



Trump Proclaims New Travel Ban, Adds Three New Countries, Including North Korea

On September 24, just hours before his previous travel ban was set to expire, President Trump signed a proclamation limiting the immigrant and nonimmigrant entry into the United States from eight countries. Trump's proclamation continues the ban on immigration from five of the six countries in the previous ban: Iran, Libya, Syria, Yemen, and Somalia. It also adds three new countries to the list: Chad, North Korea, and Venezuela. The proclamation also drops one country previously named — Sudan. Furthermore, it relaxes restrictions for non-immigrant visitors from Somalia, as well as students and other exchange visitors from Iran.



Trump said about his new proclamation:

Following an extensive review by the Department of Homeland Security, we are taking action today to protect the safety and security of the American people by establishing a minimum security baseline for entry into the United States. We cannot afford to continue the failed policies of the past, which present an unacceptable danger to our country. My highest obligation is to ensure the safety and security of the American people, and in issuing this new travel order, I am fulfilling that sacred obligation.

NPR reported that the new restrictions on Chad and North Korea are a broad ban on nationals from those countries entering the United States. However, the restrictions for Venezuela apply only to government officials and their immediate families.

These changes are set to take effect on October 18, though the restrictions on Sudan will be lifted immediately, as a result of security baselines established by the Trump administration.

However, noted the White House statement, the travel restrictions are not necessarily permanent and a nation can get off the list by making necessary changes to eliminate the administration's security concerns: "These limitations and restrictions are conditional, and these countries can, under this Executive action, improve their information-sharing practices and receive relief from the limitations and restrictions."

A statement posted on the White House website on September 24 explained the latest proclamation, noting, "This action to protect our national security builds on Executive Order 13780, which President Trump signed in March."

In a [March article, we reported](#) that President Trump had signed an executive order on March 6 "to protect the Nation from terrorist activities by foreign nationals admitted to the United States," but that



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the order differed from an earlier order restricting travel to the United States that Trump had signed on January 27. The reason for the revised order was that on January 28, a U.S. District judge of the Eastern District of New York ruled in favor of a petition filed by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) on behalf of two Iraqi men who were detained at John F. Kennedy International Airport, thus blocking the order. Subsequently, judges in other federal district courts in Massachusetts, Virginia, and Washington issued similar rulings.

Most of the arguments made by the judges blocking Trump's order asserted that the order amounted to a ban on Muslims entering the country. The revised order removed some language favorable to Christian refugees, but even these changes were not enough to satisfy those determined to stop the order.

Just hours before an amended version of the ban was scheduled to take effect, Judge Derrick K. Watson of the Federal District Court in Honolulu granted a temporary restraining order enjoining the Trump administration executive branch from enforcing or implementing two key sections of the order across the nation. The objection to Trump's travel ban most frequently cited by Watson and U.S. District Judge Theodore D. Chuang in Maryland (another judge who issued a ruling last March blocking sections of Trump's executive order) was that the order amounted to a ban on Muslims entering the United States. The judges made numerous references to Trump's alleged anti-Muslim bias in their respective decisions to block the order.

However, the critics of Trump's 90-day ban on entry into the United States from six predominantly Muslim countries — Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Yemen, and Iran (Iraq was included in the original January executive order) — did not mention that that particular group of countries originates with H.R. 158, the Visa Waiver Program Improvement and Terrorist Travel Prevention Act of 2015, signed into law by former President Obama on December 18, 2015, as part of the Omnibus Appropriations Act of FY2016.

A prolonged battle through the courts followed, with the case eventually reaching the Supreme Court. On the last day of the 2016-2017 term on June 26, the High Court granted most of the Trump administration's emergency request to put the president's March 6 travel ban executive order into place. However, Judge Watson persisted and on July 13 imposed his own interpretation of the Supreme Court's June 26 ruling. The Appeals Court for the Ninth Circuit upheld Watson on September 7 and said that the Trump administration cannot ban grandparents and other family members of citizens and legal residents from coming to the United States from the six countries named in Trump's March 6 executive order.

But four days later, Supreme Court Associate Justice Anthony Kennedy issued an order in favor of the administration and stayed the appeals court's September 7 ruling. The matter will be ultimately decided when the Supreme Court hears arguments on the merits of the executive order in October. But since the original order has now expired, the Court will now have to consider the new order. It would be surprising if one or more liberal federal judges does not issue a ruling blocking the new proclamation between now and October.

Photo: AP Images

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