

U.S. President Donald Trump Signs Revised Travel Ban for 6 Countries, Drops Iraq from Original List



Washington, March 6 (RHC-Agencies)--U.S. President Donald Trump signed Monday a revised executive order on immigration, dropping Iraq from the original list of Muslim-majority nations whose citizens face a travel ban in the United States.

Travelers from the other six of the seven nations initially targeted by the travel ban — Iran, Syria, Somalia, Sudan, Libya and Yemen — will still face a block on entry to the country for 90 days.

Federal judges temporarily blocked the initial executive order, which in January put a four-month hold on allowing refugees into the U.S. and temporarily barred travelers from the seven countries. The revised order is intended to help Trump's controversial travel ban withstand court challenges.

Secretary of State Tillerson, Department of Homeland Security Secretary John Kelly and Attorney Jeff Sessions unveiled the new restrictions in a press conference Monday.

The Department of Homeland Security chief said that the travel ban focuses on barring entry of foreign nationals not yet authorized in the United States, and will not affect current lawful residents. He added that the revised measure will exempt green card holders, who were initially affected by Trump's order.

Under the revised travel ban, Syrian refugees will also now be treated the same as refugees from other countries. The initial travel ban put a stop to refugee processing for 120 days and banned Syrian refugees indefinitely.

Tillerson, Sessions and Kelly all defended the executive order as a "lawful" measure. The three officials refused to take questions from media after reading prepared statements during the brief press conference.

Critics argue that the revised measures still do not offer any improvement to U.S. national security, and may even undermine security by complicating diplomacy with the countries targeted by the ban. Many have also pointed out that the six countries have been selected arbitrarily.

The new order will go into effect 10 days after the signing, on March 16, rather than immediately.

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