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H. RES. 378

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the plight of Cameroonian immigrants and the continued turmoil and instability in the nation of Cameroon merits a designation of humanitarian parole and calling on the Department of Homeland Security to create a humanitarian parole program for Cameroonians fleeing this violence.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 5, 2025

Mr. ESPAILLAT (for himself, Mr. IVEY, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. CLEAVER, Ms. ADAMS, Ms. PINGREE, and Ms. CASTOR of Florida) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the plight of Cameroonian immigrants and the continued turmoil and instability in the nation of Cameroon merits a designation of humanitarian parole and calling on the Department of Homeland Security to create a humanitarian parole program for Cameroonians fleeing this violence.

Whereas Cameroon is experiencing five simultaneous ethno-armed conflicts that have coalesced into a severe humanitarian crisis, as identified by the United Nations and

other international organizations, which includes the Anglophone Crisis, the Boko Haram insurgency, socio-economic clashes between herders, fishers, and farmers, state-sanctioned violence, and the conflict spillover from the Central African Republic;

Whereas each conflict has led to significant loss of life, displacement, and human rights violations;

Whereas the Anglophone Crisis in the Northwest and Southwest Regions began in 2016 with protests by teachers and lawyers against the appointment of local officials that challenged the Anglophone region's sense of autonomy and escalated into an armed separatist movement seeking independence for an unrecognized state called "Ambazonia", and over 4,000 civilians have been killed, more than 600,000 people have been internally displaced, and over 70,000 have fled to Nigeria;

Whereas educational institutions remain targets of violence, affecting over 500,000 children, and the local economy has collapsed due to insecurity;

Whereas the Boko Haram insurgency in the Far North Region has persisted since 2014, with Boko Haram and ISIS-West Africa launching deadly attacks on villages and civilians;

Whereas these foreign terrorist organizations are responsible for more than 3,000 deaths in the Lake Chad Basin, their terror has displaced over 250,000 individuals, and the insurgents engage in mass abductions, suicide bombings, and forced marriages, terrorizing communities and exacerbating insecurity in the region;

Whereas the farmer-herder and fisher-herder clashes are driven by climate change and land and water scarcity, are ex-

acerbated by religious strife between Muslim, Christian, and Traditional Spiritualist communities, and entire villages and religious sites have been destroyed, worsening intercommunal relations;

Whereas the political crisis affects the entire country, with President Paul Biya maintaining power since 1982, and suppressing any political opposition;

Whereas concerns over President Biya's age, declining health, and ability to govern have intensified political instability, and security forces have carried out arbitrary arrests, cracked down on opposition figures, violated human rights, and shut down the internet to silence dissent;

Whereas the conflict spillover from the Central African Republic has destabilized the East and Adamawa Regions due to incursions by armed Seleka and Anti-Balaka militias;

Whereas the influx of refugees and the movement of armed groups across the border have increased violence and criminal activity in these regions, and economic, ethnic, and religious tensions between Cameroonian communities and Central African refugees have escalated, leading to further instability;

Whereas, due to ongoing armed conflict, continued human rights abuses, and other extraordinary and temporary conditions in Cameroon that prevent Cameroonian nationals from safely returning to their country, the Department of Homeland Security designated Cameroon for temporary protected status (TPS) in April 2022 and then redesignated and extended TPS for Cameroon in October 2023, providing short-term relief for Cameroonian immi-

grants who have been continuously residing in the United States since October 5, 2023;

Whereas recent credible reporting suggests that the Trump administration intends to allow the TPS protections applied to Cameroonian nationals to expire in June of this year, which will further exasperate and expand the severity and scope of the harm incurred by the Cameroonian people, and will likely intensify the ongoing security and humanitarian crisis in the West African country;

Whereas Cameroonian immigrants who have fled to Nigeria have previously faced extradition back to Cameroon where they risk an unfair trial and the possibility of torture;

Whereas the journey from Africa to seek refuge in the Western Hemisphere is particularly perilous and occasionally deadly for Cameroonian migrants, as demonstrated in March 2023 when a boat carrying nearly 3 dozen West African immigrants, a majority of whom were Cameroonian migrants en route to the United States Virgin Islands, capsized, killing 3 Cameroonians and leading to a search for 13 additional bodies that were never found;

Whereas, in December 2023, the European Union (EU) signed a pact to facilitate the deportation of asylum seekers and limit migration to the bloc, leaving Cameroonian migrants fleeing violence or ethnoreligious persecution particularly at risk;

Whereas amid stricter EU immigration policies, Cameroonian asylum seekers are increasingly seeking protection in Latin America and the United States, where they often

face intense discrimination, detainment, poor conditions of confinement, and deportation;

Whereas, in the United States, despite only making up around 7 percent of the noncitizen population, Black immigrants represent over 20 percent of those in deportation proceedings on criminal grounds, constituting revealing evidence of the disparate treatment of Black immigrants;

Whereas, in August 2020, Cameroonian detainees at Louisiana's Pine Prairie Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detention center launched their third hunger strike that year to bring attention to their experiences of racism, unwarranted threats, and excessive abuse by ICE officials;

Whereas, although only 6 percent of migrants detained by ICE are Black, 28 percent of abuse complaints over a recent 6-year period (2016–2021) were reported by Black detained persons, and nearly half of the calls (43 percent) by Black nonbinary-detained persons included reports of abuse;

Whereas immigrants from majority Black countries, such as Cameroon, that are in ICE detention facilities are sent to solitary confinement at a disproportionately high rate, pay higher bonds, and face more rejections for asylum than immigrants from nonmajority Black countries;

Whereas a recent report from Human Rights Watch reveals that Cameroonian authorities, including police, paramilitary officers (gendarmes), military personnel, and other Cameroonian state actors have subjected returned deportees, and family members of those deportees, to serious human rights violations to punish them for fleeing,

including rape, torture, physical abuse, extortion, arbitrary arrest and detention, and inhuman and degrading treatment in detention;

Whereas this aforementioned report by Human Rights Watch further indicates that, upon the arrival of deported migrants back in Cameroon, Cameroonian authorities have confiscated the identity documents of these Cameroonian citizens in an attempt to contain, monitor, and possibly arrest these individuals at a later date on fabricated charges;

Whereas section 212(d)(5)(A) of the Immigration and Nationality Act grants the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security the authority to establish parole programs for urgent humanitarian reasons or significant public benefits (“Special Humanitarian Parole”); and

Whereas, since the creation of the Humanitarian Parole process in the 1950s, the United States Government has successfully established over 120 different programmatic or categorical parole programs to address the circumstances of deserving, at-risk immigrant populations from nations in Europe, Asia, and Central and South America, but has never created such a program for any of the 54 African nations in the program’s 70-year history, raising concerns of anti-Blackness and anti-Africanness in the United States historical immigration policy that deserve to be addressed and corrected: Now, therefore, be it

- 1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—
- 2 (1) recognizes the dire and ongoing humani-
- 3 tarian crisis for Cameroonian migrants that are flee-
- 4 ing violence and widespread human rights violations
- 5 in their home nation, in addition to the discrimina-

1 tory treatment often faced by Black and African im-
2 migrants;

3 (2) calls on the Secretary of Homeland Security
4 to use the authority under section 212(d)(5)(A) of
5 the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C.
6 1182(d)(5)(A)) to establish a special humanitarian
7 parole program for Cameroonian nationals who are
8 seeking refuge in the United States to grant these
9 immigrants much-deserved humanitarian relief; and
10 (3) urges the United States Government to allo-
11 cate appropriate resources to assist in the successful
12 resettlement of Cameroonian immigrants, including
13 comprehensive support for Cameroonians benefitting
14 from Special Humanitarian Parole status.

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