



**U.S. Department of State
Bureau of Consular Affairs
Visa Services
Public Inquiries Division**

**General Information about Getting a Visa to Come to the U.S
Summary for Participants - Second World Conference of Speakers of Parliament (7-9 Sept 2005)**

Since September 11, visa applications have been subject to a greater degree of scrutiny than in the past. The timeframes for visa processing today are difficult to predict with accuracy for any individual applicant, and could vary significantly by country. The State Department is working hard with other government agencies to rationalize clearance procedures in ways that continue to protect U.S. borders, our first priority, while facilitating legitimate travel. We continue the proud tradition of welcoming visitors to the United States, with secure borders and open doors. For most nonimmigrant visa applicants, a personal interview is now required as a standard part of visa processing. The traveler should contact the U.S. Embassy or Consulate to schedule an appointment for an interview. Applicants who need additional screening are informed at the time they submit their applications. These steps can take additional time to process a visa. We stress the importance of each person desiring to travel to the U.S. reviewing his/her visa status and making an early visa application. Advance planning is the essential ingredient to having your visa when you need it!

Please note that Embassy Consular Sections overseas have sole responsibility for issuance of visas, and they generally are the point of contact for visa processing. Visa Services at the Department of State is not able to expedite the scheduling of appointments or processing of visa applications.

For the Second World Conference of Speakers of Parliament, G classification visas will generally be provided to all members of the parliamentary delegations, as described in the first paragraph below.

Government Representatives Traveling to Meetings of Designated International Organizations

- Representatives of a government (officials of the three branches of Government) generally do not require interviews when applying for visas, if their travel is official. However, a consular officer can request an interview.
- Representatives of a government, (either recognized government, non-recognized or non-member government) seeking to travel to the U.S. to attend meetings of a designated international organization, must present a diplomatic note from their government requesting a visa for the purpose of the meeting. Immediate family members of government representatives, who desire to travel to the U.S. in conjunction with the international organization meeting, should include a request for their travel in the diplomatic note. There is no fee for these visas

Individuals Who are Business Not Government Representatives, Traveling to International Organization Meetings

- Travelers who are citizens of a country, but not a government representative to the designated international organization, but invited to attend the meeting (media, for example), should apply as soon as possible to the U.S. Embassy in their country of residence. The consular officer at the Embassy will determine, following immigration law, the appropriate type of visa.

How to Apply – Each Visa Applicant

- Travelers should apply for their visa as soon as possible to the U.S. Embassy in their country of residence. The Department of State recommends its web site, <http://travel.state.gov> and Consular Section websites as the first source of up-to-date visa information, about how to apply, documentation required, fees, and more. After identifying that a visa is needed, foreign travelers should contact the Embassy Consular Section in their country, via the Internet at http://travel.state.gov/travel/abroad_embassies.html to determine any additional visa procedures and processing timeframes.
- **Forms and Required Documentation** – The following must be submitted for each applicant and any accompanying persons: a completed Nonimmigrant Visa Application, Form DS-156, a valid passport for travel to the United States and with a validity date at least six months beyond the applicant's intended period of stay in the

United States, and one 2x2 photograph. Some applicants will need to submit a completed DS-157.

(March 2005)