
TRUMP TO SIGN NEW MUSLIM TRAVEL BAN EXCLUDING IRAQ

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President Donald Trump's revised travel ban will temporarily halt entry to the United States for people from six Muslim-majority nations, reports said.

Trump is expected to sign the new executive order on Monday.

The directive aims to address legal issues with the original order, which caused confusion at airports, sparked protests around the country and was ultimately blocked by the courts.

A senior White House official told the Reuters news agency that the order would keep a 90-day ban on travel to the United States by citizens of Iran, Libya, Syria, Somalia, Sudan and Yemen.

Unlike the previous order, the new directive is not expected to include Iraq in its list of countries targeted, following pressure from the Pentagon and State Department, which had urged the White House to reconsider, given Iraq's key role in fighting the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL, also known as ISIS) group.

Iraq said the revised order sends a "positive message" about the future of bilateral relations as the two countries work to combat ISIL.

Government spokesman Saad al-Hadithi said the decision to revise the ban shows that there is a "real partnership" between Washington and Baghdad.

Memories of chaos

Al Jazeera's Alan Fisher, reporting from Washington, DC, said: "It seems that they [Iraqi officials] have been told by US officials that they will not be part of the ban."

Chaos ensued when the first such order was signed on January 27, said Fisher.

"A number of agencies went to the courts and said, 'you've got to put a stop to this'. Of course they won. The Trump administration challenged that in court and lost. The ban was temporarily lifted."

The revised order does not apply to those who already have valid visas, Associated Press reported.

Trump was not expected to hold a public signing ceremony for the new measure.

Instead, several Cabinet secretaries - Homeland Security Secretary John Kelly, Secretary of State Rex Tillerson and Attorney General Jeff Sessions - planned to discuss the order at an event late

Monday morning.

Additionally, Trump's order suspends the entire US refugee programme for 120 days, though refugees already formally scheduled for travel by the State Department will be allowed entry.

When the suspension is lifted, the number of refugees allowed into the US will be capped at 50,000 for fiscal year 2017.

Other changes are also expected, including no longer singling out Syrian refugees for an indefinite ban.

Syrian refugees will now be treated like other refugees and be subjected to the 120-day suspension of the refugee program.

The new version is also expected to remove language that would give priority to religious minorities.

Critics had accused the administration of adding such language to help Christians get into the United States while excluding Muslims.

Kaynak/Source: