



## RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS (RIRs)

[New Search](#) | [About RIR's](#) | [Help](#)

28 February 2007

### SDN102443.E

Sudan: Information on the various identity documents in Sudan and the names of the agencies that issue them  
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

In a 14 February 2007 telephone interview, an official at the Embassy of the Republic of Sudan in Canada indicated that the main identity documents carried in Sudan include the identity card, the citizenship identity document, the driver's licence, the birth certificate and the passport.

The Sudanese identity card is reportedly issued by Sudan's Ministry of Interior Affairs and used for identity purposes within Sudan (Sudan 14 Feb. 2007). The embassy Official noted that, to obtain this identity card, application must be made in person in Sudan (*ibid.*). *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2005* indicates that prior to the lifting of the state of emergency in July 2005, persons failing to produce their identity card at checkpoints in Sudan "risked arrest" (US 8 Mar. 2006, Sec. 2.d).

The citizenship identity document, as described by the embassy Official, is a "type of certificate" that contains the holder's photograph and personal information (Sudan 14 Feb. 2007). The certificate reportedly has a hard, hunter-green cover (*ibid.*). According to the Official, the document is carried by persons born in Sudan and by Sudanese persons born abroad (*ibid.*). For example, Sudanese nationals who have a child while abroad are able to apply for a citizenship identity document for their child (*ibid.*). The citizenship identity document is issued by Sudan's Ministry of Interior Affairs; however, persons outside of Sudan can apply for this document through an embassy of Sudan (*ibid.*).

Like the identity card and the citizenship identity document, the driver's licence is also reportedly an identity document that is commonly carried in Sudan (Sudan 14 Feb. 2007). The Sudanese driver's licence is issued by the country's Ministry of Interior Affairs and can only be obtained within Sudan (*ibid.*). The Official at the Embassy of Sudan in Ottawa indicated that the embassy is able to verify the authenticity of Sudanese driver's licences, but cannot renew or issue new ones (*ibid.*).

Birth certificates, another common identity document in Sudan (*ibid.*), are reportedly available through the Department of Statistics of Sudan's Ministry of Social Affairs (US 13 Nov. 2006). According to the Official at the Embassy of Sudan in Ottawa, birth certificates are issued to most people in Sudan (14 Feb. 2007). The Official noted that even if a person is not born in a hospital, "legal doctor assistance" in the rural villages or towns issue stamped papers, which can be taken to the birth registry (Sudan 14 Feb. 2007).

According to the Official, however, there are some Sudanese people who were born 30 to 40 years ago who do not have birth certificates because certificates were not available in the rural villages or towns of Sudan at that time (*ibid.*). A person without a birth certificate can go to the country's birth registry to obtain a document certifying that there is no record of his or her birth in the registry's database (*ibid.* 26 Feb. 2007). The birth registry document can then be taken to the health commission, which is able to issue a "substitute health document" (*ibid.*). This substitute document indicates the person's age, but not necessarily where he or she was born (*ibid.* 14 Feb. 2007). According to the embassy Official, laboratory tests are conducted by the Commission to estimate the person's age (*ibid.*). The date of birth appearing on the substitute health document is generally 1 January with the estimated year of the person's birth (*ibid.*). The embassy Official indicated that a birth certificate or a "substitute health document" is required in order to apply for the identity card, the citizenship paper and the passport (*ibid.*).

The Sudanese passport, according to the embassy Official, is another commonly held identity document in Sudan. Issued by the country's Ministry of Interior Affairs, Sudanese passports are valid for ten years, but need to be renewed four times during this period (*ibid.*). Passports can be renewed within Sudan through the Ministry of Interior Affairs or outside Sudan through one of the country's embassies (*ibid.*). A 28 February 2005 letter from the United Kingdom (UK) Foreign Commonwealth Office, cited in a January 2007 UK Home Office report on Sudan,

indicates that the Sudanese passport is "green, has 64 pages and is initially valid for 2 years" (UK 18 Jan. 2007, 115).

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of additional sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

#### References

Sudan. 26 February 2007. Embassy of the Republic of Sudan, Ottawa. Telephone interview with an official.

\_\_\_\_\_. 14 February 2007. Embassy of the Republic of Sudan, Ottawa. Telephone interview with an official.

United Kingdom (UK). 18 January 2007. Home Office, Country of Origin Information Service. "Sudan." *Country of Origin Information Report*. <<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs07/sudan-260107.doc>> [Accessed 13 Feb. 2007]

United States (US). 13 November 2006. Department of State. "Sudan: Reciprocity Schedule." <<http://travel.state.gov/visa/reciprocity/Country%20Folder/S/Sudan.htm>> [Accessed 13 Feb. 2007]

\_\_\_\_\_. 8 March 2006. Department of State. "Sudan." *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2005*. <<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2005/61594.htm>> [Accessed 13 Feb. 2007]

#### Additional Sources Consulted

**Internet sites, including:** AllAfrica, British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), European Country of Origin Information Network (ecoi.net), Factiva, Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), Keesing's Document Checker, Sudan - Embassy of the Republic of Sudan in Washington, Sudan - Embassy of Sudan in Canada.

**The attached reproduction is a copy of an official work that is published by the Government of Canada. The reproduction has not been produced in affiliation with, or with the endorsement of the Government of Canada.**