

WASHINGTON, Sept, 20, 2013 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- The Embassy of the Republic of the Sudan in Washington, DC hereby states the following regarding president Omar al-Bashir's participation in the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) meetings:

H.E. Omar al-Bashir, the president of the Republic of the Sudan, intends to visit the UN headquarters, and participate in the meetings of the 68th session of the UN General Assembly. Accordingly, Sudan has requested that the United States, in its capacity as the UN host country, immediately issuing the required entry visas for president Bashir and his accompanying delegation.

As the host country, the United States is required by the UN Headquarters Agreement to grant visas to foreign heads of states and their representatives who wish to attend the General Assembly, regardless of any dispute the American Government may have with them. In the past, visas have been granted to world leaders despite profound disputes between their countries and the United States, including Fidel Castro of Cuba

, Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad of Iran, Hugo Chavez of Venezuela, Ghaddafi of Libya

, and Nikita Khrushchev of the Soviet Union

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Nor does the ICC warrant for president Bashir change the legal situation. It is ironic that this issue has been raised as a pretext to criticize the application of President Bashir for an entry visa, when the United States itself is not a member of the ICC, openly objects to it, has not ratified the ICC treaty, and has bilateral agreements with most ICC signatory countries forbidding extradition of U.S. officials wanted by the International Criminal Court.

The African Union and the Arab League actively oppose enforcement of the questionable ICC warrant against president Bashir. Many if not most country leaders do not support the ICC warrant.

Those who oppose the legally unquestionable right of president Bashir to attend and speak at the United Nations General Assembly are opposing the rule of law.

Therefore, the United States should respect the rule of law and immediately grant visas to President Bashir and his accompanying delegation to the United Nations.

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