Afghanistan, Pakistan and the United States (US): Whether the Embassy of the United States (US) in Pakistan issues non-immigrant visas to Afghan citizens residing in Afghanistan (2008 - July 2010)

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In 14 July 2010 correspondence with the Research Directorate, an official at the Embassy of the United States (US) in Ottawa stated that on 15 February 2009, the US Embassy in Kabul began processing the full range of non-petition-based non-immigrant visas, which included visitor visas for business or tourism, student and exchange visas, and official visas. He indicated that prior to 15 February 2009, many Afghan citizens applied for non-immigrant visas to the US at the US Embassy in Islamabad (US 14 July 2010). He further stated that the US Embassy in Islamabad still accepts applications from Afghans, but that from February 2009 to July 2010, there have been only a relatively small number of applicants (ibid.).

The Official indicated that the US Embassy in Kabul does not process petition-based non-immigrant visas, such as H work visas, K fiancé(e) visas, L intra-company transfer visas, O and P visas (ibid.). He noted that the US Embassy in Islamabad continues to process petition-based non-immigrant visas for Afghan citizens applying for visas as temporary workers, intra-company transfers, investors, and performers, but that there have been fewer than 50 Afghan applicants for those types of visas since 1995 (ibid.).

According to the Official, prior to 15 February 2009, the US Embassy in Kabul processed some B1 and J visas for Afghans participating in US government-sponsored training and exchange programs (ibid.). B1 visas are for temporary business visitors and J visas are for student and exchange visitors and their dependents (US 2009).

On its website, the US Department of State lists the embassy in Afghanistan, Kabul as an embassy with "limited visa services" and notes that embassies with "limited visa services" have reduced services "because of natural disasters, civil unrest, war, conditions of insecurity, or other reasons" (US n.d.). The website also notes that immigrant visas for Afghans are processed at the US Embassy in Islamabad (ibid.).

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

References

United States (US). 14 July 2010. Embassy of the United States of America in Ottawa. Correspondence with the Vice Consul.


Additional Sources Consulted
**Internet sites, including:** Factiva, *Forced Migration Review*, Office of the United Nations (UN) High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United States (US) Consulate in Karachi, **US** Embassy in Kabul, **US** Embassy in Islamabad.

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