

Trump implements new indefinite travel ban

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President Donald Trump signed a proclamation Sunday night implementing indefinite travel restrictions on citizens of Iran, Libya, Syria, Yemen, Somalia, Chad, North Korea and Venezuela.

The decision comes 90 days after the Supreme Court allowed a temporary anti-Muslim travel ban, targeting six majority Muslim countries, to go into effect pending a possible hearing of challenges to the measure in October.

However, following Sunday's proclamation, the Supreme Court cancelled impending oral arguments in two court cases challenging the travel ban, *Trump v. International Refugee Assistance Project* and *Trump v. Hawaii*. Lawyers for both sides in each case have been given until next Friday to file briefs in order to determine if the legal issues are moot given Trump's latest order.

The high court had declared in June that those with "bona fide" relationships in the United States could still travel to the United States; this exception will be dropped once the new restrictions go into effect on October 18.

The travel restrictions, which were set to expire Sunday night, covered citizens of Iran, Libya, Syria, Yemen, Somalia and Sudan. Iraq, included in the original ban signed by Trump in January, was later dropped in the revised executive order signed by Trump in March, but Iraqis are still subject to extra security screenings if they seek to travel to the US.

Trump's proclamation continues the existing restrictions while dropping Sudan and adding Chad, North Korea and Venezuela. Permanent immigration to the US from all the countries, except for Venezuela, will be entirely suspended starting next month.

Further restrictions on travelers and immigrants vary by country: travel has been completely blocked from Syria and North Korea; while business and tourist visas will be blocked, Iranians will still be able to come to

the US on student visas with extra security screenings; additional security screenings will be required for travelers from Somalia; residents of Libya, Chad and Yemen will not be able to travel to the US on business or tourist visas. The travel restrictions on Venezuela apply only to government officials and their family members.

Amnesty International released a statement condemning the latest version of Trump's travel ban as "senseless and cruel." The American Civil Liberties Union noted that the addition of Venezuela and North Korea, non-Muslim majority countries, "doesn't obfuscate the real fact that the administration's order is still a Muslim ban."

Trump signed the original Muslim ban during his first week in office, on January 27, sparking protests by thousands at airports across the country, denouncing the racist policy and demanding that travelers and refugees from the seven restricted countries be allowed into the United States. During the 2016 election campaign Trump had promised to impose a "total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering the United States."

Legal challenges were immediately filed by Democratic state attorneys general from Washington state and Minnesota, in lower federal court, resulting in a nationwide temporary restraining order. Trump responded by signing a new executive order in March, which was also temporarily blocked by federal district court challenges until the Supreme Court allowed the travel ban to go into effect in June.

Except for Chad, all the countries covered by the latest travel ban are either currently being bombed by the United States (Libya, Syria, Yemen, and Somalia), or, in the cases of Iran, North Korea and Venezuela, are prime targets for US wars of aggression and CIA-instigated regime change operations.

Just last week Trump set the stage for world war in

his appearance at the United Nations in New York where he threatened to destroy North Korea, pull out of the Iran nuclear deal and menaced Venezuela. The implementation of the new travel restrictions can only be understood as a prelude to a further escalation of US imperialist operations, which already encompass a significant portion of the globe, from South America to northern Africa and the Middle East to South Asia.



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