



April 23, 2026

Her Excellency Ángeles Moreno Bau  
Embassy of Spain  
2375 Pennsylvania Ave NW  
Washington, DC 20037

RE: Time Sensitive Concerns Regarding Spring 2026 Student Visa Processing for U.S. Students Studying Abroad in Spain

Dear Ms. Ambassador:

On behalf of NAFSA: Association of International Educators and The Forum on Education Abroad, we wish to express our appreciation for Spain's longstanding partnership in supporting student mobility and academic exchange. Spain continues to be one of the most valued destinations for U.S. students, and we are committed to ensuring that these opportunities remain accessible and successful.

We write to share concerns reported widely by our members throughout the Spring 2026 student visa application cycle regarding the processing of student visas through your processing partner, BLS International Services Ltd. Institutions and students across the United States have described persistent and systemic challenges within BLS operations and the associated consular workflow. These concerns include:

- **Significantly extended processing timelines**, often 8–10 weeks or longer;
- **Lack of responsiveness** to applicant inquiries and difficulty obtaining status updates;
- **Unclear, shifting, or inconsistently applied requirements** across BLS offices and consulates;
- **Repeated requests for documents** already submitted in complete and correct form;
- **Denials issued despite full compliance** with published requirements; and
- Reports of a **lag between BLS intake and transmission of files** to the consulates, contributing to delays and inconsistent outcomes.

We know and appreciate that efforts have been made to work closely with APUNE on resolving some of these issues. However, they have persisted throughout the entire application period and have had serious consequences for students, including unexpected financial loss, changes to travel plans, and even withdrawal from academic programs altogether. Given the impact on educational exchange, we respectfully request the Embassy's assistance to:

- Enhance oversight of BLS operations, including clearer accountability for the timely transfer of applications to consulates;
- Require that all BLS offices publish and adhere to **consistent, transparent, and up-to-date** requirements for student visas to Spain;
- Provide **predictable processing timelines** and improved communication channels for applicants and institutions;
- Establish a **formal mechanism for inquiries, escalations, and appeals**, particularly in cases where denials cite unclear or contradictory grounds.

We deeply value our strong partnership with the Government of Spain and remain dedicated to supporting the thousands of U.S. students who pursue life-changing educational experiences there each year. We welcome the opportunity to meet with you or your staff to discuss these concerns and explore collaborative solutions.

Thank you very much for your attention and for your continued commitment to international education.

Sincerely,

Dr. Fanta Aw

Executive Director & CEO

NAFSA: Association of International Educators

Melissa Torres

President & CEO

The Forum on Education Abroad

cc: JESUS-JOAQUIM CEREJA-TORTOSA, EDUCATION ADVISOR

cc: KIM GRIFFIN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF APUNE