



U.S. Citizenship  
and Immigration  
Services

July 11, 2016

Sister Jeri Cashman  
Dominican Sisters of Sinsinawa  
6600 Pleasant Avenue S., Apt. 324  
Minneapolis, MN 55404

Dear Sister Cashman:

Thank you for your June 2, 2016 letter. Secretary Johnson asked that I respond on his behalf.

We appreciate your interest in Temporary Protected Status (TPS) designations for El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. The Secretary's discretionary authority to designate a country for TPS is based upon specific statutory criteria. U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) is the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Component principally responsible for advising the Secretary on TPS issues and implementing the program.

To designate a country for TPS, the Secretary must find, after consultation with appropriate agencies, one or more of the following: (1) there is an ongoing armed conflict within the country that would pose a serious threat to the personal safety of the country's nationals if they were returned; (2) there has been an environmental disaster resulting in a substantial, but temporary, disruption of the living conditions in the area affected; the country is temporarily unable to adequately handle the return of its nationals; and the country has officially requested TPS designation; or (3) there exist extraordinary and temporary conditions in the country that prevent nationals from returning in safety, and the Secretary does not find that permitting the country's nationals to remain temporarily in the United States would be contrary to the national interest of the United States. *See* Immigration and Nationality Act § 244(b)(1).

As you are likely aware, Honduras has been designated for TPS since 1999 and El Salvador since 2001, with over 300,000 individuals holding TPS under the two countries' designations. DHS regularly reviews conditions in all countries currently designated for TPS, including El Salvador and Honduras, to determine whether the conditions continue to support each country's existing designation for TPS, as well as any potential redesignation. DHS is also monitoring conditions in Guatemala to assess whether it may warrant a discretionary TPS designation under the statute.

We share your concern for the difficult situations faced by many nationals of the Northern Triangle countries and are committed to assisting those in need through our relevant

humanitarian programs. In addition to TPS, USCIS humanitarian programs include the Central American Minors (CAM) Refugee/Parole Program, the USCIS Asylum Program, and the recent expansion of the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program for nationals (or, if stateless, habitual residents) of Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras. With respect to the CAM Program, you could find more information about eligibility requirements and the application process on our website at: <https://www.uscis.gov/CAM>. Other immigration relief measures (offered on a case-by-case basis) that may be of assistance to nationals of El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras affected by the current conditions in those countries may be found at: [www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/special-situations](https://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/special-situations).

Thank you again for your letter and interest in this important issue. Please share this letter with the co-signers of your letter. Should you wish to discuss this matter further, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "León Rodríguez", written in a cursive style.

León Rodríguez  
Director