

San Salvador, November 15th, 2017

Ambassador Jean Elizabeth Manes
United States Ambassador to El Salvador

Dear Ambassador Manes,

We, El Salvador and US based solidarity organizations, strongly urge the United States Government to renew Temporary Protective Status (TPS) for El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Haiti and all other countries currently protected under this program. If these programs are not renewed, it would needlessly result in the separation of thousands of families that have made the United States their home and further criminalize and marginalize immigrant communities.

For Central America, the 1998 Hurricane Mitch that ravaged Honduras and Nicaragua and subsequent 2001 earthquakes in El Salvador left thousands of families in precarious conditions and unable to survive in their home countries. Today, these migrants make up the bulk of TPS recipients at 254,550, along with 50,000 Haitian beneficiaries. For this reason, we join the 116 Congressional Representatives who on September 11, 2017 expressed their support for renewal, rightly stating that, “The potential return of hundreds of thousands of former TPS holders to Honduras and El Salvador would likely bring destabilizing consequences throughout the region.”¹

Indeed, over the last several decades, US policies of military intervention, economic liberalization and mass deportation have directly contributed to the economic, political and security crises currently facing the Northern Triangle. As a result, these countries do not enjoy the conditions necessary to receive or protect these forced returnees. We urge our government to consider the protection and conservation of human life into its decision on TPS, and to heed the voices of community and religious groups across the country that join the bi-partisan consensus on preserving TPS.

We condemn the recent announcement to terminate TPS for Nicaragua, and urge the Trump Administration to reconsider its decision. We would also like to take the opportunity to express our solidarity with the nearly 800,000 Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients and their families who have been unjustly cast into an uncertainty with Attorney General Jeffrey Session’s September announcement to rescind that program, and all those impacted by the termination of the Central American Minors (CAM) refugee and parole program. We call on the U.S. Congress to immediately pass legislation to protect those affected from deportation, and **approve a just and humane immigration policy to protect their families and all immigrants who do not enjoy a secure, stable and legal status within US borders.** Further criminalization of immigrants and militarization of borders and communities has no place in this policy.

¹ Rep. Jim McGovern (2017, September 12) “Press Release: Bipartisan Group of 116 Lawmakers Call to Extend Temporary Protections for Salvadorans and Hondurans.”

<https://mcgovern.house.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=397106>

As organizations in solidarity with the people of El Salvador and immigrants everywhere, we demand the following:

1. An immediate end to all immigrant detention and deportations and the approval of a just and humane immigration policy that will provide a pathway towards citizenship for the 11 million undocumented immigrants that have made the United States their home.
2. The immediate renewal of TPS and pathway towards citizenship for TPS recipients from El Salvador, Honduras, Haiti, Nepal, Syria, Nicaragua, Yemen, Sudan, Somalia, and South Sudan.
3. That Congress immediately approve legislation to protect DACA recipients and former TPS recipients impacted by recent decisions of non renewal, and provide a path towards citizenship for this community and their families.
4. That the United States government fulfill its international legal and moral obligation to provide protection to unaccompanied refugee minors, which includes the extension of programs such as the Central American Minors Program (CAM).
5. That the Trump Administration cease its stigmatization of Central American minors as “deadly MS-13 gang members” and “terrorists” as a strategy to justify its anti-immigrant policies.
6. That the U.S. government end its militarization project in Mesoamerica and not interfere with local initiatives building sustainable and equitable development in the region.
7. Finally, that the U.S. Embassy in El Salvador publish a statement clarifying that the Trump Administration’s decisions regarding TPS and other immigration programs have nothing to do with the sovereign domestic or foreign policies of the government of El Salvador or any other impacted nation.

The United States has a moral and legal obligation to protect the lives and well being of migrants and refugee families. Renewing TPS and creating a pathway towards citizenship for those covered by TPS, DACA, CAM and other temporary protection programs will not only be good for immigrant families, but also for the US communities that they enrich.

Sincerely,

SHARE FOUNDATION

SISTER CITIES

CENTRO DE INTERCAMBIO Y SOLIDARIDAD (CIS)

COMMITTEE IN SOLIDARITY WITH THE PEOPLE OF EL SALVADOR (CISPES)

VOICES ON THE BORDER

