

Chile Targets Haitians, Venezuelans in New Immigration Policies



Santiago de Chile, April 16 (RHC)-- The complex process of immigration to Chile has become increasingly difficult for Haitians and Venezuelans alike with the coming of the Democratic Responsibility Visa.

President Sebastian Piñera decreed that all Haitian and Venezuelan immigrants must acquire a visa prior to their arrival to the Latin American country. However, this legislature extends not only to incoming migrants, but to preexisting residents and will force them to return home to fill out visa applications at the Chilean ministry in their respective countries.

The new measure attempts to quell the flood of undocumented immigrants traveling without passports. Both Haitians and Venezuelans were previously permitted to travel to Chile and wait until their arrival to search for work and initiate the lengthy and complicated process of applying for a work visa and a Chilean I.D.

With the changes to immigration policy, Haitians will only be permitted 30 days for a tourist visa

which will prevent holders from working or earning money in Chile. Temporary residency for humanitarian visas, limited to one year, will be awarded to only 10,000 Haitians, with preference given to residents with high education or families.

“I’ve been receiving calls all day from Haitians saying they already bought tickets to travel for May and the end of April. They should go and get their money back from agents because they won’t be allowed to enter,” said Haitian migrant and Chilean immigration activist, Yvenet Dorsainvil.

In regards to the humanitarian visa, Dorsainvil said, “It’s not normal, it’s not humane... Piñera says he wants to prioritize children in Chile, well he can’t prioritize one set of children and put conditions on another group.”

The flow of illegal immigrants is only likely to increase, Dorsainvil said, as Haitians take to traveling across the land to enter the country by a neighboring nation rather than taking a plane. The series of regulations will be effective as of August 1.

Over the last four years, there has been a dramatic increase in immigration in Chile with statistics jumping from 416,000 in 2014 to an estimated 1 million in 2017.

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