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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

USCCB AND CRS CHAIRMEN APPLAUD EXTENSION AND RE-DESIGNATION OF TPS TO HAITI, EXPRESS CONCERN WITH RESUMPTION OF DEPORTATIONS

WASHINGTON—Archbishop José H. Gomez of Los Angeles, chairman of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) Committee on Migration, and Bishop Gerald F. Kicanas of Tucson, chairman of Catholic Relief Services (CRS), today hailed the extension and re-designation of Temporary Protected Status (TPS) to Haiti.

On May 17, the Obama Administration announced that it would extend TPS for another 18 months beginning July 23, 2011. The Administration also re-designated eligibility for TPS to those who arrived by January 12, 2011, a year after the January 12, 2010, earthquake.

TPS permits nationals of a designated nation to remain in the United States with legal status and work authorization for a specific time, until that nation recovers from conflict or natural disaster.

“I commend the action to re-designate TPS to Haiti,” said Archbishop Gomez. “This action will permit those who entered the United States in the aftermath of a devastating natural disaster to remain and work to support their families.”

“It is simply the right thing to do,” he added. “It directly alleviates the suffering of Haitians and their families both in the United States and in Haiti. I congratulate President Obama and Secretary Napolitano on this decision.”

Bishop Kicanas stressed the importance of the TPS decision to the recovery in Haiti. “The re-designation of TPS to Haiti will preserve the flow of much-needed remittances to that stricken country,” he said. “The remittances are vital to bolstering the fragile Haitian economy and supporting the national recovery,” he added.

At the same time both chairmen lauded the TPS decision, they expressed concern about the recent resumption of deportations to Haiti on April 15, 2011. The deportations were

suspended for three months following the death of one deportee from cholera contracted in a Haitian jail where he was held by the Haitian Government following deportation.

“We remain troubled by the resumption of deportations to Haiti at a time when the nation is ill-equipped to handle them,” Bishop Kicanas said.

Haiti remains in crisis, with more than one million homeless and an ongoing cholera epidemic.

According to USCCB officials, Haitians who pose no threat to the community could be placed in alternative to detention programs until Haiti is sufficiently recovered to receive and reintegrate them.

Keywords: Haiti, Haitians, Temporary Protected Status, TPS, deportations, President Obama, Secretary Napolitano, Homeland Security, Archbishop José Gomez, Bishop Gerald Kicanas, Catholic Relief Services, CRS, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, USCCB

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