



Solidarity with Black Immigrants & Ukraine

While the Inter-Faith Committee on Latin America (IFCLA) has worked to accompany the people of Latin America in their struggles for human rights and social justice, we recognize the interconnected struggle of immigrants worldwide whose countries have been ravaged by U.S. intervention and colonization. IFCLA was founded with the spirit to support the people of Latin America in their fight against repression and the destruction of their land, territories, and rights.

As Russian repression drives [millions of Ukrainians to flee their homes](#) or take up arms to protect their country, we draw parallels with many of the families and individuals who have arrived at our borders seeking asylum who leave dangerous places. We must not forget that these conditions – pervasive violence, rampant poverty, and, often, the threat of death – are the direct results of decades of dangerous policy and intervention. We must show empathy for humans and families, regardless of their circumstances that may lead them to migrate or seek protection in their home.

While the U.S. rightly and swiftly granted [aid](#) and [temporary protected status \(TPS\)](#) to Ukraine, TPS is long overdue for Cameroon.

In the U.S., Black immigrants are more likely to be criminalized as they are simultaneously barraged with two prongs of oppression: racism and xenophobia. As the Biden-Harris Administration lags in providing temporary protected status (TPS) for Cameroon, each day spent in limbo places more and more Cameroonian lives at risk of deportation. The negative impacts of such trauma are felt among mixed status families and across generations, as we have seen in our work with people from Latin America in the last 40 years. **We echo the calls of the Cameroon Advocacy Network and demand that the Biden-Harris Administration allow Black immigrants to seek safety within the U.S. without the imminent threat of deportation.** In order to create a world that recognizes the sacred dignity and worth of all people, we must protect Black immigrants.

We demand humane policies that value family unity and human dignity, and we oppose anti-Blackness in all forms. At its core, the US immigration system is designed to deny the dignity of migrants, using mechanisms like enacting quotas and placing immigration restrictions based on country of origin, education level, and occupational specializations. All people have a fundamental right to migrate in order to seek protection from harmful situations. Deporting Cameroonians further violates the Biden-Harris Administration's promise to keep families together and further targets an already vulnerable group. Just last week, Human Rights Watch [issued a report](#) documenting that 13 of the estimated 80 to 90 Cameroonians deported on flights in late 2020 were tortured, physically or sexually abused, or assaulted by state agents. Since 2014, reports continue to surface of state-sponsored violence against its own people, which has amounted to [more than 4,000 deaths and more than 700,000](#) displaced civilians, among homes burnt, schools attacked and villages raided. In short, it is not safe for people to return. **Issuing TPS for Cameroon nationals is the appropriate moral response right now.**



Granting TPS to Cameroonians is by no means a long-term solution, however it will grant necessary short-term protections that currently place them at risk of immediate deportation. As we work toward a more permanent solution, **we reiterate our demand for clean legislation that honors the dignity of all and stands up for civil rights and provides a path to legalization for the millions of immigrants that are already part of this country.** We believe that every person has the right to move and live freely, in community and with their family, without fear of being separated from their loved ones or displaced from their home.

In solidarity,
IFCLA