
GERMANY WILL SUPPORT THOSE AFFECTED BY US TRAVEL BAN, SAYS MERKEL

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German Chancellor Angela Merkel on Monday renewed criticism of a US immigration order that bans citizens from seven Muslim-majority countries and blocks refugee admissions.

"The necessary and decisive battle against terrorism does not in any way justify putting groups of certain people under general suspicion, in this case people of Muslim belief or of a certain origin," Merkel told reporters in Berlin.

US President Donald Trump's executive order restricting travel to the country has created chaos at airports and prompted widespread criticism in the US and abroad.

The chancellor, known for her open-door policy for those fleeing war, said the travel ban contradicts "the base concept of international aid for refugees," noting that the German government is consulting with other European nations concerning the issue.

"The chancellery and the foreign ministry will do everything they can, especially for those dual citizens affected, to clear up the legal ramifications and to emphatically represent their interests under the law," she said.

The travel ban has affected German lawmakers, including Omid Nouripour, a dual national who serves as the vice-chair of the Germany-US parliamentary friendship aimed at strengthening transatlantic relations between the two nations.

Nouripour, who has visited more than 40 US states, told DW on Sunday that the travel ban isn't about security, but instead about "dirty symbolism which [is] poisoning our societies."

'Crusade against Muslims'

German opposition leader Katja Kipping, who serves as chairperson for the Left Party, said on Monday that the party is exploring legal routes to challenge Trump's immigration order.

In a tweet, she called on Merkel to summon the US ambassador to Germany and make a complaint to the UN via the EU.

"This is a crusade against Muslims, but also a crusade against civil rights," Kipping told German broadcaster N-TV.

"One must also say, if the federal chancellor does not act, then every citizen here has the right to sue against inaction at the European Court of Justice," she added.

In the US, four federal judges have moved to halt deportations, with civil rights lawyers warning that the legal battle could head to the Supreme Court.

The travel ban targets passport-holders from Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen for 90 days, as well as indefinitely blocks refugees from entering the country.

Meanwhile, some US-based researchers have questioned why countries such as Saudi Arabia, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates have not been targeted by the ban, which Trump says will curb the threat of Islamist terrorism.

Kaynak/Source: