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Nigeria: Information on the various identity documents in Nigeria and the names of the agencies that issue them (2002-2004)

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This Response lists the agencies that issue the following identity documents: national identification card, passport, birth certificate, baptismal certificate, hospital record, driver's licence and the Combined Expatriate Residence Permit and Aliens Card.

National Identification Card

Issued by the Department of National Civic Registration, the national identification card will serve as the main identification document in Nigeria (IRIN 4 Mar. 2003). It will also serve as a means of controlling the influx of immigrants, controlling crime and assisting in national planning (*This Day* 9 Nov. 2004; Nigeria 18 Feb. 2003). In 2003, it was reported that all Nigerians aged 18 years or more were to register in order to obtain a national identification card (IRIN 4 Mar. 2003). However, in 2004, it was reported that the national identity card project "witnessed a series of hiccups culminating in a near paralysis" (*This Day* 9 Nov. 2004).

Passport

The Passport (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, Chapter 343 of the Laws of the Federation of Nigeria 1990, as published on the Website of the International Centre for Nigerian Law (ICFNL) describes four types of passports, including a "standard Nigerian passport; a Nigerian diplomatic or official passport; a Nigerian pilgrim's passport; and a seaman's passport or seaman's card of identification" (1985). According to information found on NigeriaBusinessInfo.com, the diplomatic and official passports are two distinct passports (23 Feb. 2002). No information on the pilgrim's or the seaman's passport was found by the Research Directorate within time constraints. Nigerian passports are issued at passport control offices in Nigeria, and at embassies, high commissions and consulates (Nigeria High Commission 14 Nov. 2003).

According to information found on the Website of the Nigeria High Commission in Ottawa, an "emergency travel certificate" may be issued in the case of the loss of a passport (n.d.). It is good for a "single journey to Nigeria, and must be surrendered to Nigerian immigration at the point of entry" (Nigeria High Commission n.d.).

Birth Certificate

For births after 1992, the National Population Commission issues birth certificates (United States 2 July 2002). According to the Visa Reciprocity and Country Document Finder of the United States State Department, "registration of births" is mandatory in Lagos (2 July 2002). The "Ministry of Health, Old Secretariat, Ikeja, Lagos" is responsible for providing certified copies of records up to and including 1979 (ibid.). Local governments have the same responsibility for documents issued after 1979 (ibid.).

Baptismal Certificate and Hospital Record

Since most births in Nigeria happen in hospitals, baptismal certificates and hospital records of births can also be used as identification (ibid.). Hospitals keep the records (ibid.).

Driver's Licence

According to an article published in *This Day* of 1 January 2005, another identity document is the enhanced national driver's license, issued by the Federal Road Safety Commission (see also *Daily Champion* 31 Dec. 2004). According to an article in the *Daily Champion*, the "Vehicle Inspection Office ... certif[ies] who drives or which vehicle should be on public roads" (31 Dec. 2004).

Combined Expatriate Residence Permit and Aliens Card

According to the United Kingdom (UK) Trade and Investment Website, a CERPAC (combined expatriate Residence permit and aliens card) identification card is needed as a "residence permit for expatriates except [Economic Community of West African States] (ECOWAS) citizens, accredited diplomats and children below the age of 16 years" (n.d.). This is a "requirement to live and work in Nigeria" (United Kingdom n.d.). This replaced "the old manual system" (Nigeria n.d.)

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.

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Additional Sources Consulted

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Oral sources: Committee for the Defence of Human Rights, Constitutional Rights Project, International Centre for Nigerian Law (ICFNL).

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