



tps/eth

## **Request for Extension and/or Re-Designation of Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Ethiopia**

To:  
The Honorable Secretary  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
Washington, D.C.

January 12, 2026

Cc:  
Director, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services  
DHS Office of Strategy, Policy, and Plans, EOTC priests

Subject: Request for Extension and Re-Designation of Temporary Protected Status for Ethiopia Pursuant to INA §244

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Dear Honorable Secretary,

**The Ethiopian World Federation, Incorporated (EWF)**, respectfully submits this formal request urging the Department of Homeland Security to extend and where appropriate, re-designate Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for nationals of Ethiopia pursuant to Section 244 of the Immigration and Nationality Act.

Founded in 1937 during Ethiopia's appeal to the conscience of the international community, EWF has for nearly a century served as a humanitarian and diplomatic bridge between Ethiopia, its global diaspora, and the institutions of international law. It is in that enduring spirit of lawful order, peace and protection of civilians that we write today.

Despite prior expectations of stabilization, conditions in Ethiopia remain incompatible with the safe and dignified return of civilian populations, including current TPS beneficiaries residing lawfully in the United States. Religious freedom and civilian protection are core American values not regional or partisan concerns. Temporary Protected Status is one of the lawful tools available to ensure that the United States does not return individuals to conditions where faith, identity or mere civilian status place them at risk. Your decision today could affect the trust and belief in the American dream.

### **Ongoing Armed Conflict and Civilian Harm**

Credible international reporting confirms that armed conflict, insecurity, and civilian targeting persist in multiple regions, including northern and central Ethiopia. Of particular concern is Lalibela where EWF has our Local 2, a UNESCO World Heritage site and living center of ancient Christian worship, which has repeatedly experienced armed incursions, displacement of civilians, and threats to religious and cultural heritage.

Authoritative sources documenting these conditions include:

- United Nations reporting on continued instability and humanitarian access constraints:  
<https://www.unocha.org/ethiopia>
- U.S. Department of State Country Reports on Human Rights Practices – Ethiopia:  
<https://www.state.gov/reports/2023-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/ethiopia/>
- Amnesty International documentation of civilian harm and unlawful conduct by armed actors:  
<https://www.amnesty.org/en/location/africa/east-africa-the-horn-and-great-lakes/ethiopia/>
- Reporting on hostilities and insecurity affecting Lalibela and surrounding areas:  
<https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2024/country-chapters/ethiopia>
- Reporting on the killing of Orthodox priests 2025  
<https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/267615/ethiopias-catholic-bishops-condemn-deadly-attack-on-parish-call-for-government-protection>
- Reporting on the killing of more than 25 civilians 2025  
<https://addisstandard.com/more-than-25-civilians-killed-in-east-arsi-zone-oreomia-in-october-orthodox-church-says/>

These conditions meet and continue to meet the statutory TPS criteria of ongoing armed conflict, extraordinary and temporary conditions, and serious threat to personal safety upon return.

### Humanitarian and Legal Considerations

TPS beneficiaries from Ethiopia have built lawful lives in the United States, contributing to their communities, workplaces, and families. Forcing return under present conditions would expose civilians to serious risk, undermine family unity, and contradict the humanitarian purpose Congress embedded in INA §244.

EWF further notes that the United States has historically recognized Ethiopia as a sovereign partner committed to peace and international order. Extending TPS aligns with both U.S. humanitarian tradition and America's longstanding relationship with the Ethiopian people, particularly in moments when civilian protection is imperative.

### **Request**

Accordingly, EWF respectfully requests that DHS:

1. Extend TPS for Ethiopia or
2. Re-designate Ethiopia for TPS, recognizing that conditions continue to warrant protection under the statute.

We stand ready to provide additional documentation, expert testimony or community impact statements at the

Department's request.

Respectfully submitted,

Sincerely,

Donah Sandford,  
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