

Group targeting U.S. foreign scholar ban

by UPI

WASHINGTON -- A coalition of academic and civil liberties organizations says the U.S. government should lift a ban on foreign scholars receiving visas.

The coalition, in preparation for an upcoming U.S. Court of Appeals case on the matter, is asking the administration of U.S. President Barack Obama to do away with the foreign scholar policy put into place by U.S. President George W. Bush, The New York Times said Wednesday.

Among the organizations involved in the request are the American Civil Liberties Union, the American Academy of Religion, the American Association of University Professors and PEN American Center.

The organizations have been lobbying for the removal of the ban since Swiss academic Tariq Ramadan was denied U.S. entry in 2004. Ramadan, also a Muslim scholar, was tied to charity with suspected terrorist connections.

The Times said while a federal judge ruled in 2007 in favor of the government's actions, an appeal of the Ramadan case will go before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit in New York next Tuesday.

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