

04-127

The Secretary of State presents his compliments to Their Excellencies and Messieurs and Mesdames the Chiefs of Mission and refers to Section 544 of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2004, (the "Act") (Div. D, P.L. 108-199), which requires the United States to withhold foreign assistance funds in an amount equivalent to 110 percent of the amount of unpaid fully adjudicated parking fines and penalties owed in Washington, D.C. and New York City. Such assistance must be withheld until the Secretary of State certifies to the United States Congress that the amounts owed are fully paid to the governments of Washington, D.C. and New York City.

The amount withheld is calculated from the amount owed on parking violations, by vehicles registered to the Department of State, that were incurred from April 1, 1997 through September 30, 2003. However, the amount of assistance withheld under this year's Act will not include parking fines and penalties for which assistance was previously withheld under prior legislation for the same period.

For each country affected, the Department is enclosing a separate notification of the total amount of withheld assistance pursuant to Section 544, as well as the total amount of unpaid or unresolved parking tickets (see enclosure). Data are categorized by amounts owed to Washington, D.C. and New York City. The New York City amounts are further divided by United Nations Permanent Mission ("PM") and Consulate ("C").

The withheld funds will be held in reserve. If the amounts owed are fully paid to the governments of Washington, D.C. and New York City before July 30, 2004, then the withheld funds could be provided before the end of this fiscal year, after the Secretary of State certifies this information to Congress.

The Department encourages all affected missions and mission members to contact the appropriate city officials to confirm the accuracy of the parking violation data, and then take the necessary steps to resolve all outstanding valid parking tickets either by paying amounts owed or successfully adjudicating violations.

Enclosure: *(please note country specific enclosures have been omitted)*
As stated.

JA

Department of State,

Washington,

JUN 29 2004