

AGREEMENT BETWEEN

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA

AND

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF BENIN

ON MUTUAL EXEMPTION FROM THE VISA REQUIREMENT

FOR HOLDERS OF DIPLOMATIC, OFFICIAL/SERVICE PASSPORTS

The Government of the Republic of India and

The Government of the Republic of Benin

Hereinafter jointly referred to as the "Parties";

Desirous of developing friendly relations and strengthening existing cooperation between them;

Concerned with facilitating the entry of the citizens of each Party into the territory of the other Party;

Taking into account the provisions of the Vienna Convention of 1961 on Diplomatic Relations and the Vienna Convention of 1963 on Consular Relations ;
have agreed as follows:

Article 1: Abolition of visas

1. Nationals of the Republic of Benin holding valid diplomatic, official or service passports shall be exempt from the visa requirement when travelling to, transiting or staying in the territory of the Republic of India.

Nationals of the Republic of India holding valid diplomatic or official passports shall be exempt from the visa requirement when travelling to, transiting or staying in the territory of the Republic of Benin.

2. The persons referred to in paragraph 1 of this article shall be authorized to stay in the territory of the other Party for a maximum period of ninety (90) days from the day of entry over a period of 180 days.
3. The period of validity of diplomatic, official or service passports of nationals of one of the Parties shall be at least six (6) months from the date of entry into the territory of the other Party.

Article 2: Visas for Assignments

1. A Citizen of either Contracting Party, who is assigned as a member of the diplomatic or consular staff in Missions / Posts or as representative of his/her country in an international organization located in the territory of the other Contracting party and is in possession of a valid diplomatic passport, shall be required to obtain a visa prior to entry into the territory of the other Contracting Party.

2. The holders of diplomatic passports of either Contracting party who are employed by an international organization, body, agency or any other such entity, would be required to obtain visa prior to their entry into the territory of the other Contracting Party for official or private visits.
3. The conditions enumerated in paragraph 1 of the Article shall also apply to the spouse of a member of the diplomatic Mission or Consulate or representative in international organization, their children and their dependent parents.

Article 3: Exchange of specimen passports

1. The Parties shall exchange, through diplomatic channels, specimens of diplomatic, official and service passports in force, no later than thirty (30) days after the date of entry into force of this Agreement.
2. Each Party shall inform the other of any changes to these documents and shall communicate through diplomatic channels specimens of new passports before their date of entry into circulation.

Article 4: Cases of loss of passports

1. The loss or deterioration of a diplomatic, official and service passport of a national of one Party in the territory of the other Party shall be immediately notified to the competent authorities of the host country.
2. The diplomatic or consular mission concerned shall grant a new passport or travel document to its national and shall immediately inform the competent authorities of the host country or country of stay.
3. In the event that the State Party whose national has lost his diplomatic, official and service passport does not have a diplomatic or consular mission in the receiving State, the authorities of that State shall provide the said national necessary assistance and assistance to facilitate his stay and departure from the country.

Article 5: Freedom of entry at borders

The persons mentioned in Article 1 of this Agreement may enter and leave the territory of the other Party at border crossings recognized by the laws of that State.

Article 6: Compliance with national legislation

1. This Agreement does not exempt nationals of each Party holding diplomatic, official or service passports from the obligation to comply with the laws and regulations of the host country.
2. The two Parties shall undertake to inform each other, through diplomatic channels, of any changes in their laws and regulations relating to the entry of foreigners.

Article 7: Refusal of entry and residence

This Agreement does not affect the right of each Party to refuse entry or to interrupt the stay in its territory of any national of the other Party deemed undesirable.

Article 8: Passport Security

Both Parties shall undertake to ensure the highest level of security for their passports and travel documents to protect them against forgery. They shall take into account the minimum security standards for machine-readable travel documents recommended by the International Civil Aviation Organisation.

Article 9: Non-Impact Clause

This Agreement shall not affect the rights and obligations of both Parties arising from international conventions and agreements to which either or both of them are parties.

Article 10: Dispute Resolution

Any dispute arising out of the interpretation or application of this Agreement shall be settled amicably through diplomatic channels between the two Parties.

Article 11: Amendment

1. Either Party may request in writing, through diplomatic channels, a revision or amendment of this Agreement in whole or in part. Any amendment to this Agreement shall be agreed by mutual agreement between the two Parties through diplomatic channels.
2. The amendments shall enter into force in accordance with Article 13 of this Agreement.

Article 12: Suspension

Either Party may suspend the application of this Agreement, temporarily, in whole or in part, for reasons of national security, public policy or public health, provided that such suspension does not affect the rights of citizens who have already entered the territory of the other Party. Such suspension shall be immediately communicated to the other Party through diplomatic channels.

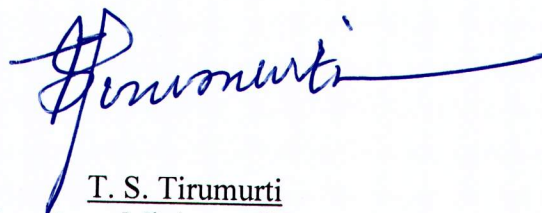
Article 13: Final Provisions

1. This Agreement shall enter into force on the thirtieth day following the date of receipt of the last of the two notifications by which the Parties notify each other of the completion of the respective domestic legal procedures necessary for this purpose.
2. This Agreement shall remain in force for an indefinite period.
3. Each Party may denounce this Agreement at any time by written notification to the other Party, through diplomatic channels, expressing its intention to denounce it. The denunciation shall take effect 90 days after the date of its official notification. Denunciation shall not affect the rights of nationals of one of the Parties who are already in the territory of the other Party.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned, duly authorized by their respective Governments, have signed this Agreement.

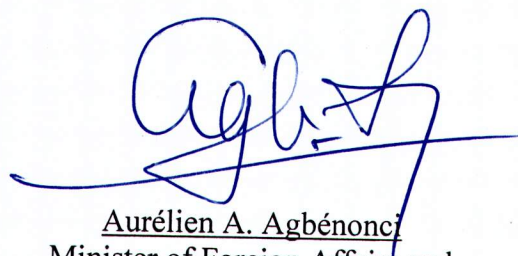
Done in Cotonou, on 29 July 2019 in two originals, in Hindi, French and English, all texts being equally authentic. In the event of any discrepancy in interpretation, the English text shall prevail.

FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF
THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA



T. S. Tirumurti
Secretary, Ministry of External
Affairs

FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF
THE REPUBLIC OF BENIN



Aurélien A. Agbénonci
Minister of Foreign Affairs and
Cooperation