

Administration of Barack Obama, 2014

Statement on Signing Legislation Concerning Visa Limitations for Certain Representatives to the United Nations

April 18, 2014

Today I have signed into law S. 2195, an Act concerning visa limitations for certain representatives to the United Nations. S. 2195 amends section 407 of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 1990 and 1991, to provide that no individual may be admitted to the United States as a representative to the United Nations, if that individual has been found to have been engaged in espionage or terrorist activity directed against the United States or its allies, and if that individual may pose a threat to United States national security interests. As President Bush observed in signing the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 1990 and 1991, this provision "could constrain the exercise of my exclusive constitutional authority to receive within the United States certain foreign ambassadors to the United Nations." (Public Papers of the President, George Bush, Vol. I, 1990, page 240). Acts of espionage and terrorism against the United States and our allies are unquestionably problems of the utmost gravity, and I share the Congress's concern that individuals who have engaged in such activity may use the cover of diplomacy to gain access to our Nation. Nevertheless, as President Bush also observed, "curtailing by statute my constitutional discretion to receive or reject ambassadors is neither a permissible nor a practical solution." I shall therefore continue to treat section 407, as originally enacted and as amended by S. 2195, as advisory in circumstances in which it would interfere with the exercise of this discretion.

BARACK OBAMA

The White House,
April 18, 2014.

NOTE: S. 2195, approved April 18, was assigned Public Law No. 113–100.

Categories: Bill Signings and Vetoes : United Nations representatives, legislation on U.S. visa limitations, signing statement.

Names: Bush, George H.W.

Subjects: Immigration and naturalization : Visa policy, U.S.; Legislation, enacted : United Nations representatives, legislation on U.S. visa limitations; United Nations : U.N. representatives, U.S. visa policy.

DCPD Number: DCPD201400275.