



## RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS (RIRs)

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18 December 2009

### ETH103317.FE

Ethiopia: Procedures that Ethiopian citizens must follow in order to obtain identity documents from consulates or missions in Canada; registration of births and the issuance procedure for birth certificates  
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

#### Passports

In a 12 November 2009 telephone interview with the Research Directorate, a representative from consular services at the Embassy of Ethiopia in Ottawa stated that the Embassy, like other Ethiopian missions abroad, issues passports to Ethiopians who request a passport. The Embassy Representative stated that Ethiopians who want to obtain a passport must address their application to the embassy and proceed as follows:

- Fill out a passport application form;
- Attach two passport photos to the application form;
- Provide a criminal record check from Canada;
- Provide a copy of the birth certificate certified by the appropriate authorities;
- Provide a residence permit from the host country;
- Bring a stamped envelope;
- Pay 73 or 88 Canadian dollars for a lost passport. (Ethiopia 12 Nov. 2009)

#### Identity card

According to the website of the Embassy of Ethiopia in Ottawa, an applicant who wants to obtain an Ethiopian Origin Identification Card must already have Ethiopian nationality before acquiring a foreign nationality, or at least one of the applicant's parents must be an Ethiopian national (Ethiopia 4 Aug. 2009). The applicant must also present the following documents:

1. Two copies of a duly completed (both in Amharic and English) ID application form;
2. A document issued by the Government of Ethiopia which can prove [...] identity as Ethiopian origin (... includes previous Ethiopian passport, birth certificate);
3. Canadian passport (Valid for at least six months);
4. Three recent 1.5 x 1.5 [passport] pictures; and
5. ID fee - \$500.00 USD [1 US dollar = 1.06 Canadian dollar (XE.com 24 Nov. 2009)]. (Ethiopia 4 Aug. 2009)

Children under the age of 18 years can be registered on the identity cards of their parents and they can then enjoy the same privileges; however, a child's birth certificate must be attached to the application (Ethiopia 4 Aug. 2009).

A foreign national spouse of an Ethiopian is entitled to apply for an identity card that specifies that he or she is married to a person holding an identity card for people of Ethiopian origin (ibid.). The applicant must present the following documents:

1. Two copies of duly completed application form;
2. All the same requirements as applying for Ethiopian Origins ID except requirements stated under '1' and '2';

3. Certified marriage certificate; and
4. A copy of an ID of a spouse. (Ethiopia 4 Aug. 2009)

### **Registration of birth**

A 15 April 2008 article published by PANApres (PANA) states that, at a consultation workshop in Addis-Ababa on the same date and concerning the creation of a national registration system for vital events, the representative of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in Ethiopia stated that [English version] "Ethiopia was the only African country with no law that demands for the registration of vital events" such as births (PANA 15 Apr. 2008). The website of the United States (US) Bureau of Consular Affairs of the US Department of State states that registration of births is not automatic in Ethiopia, as the procedure is relatively new and it is largely confined to urban areas (US n.d.).

### **Procedure for issuing birth certificates**

Information further to that reprinted below from Response ETH100912.E of 23 January 2006 could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

An applicant wishing to obtain a birth certificate must contact a city hall in Ethiopia (Ethiopia 16 Jan. 2006). The applicant needs to arrange for a family member or friend in Ethiopia to obtain the birth certificate on their behalf from the city hall (ibid.). If the applicant does not have a family member or friend in Ethiopia, the Ethiopian embassy can provide the applicant with the telephone number and mailing address of the appropriate city hall so that the applicant can make direct contact with the city hall (ibid.).

The United States Bureau of Consular Affairs website provides the following information regarding the procedure to obtain an Ethiopian birth certificate:

[Birth certificates are] available only to those resident in Ethiopia. Requests for copies of previously issued birth certificates should be addressed to the Office of Region 14 Administration, Vital Statistics Service, Municipality of Addis Ababa, P.O. Box 356, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; or to the equivalent office or any other municipality in which the birth was registered.

For children under ten years of age, a hospital birth certificate, court document confirming parentage, or a baptismal certificate and acknowledgment from one's "kebele" (urban neighborhood association) are sufficient documentation for issuance of a birth certificate. For children between the ages of eleven and thirteen, the above mentioned documents and school records are required for issuance. Any of the above documents and an identity card are satisfactory for issuance of birth certificates for persons over the age of eighteen.

Persons applying for original birth certificates should contact the appropriate municipal authorities and present hospital birth records, which have been authenticated by their "kebele." Because of the nature of the "kebele" system, the birth certificate may be issued by the municipality where the person presently resides rather than where the birth actually took place. (25 Aug. 2005)

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 sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

### References

Ethiopia. 12 November 2009. Embassy of Ethiopia in Ottawa. Telephone interview with a representative from the consular section.

\_\_\_\_\_. 4 August 2009. Embassy of Ethiopia in Ottawa. "Ethiopian Origin Identification Card." <[http://embassyofethiopia.net/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=69&Itemid=91](http://embassyofethiopia.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=69&Itemid=91)> [Accessed 9 Nov. 2009]

\_\_\_\_\_. 16 January 2006. Embassy of Ethiopia in Ottawa. Telephone interview with the head of the consular section.

PANApres (PANA). 15 April 2008. "L'UNICEF encourage l'enregistrement des naissances en Éthiopie." (Afrique en ligne) <<http://www.afriquejet.com/international/organisations-internationales/l'unicef-encourage-l'enregistrement-des-naissances-en-ethiopie-200804151916.html>> [Accessed 9 Nov. 2009]

United States (US). 25 August 2005. Department of State. "Ethiopia Reciprocity Schedule." <<http://travel.state.gov/visa/reciprocity/Country%20Folder/E/Ethiopia.htm>> [Accessed 16 Jan. 2006]

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XE.com. 24 November 2009. "Résultats du convertisseur universel de devises."  
<<http://www.xe.com/ucc/convert.cgi>> [Accessed 24 Nov. 2009]

Additional Sources Consulted

**Internet sites, including:** United Nations (UN) Children's Fund (UNICEF), UN Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN).

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