

Convention (No.17) on the exemption from legalisation of certain records and documents

signed at Athens on 15 September 1977

The signatory States to this Convention, members of the International Commission on Civil Status, being desirous of exempting, among the States party to this Convention, certain records or documents from legalisation or any equivalent formality, have agreed as follows:

Article 1

For the purposes of this Convention, legalisation means only the formality intended to certify the authenticity of the signature on a record or document, the capacity in which the person signing it has acted and, where appropriate, the identity of the seal or stamp which it bears.

Article 2

Each Contracting State shall accept without legalisation or equivalent formality, provided that they are dated and bear the signature and, where appropriate, the seal or stamp of the authority of another Contracting State which issued them:

1. Records and documents relating to the civil status, capacity or family situation of natural persons or their nationality, domicile or residence, regardless of their intended use,
2. all other records or documents if they are produced with a view to the celebration of a marriage or the establishment of a civil status record.

Article 3

If a record or document covered by Article 2 has not been transmitted through diplomatic channels or another official channel, the authority to which it is produced may, in case of serious doubt as to the authenticity of the signature, the identity of the seal or stamp or the capacity of the signatory, have it verified by the issuing authority.

Article 4

The request for verification may be made by means of a multilingual form a model whereof is appended to this Convention. This form shall be sent in duplicate directly to the issuing authority and shall be accompanied by the record or document requiring verification.

Article 5

Verification shall be effected free of charge, and the reply shall be returned together with the record or document as soon as possible, either directly or through diplomatic channels.

Article 6

This Convention shall be ratified, accepted or approved and the instruments of ratification, acceptance or approval shall be deposited with the Swiss Federal Council.

Article 7

This Convention shall enter into force on the first day of the third month following the month of deposit of the second instrument of ratification, acceptance or approval.

For a signatory State ratifying, accepting or approving the Convention after its entry into force, the Convention shall take effect on the first day of the third month following the month of deposit by that State of the instrument of ratification, acceptance or approval.

Article 8

Any member State of the International Commission on Civil Status which has not signed this Convention and any member State of the Council of Europe may accede to this Convention after its entry into force. The instrument of accession shall be deposited with the Swiss Council. The Convention shall take effect, for the acceding State, on the first day of the third month following the month of deposit of the instrument of accession.

Article 9

No reservation to this Convention shall be permitted.

Article 10

Any State may, at the time of signature, ratification, acceptance, approval or accession or at any later date, declare that this Convention shall extend to all of the territories for whose international relations it is responsible, or to one or more of them.

The Swiss Federal Council shall be notified of such declaration and the extension shall take effect when the Convention enters into force for that State or, subsequently, on the first day of the third month following the month of receipt of the notification.

Any declaration of extension may be withdrawn by notification to the Swiss Federal Council, and the Convention shall cease to apply to the designated territory on the first day of the third month following the month of receipt of that notification.

Article 11

This Convention shall remain in force indefinitely.

However, any State party to this Convention shall have the option of denouncing it at any time after the expiry of a period of one year from the date of the entry into force of the Convention in respect of that State. Denunciation shall be notified to the Swiss Federal Council and shall take effect on the first day of the sixth month following the month of receipt of that notification. The Convention shall remain in force among the other States.

Article 12

The Swiss Federal Council shall notify the member States of the International Commission on Civil Status and any other State which has acceded to this Convention of:

- (a) the deposit of any instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession
- (b) any date of entry into force of the Convention;
- (c) any declaration concerning the territorial extension of the Convention or its withdrawal, together with the date on which it will take effect;
- (d) any denunciation of the Convention and the date on which it will take effect.

The Swiss Federal Council shall inform the Secretary General of the International Commission on Civil Status of any notification made in pursuance of the first paragraph of this Article.

On the entry into force of this Convention, a certified copy shall be transmitted by the Swiss Federal Council to the Secretary General of the United Nations for the purposes of registration and publication, in accordance with Article 102 of the United Nations Charter.

In witness whereof the undersigned, duly authorised to this end, have signed this Convention.

Done at Athens, on 15 September 1977, in a single copy in the French language, which shall be deposited in the archives of the Swiss Federal Council and a certified copy of which shall be transmitted, through diplomatic channels, to each of the member States of the International Commission on Civil Status and to

the acceding States. A certified copy shall also be sent to the Secretary General of the International Commission on Civil Status.

Territorial extension:

On 3 March 2015, the Kingdom of the Netherlands forwarded to the depositary an instrument of acceptance of the Convention for Aruba. The territorial extension, made by virtue of the article 10, paragraph 2, of the Convention, came into effect on 1 June 2015.