U.N. Chief Urges All Countries to Lift HIV Travel Bans

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Applauding President Barack Obama's removal of the United States' 22-year-old travel ban on HIV-positive visitors, U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon urged other countries to follow his lead, Agence France-Presse reports.

"I congratulate President Obama on announcing the removal of the travel restrictions for people living with HIV from entering the United States," Ban said in a UNAIDS statement released October 31. "I urge all other countries with such restrictions to take steps to remove them at the earliest."

According to UNAIDS, Ban's home country of South Korea is in the process of removing its HIV-related travel restrictions while China and Ukraine are among the nations considering lifting theirs.

This isn't the first time Ban has fought HIV stigma and discrimination. In 2008, at the International AIDS Conference in Mexico City, he called on all countries to lift their HIV travel bans, saying that these lingering restrictions worldwide "should fill us all with shame."

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