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## State Dept. Cable Requesting Visa Interview Priority for Students and Scholars

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO ALL DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR POSTS  
SPECIAL EMBASSY PROGRAM  
AMEMBASSY KABUL  
AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE  
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

UNCLAS STATE 172365

VISAS, FOR CONSULS FROM VO DAS JANICE JACOBS  
E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: CVIS, KPAO  
SUBJECT: PRIORITY FOR STUDENT AND EXCHANGE VISITOR VISA  
PROCESSING

REFTELS: A) STATE 136100, B) STATE 139997

1. Following up on ref A guidance on waiving personal appearances, I would like to ask posts that have developed or expect to develop waiting periods for NIV interviews to give priority to students and exchange visitors in the professor, student, and research scholar categories when scheduling interviews this summer. I commend those posts that already have developed mechanisms within their appointment systems for giving priority to these important classes of NIV applicants.

2. A small number of posts already have waiting times for interviews of four weeks or more; others could develop such waiting periods as the recently-announced personal appearance waiver regulations are implemented. The Department is sensitive to the potential impact on our nation's academic and research institutions if students are not able to begin their courses of study on time, and we want to avoid the kinds of delays in the entry of students and scholars that we saw last summer as a result of changes in the

SAO process.

3. Any questions or comments about priority appointment systems can be forwarded to CA/VO/F/P. Posts that have developed appointment systems that take into account seasonal travelers such as students are encouraged to share their stories with other posts. For example, I understand that Embassy London has asked its call center to identify certain categories of applicants by visa class, including students, to prioritize appointments. Other posts may have similar mechanisms built into their appointment system. In closing, I would like to join Secretary Powell and Assistant Secretary Harty in expressing my thanks and admiration to all my colleagues in the field.