



**UNITED STATES MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS
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The United States Mission to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Permanent Missions to the United Nations and Observer Offices and has the honor to refer to the procedures associated with the limited circumstances in which foreign protective escorts accompanying visiting foreign government dignitaries are allowed to bring firearms and/or ammunition into the United States. The United States Mission requests that this vital information be conveyed to your respective Ministries of Foreign Affairs.

The United States Bureau of Customs and Border Protection (CBP) is responsible for clearing individuals coming into the United States with firearms or ammunition. The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) is responsible for implementing security-screening procedures that protect the traveling public by preventing any deadly or dangerous objects from being transported onto an aircraft. TSA and CBP have the authority to seize and/or hold any firearm or ammunition being brought into the United States and will do so if the proper notifications have not been completed. Federal law generally prohibits the importation or transportation into the United States of firearms and ammunition by foreigners. The prohibition on importing firearms and ammunition has an exception for officials of foreign governments if

the firearm or ammunition is shipped, transported, possessed, or received in the official capacity. A port courtesy request to the Department of State serves as the mechanism for informing federal entities that a foreign government dignitary will be arriving with armed Foreign Protective Escorts (FPEs). If the request is approved, FPEs may only bring weapons into the United States for the purpose of protecting the visiting foreign government dignitary they are accompanying. The Permanent Missions and Observer Offices are reminded that port courtesies will not be granted to allow advance teams to bring weapons into the United States. FPEs traveling with the dignitary may be permitted to bring weapons for the advance FPEs already in the United States. In such cases, it is imperative that the FPEs traveling with the dignitary be listed in the port courtesy request as many times as necessary to address all of the weapons with which they are travelling, including those they are bringing for the advance FPEs.

In order to continue to ensure the efficient authorization of a foreign government's use of its armed security personnel to accompany the travel of its dignitaries to, within, and from the United States, the United States Mission wishes to remind the Permanent Missions and Observer Offices of the following procedural requirements:

1. Permanent Missions and Observer Offices are required to notify the Department of State of the arrival of a foreign dignitary who is traveling to the United States with armed security personnel via the electronic system by means of a request for *Courtesies of the Port* at least 72 hours before the arrival will take place.
2. Requests for *Courtesies of the Port* are made using the Department of State's e-Government System (e-Gov) (<https://ofmapps.state.gov/eGov/public/login.jsp>).
3. Detailed instructions concerning the process for making such requests using the Department of State's e-Government System are available at

www.state.gov/documents/organization/170450.pdf. Please direct questions regarding the completion of the request for Courtesies of Port to the United States Mission's Office of Host Country Affairs, Ms. Jessica Nelson. Ms. Nelson can be reached via email at nelsonja@state.gov or by telephone at 212-415-4029.

4. With respect to the sending State's armed security personnel, Permanent Missions are required to provide the following information concerning such individuals as part of their request for *Courtesies of the Port*:

- name and rank/title;
- passport and visa numbers;
- visa type;
- make, model, caliber, and serial numbers of weapon(s) assigned to each individual; and
- the number of rounds of ammunition assigned to each individual.

5. The Permanent Missions and Observer offices are reminded that they are responsible for ensuring that any armed security personnel sent to the United States by their governments:

- are trained and proficient in the use of weapons that such individuals have been assigned to carry during their time in the United States;
- are able to communicate in English;
- will carry weapons ONLY when accompanying the dignitary to whom they are assigned; and
- will securely store their weapons when they are not on duty.

It is important to understand that the port courtesy does not constitute a weapons permit authorizing the possession or carrying of weapons in specific jurisdictions within the United States, which is a matter regulated by state and local authorities, not the Department of State.

Armed FPEs included on port courtesy requests must also meet the requirements for and be traveling on the appropriate A-1, A-2, C-3, G-1, G-2, G-3, G-4, or NATO-1 through 6 visa when coming to the United States. FPEs may not seek to enter the United States with weapons and/or ammunition under the Visa Waiver Program (Electronic System for Travel Authorization – ESTA) or a nonimmigrant visa classification other than the appropriate A, C, G, or NATO visa.

All foreign nationals, regardless of their status, are prohibited from importing firearms restricted by the National Firearms Act, such as machine guns, silencers, and short-barreled rifles, shotguns and Tasers. Foreign nationals are also prohibited from importing semi-automatic assault weapons or large-capacity ammunition-feeding devices.

The United States Mission would like to remind all Permanent Missions and Observer Offices that FPEs must comply with all airline regulations when transporting weapons. Generally, travelers may only transport unloaded firearms in a locked, hard-sided container as checked baggage. The container must be completely secured from being accessed. Firearms and ammunition must be packed separately. It is advised that FPEs check the regulations of the corresponding commercial airline he or she plans to travel with and review the company's policy when traveling with weapons. The United States Department of State will not intervene in an airline's decision concerning the location of the weapon(s) and/or ammunition within the aircraft and how they are transported.

For the period from September 18, 2018 to September 30, 2018, all foreign armed security personnel accompanying visiting dignitaries to the New York City area will be provided visual indicators that they will be required to wear during all times in which they are performing protective services for the dignitary or dignitaries to whom they are assigned during their visit to the United States. These indicators will be provided by representatives from either the Department of State's Bureau of Diplomatic Security or the United States Secret Service.

Questions concerning the provision of protective services to visiting high-level delegations concerning a foreign government's armed security personnel's ability to function within the United States should be directed to the Department of State's Diplomatic Security Service, Protective Liaison Division at 202-895-3600.

The United States Mission to the United Nations avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Permanent Missions and Observer Offices to the United Nations the assurances of its highest consideration.