

LAW N<sup>o</sup> 2024/016 OF 23 DEC 2024

ORGANIZE THE CIVIL REGISTRATION SYSTEM IN  
CAMEROON



*The Parliament deliberated and adopted,  
the President of the Republic hereby  
enacts the law set out below:*

## CHAPTER I GENERAL PROVISIONS

### I. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

**SECTION 1:** (1) This law lays down the organization of the civil registration system in Cameroon.

As such, it deals in particular with:

- rules relating to the legal establishment, recording and transcription of vital events;
- the conditions for making, issuing and the validity of civil status documents;
- rules relating to the organization and financing of the national civil registration system.

(2) Separate laws shall lay down rules relating to the status of persons.

**SECTION 2:** (1) The provisions of this law shall apply to Cameroonians living on the national territory, as well as Cameroonians born, resident or established abroad.

(2) They shall also apply to aliens born, established, visiting, in transit in Cameroon, as well as to refugees, asylum seekers and stateless persons present on the national territory.

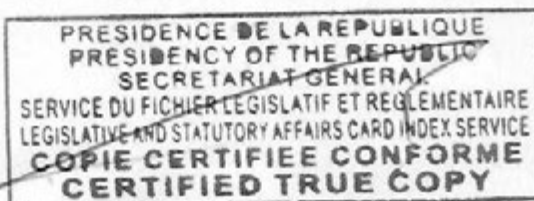
### II. DEFINITIONS

**SECTION 3:** For the purposes of this law and its implementing instruments, the following definitions shall apply:

**Civil status certificate:** authentic document issued by an approved authority establishing the occurrence of a vital event such as birth, marriage, or death. A civil status document may be physical or electronic;

**Electronic certificate:** electronic document secured by the electronic signature of its issuer, which attests, upon verification, to the authenticity of its content;

**Qualified electronic certificate:** electronic certificate issued by an approved certification authority;



**Initial copy:** first copy of a civil status certificate from the national civil status registry issued when made or amended;

**Full copy:** faithful duplicate of the original civil status certificate, signed by the competent authority and having the same probative value as the original certificate, where it is issued from the certificate's stub contained in the civil status register;

**Subsequent copy:** any copy of a civil registration certificate issued from the national civil status register after the initial copy;

**Body of a civil status certificate:** part of the civil status certificate containing the predefined particulars as provided for by law;

**Declarant:** person who notifies the civil status registrar of the occurrence of a vital event;

**Declaration of a vital event:** notification of a vital event to the civil status registrar so that it may be recorded and the corresponding civil status certificate drawn up;

**Civil registration:** continuous, permanent, compulsory and universal recording in the civil status register or the national civil status file of information relating to vital events;

**Child:** any human being under the age of 18 (eighteen);

**Abandoned child:** any newborn child found in Cameroon, or any child abandoned by and no longer under the authority of their parents;

**Recording of declaration:** entry of requisite and sufficient information relating to the occurrence and characteristics of a vital event, as provided by the declarant;

**Civil status:** all the elements characterizing the legal situation of a natural person and enabling their administrative identification;

**Certificate registration:** manual or electronic recording and archiving of the certificate establishing the declared vital event;

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SECRÉTARIAT GÉNÉRAL  
SERVICE DU FICHIER LEGISLATIF ET REGLEMENTAIRE  
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**Extract from a civil status certificate:** document based on the civil status register or the national civil status file containing some information or details drawn from a civil status certificate;

**Vital event:** occurrence during the life of a natural person that the civil status law recognizes as having legal effects;

**National civil status database:** computerized, permanent, centralized and secure database made up of electronic and printed civil status certificates that have been digitized;

**Declaratory judgment:** decision whereby the judge orders the recording of a vital event declared beyond the time limit set by law;

**Amending judgment:** decision whereby the judge orders correction of the information or details contained in a civil registration certificate;

**Re-constitutive judgment:** decision provided for in Sections 60 and 64 of this law, whereby the judge orders the reconstitution of all or part of a civil status register, the national civil status database or a civil registration certificate that has been destroyed or lost;

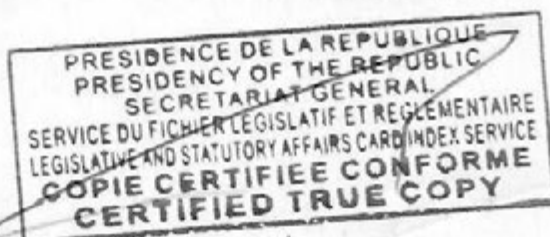
**Supplementary judgment:** decision whereby the judge orders the replacement of a pre-existing civil status certificate, either because it has been annulled or because it was marked "provisional";

**Certificate margin:** part of the civil status certificate that can be annotated to amend or supplement it by referring to, explaining or clarifying a detail in the body of the certificate;

**Initial entry:** information appearing in a civil status certificate when it is signed;

**Marginal entry:** annotation made in the margin of a civil status certificate either when it is drawn up, or following the introduction of additional, supplementary, corrective or residual information in the civil status certificate;

**Subsequent entry:** information added to a civil registration certificate after it has been signed;





**Unique personal identification number (UPIN):** alphanumeric code generated and assigned to each person when their birth or civil status certificate is recorded in the national civil status database;

**Civil status registrar:** sworn public official responsible for establishing vital events, drawing up civil status certificates and issuing copies and extracts thereof;

**Internally displaced persons:** people or groups of people who have been forced or obliged to leave their usual place of residence and settle in any other part of the country, as a result of armed conflict, generalized violence, serious human rights violations or natural or human-triggered disasters, in order to avoid or limit their consequences;

**Civil status register:** document containing a specified number of sheets of paper of civil status certificates, signed and initialled by the President of the competent Court of First Instance and kept by the civil status registrar;

**Civil status secretary:** sworn public official authorized by law to assist the civil status registrar in the discharge of his/her duties;

**Electronic signature:** signature obtained using an asymmetric encryption algorithm that helps to authenticate the sender of a message and to verify its integrity;

**Advanced electronic signature:** electronic signature obtained using a qualified electronic certificate;

**Graphic signature:** handwritten signature of a civil status registrar or secretary, or of any other person, scanned and included in the national civil status register;

**Stub:** civil status register in which an authentic copy of the civil status certificate issued to the user is kept;

**Witness:** natural person whom the declarant brings before a civil status registrar or a judge to attest to the existence or occurrence of a vital event or to the drawing up of a civil status certificate;

**Transcription:** entry in the civil status register or national civil status database of the elements of a court decision relating to a vital event, a civil status

certificate drawn up by a foreign authority or of a customary marriage.

### III. FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

**SECTION 4:** The State shall organize and control the civil registration and vital statistics production system. As such, it shall:

- ensure free, continuous, permanent and universal delivery of the civil status public service;
- align domestic laws and regulations with Cameroon's international civil status commitments.

**SECTION 5:** (1) The State shall guarantee equal access to civil status public service by nationals as well as aliens residing or established in Cameroon for the declaration, recording and transcription of vital events, the establishment and issuance of civil status certificates.

(2) It shall ensure free delivery of the civil status public service, in particular as concerns the declaration, recording and transcription of vital events, the establishment and issuance of the originals of civil status certificates and the initial copies of civil status certificates from the national civil status database.

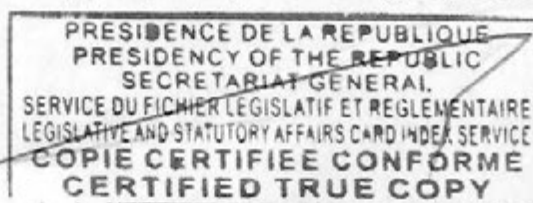
(3) However, the issuance of copies and extracts of civil status certificates, in whatever form, shall be subject to payment of a fee the amount of which shall be fixed by the laws and regulations relating to stamp duty.

**SECTION 6:** (1) The declaration of vital events that occur on the Cameroonian territory shall be compulsory. The declaration of vital events of Cameroonians that occur abroad shall also be compulsory.

(2) The obligation to declare the vital events referred to in (1) above shall be incumbent on:

- (a) any Cameroonian resident in Cameroon;
- (b) any foreign national resident in Cameroon;
- (c) any Cameroonian born, resident or established abroad.

(3) In countries where Cameroon has a diplomatic mission or a consular post, Cameroonians shall ensure that births, marriages and deaths concerning them are declared to or transcribed by the head of the diplomatic mission or consular post, or, as appropriate, the acting diplomat.



(4) However, civil status certificates drawn up in foreign countries shall be authentic if they were drafted in the forms used in such countries.

**SECTION 7:** Civil status certificates shall be authentic, intangible and final documents. They may be modified, reconstituted or cancelled only under conditions laid down by this law.

**SECTION 8:** (1) Information on the civil status form shall be printed in English and French, in the same font, colour and size.

(2) Civil status certificates shall be drawn up in either of Cameroon's official languages.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **DECLARATION AND RECORDING OF VITAL EVENTS**

**SECTION 9:** (1) The declaration of birth, marriage intention or death may be oral or written.

(2) The declaration referred to in (1) above shall be made electronically under the conditions laid down by regulation.

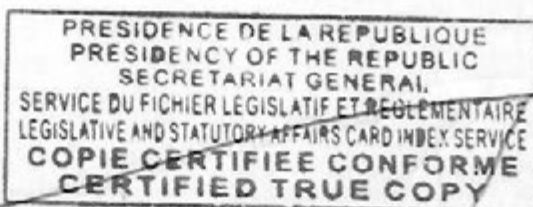
#### **I. DECLARATION AND RECORDING OF BIRTHS**

**SECTION 10:** (1) Birth shall be declared to the civil status registrar of the place of birth within 90 (ninety) days of such birth.

(2) Declaration shall in particular state:

- the mother's full name;
- the child's sex;
- the date of birth comprising the day, month and year;
- the place of birth;
- the declarant's full name.

(3) The information mentioned in (2) above shall be completed by the parents or by the declarant when the civil status registrar draws up the birth certificate.





(4) The declaration of birth shall be entered by the civil status registrar in a register provided for that purpose or by any means that leaves a written trail within 10 (ten) days of its receipt.

**SECTION 11:** (1) A birth shall be declared by the father or mother of the child, or any person having knowledge of it, if it takes place in the community.

(2) If the child is born in a public or private health facility, the person in charge of the said facility or, failing that, the physician or any health professional who attended the birth, shall be required to declare the birth within 30 (thirty) days.

(3) If the persons mentioned in (2) above fail to do so, the parents of the child shall have an additional period of 60 (sixty) days within which to make the declaration to the registrar of the place of birth.

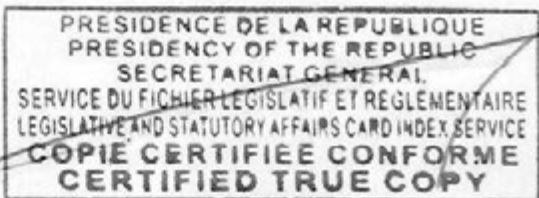
(4) In the case of a birth in prison, the person in charge of the prison or, failing that, the doctor, health care worker or prison staff who attended the birth must report the birth within 30 (thirty) days of the birth.

**SECTION 12:** (1) Where a birth has not been declared within the period of 90 (ninety) days provided for in Section 10 above, it may be registered by the civil status registrar within 12 (twelve) months of delivery, at the request of the territorially competent State Counsel.

(2) However, if the child's place of birth is far from the seat of the competent court, the birth may be registered by the civil status registrar at the request of the territorially competent Subdivisional Officer. A copy of the request must be sent to the State Counsel. The request shall be mentioned in the margin of the child's birth certificate.

(3) The matter shall be referred to the State Counsel, or, where appropriate, the Subdivisional Officer, by the parents, the traditional ruler of the area, the official of the service responsible for social or family affairs, the head of a legally constituted association engaged in child protection or any other natural or legal person concerned.

**SECTION 13:** Where a birth has not been declared within the period of 12 (twelve) months provided for in Section 12 above, it may be registered only by the civil status registrar by virtue of a declaratory judgment issued by the competent court, under the conditions set out in Sections 57, 58 and 61 below.





**SECTION 14:** (1) Cameroonians who are born, resident or settled abroad in a country where there is no Cameroonian civil status registry office and who are unable to obtain a birth certificate in such country shall, within 12 (twelve) months of their return to Cameroon and under penalty of forfeiture, declare the births that concern them to the civil status registrar of the office of their current place of residence in Cameroon or, where applicable, of their place of birth in Cameroon. Such declaration should be accompanied by supporting documents.

(2) On expiry of the twelve (12) month period provided for in (1) above, or in the absence of supporting documents, the birth certificate may be issued only by the civil status registrar on the basis of a declaratory judgement issued by the competent court within 6 (six) months.

**SECTION 15:** (1) Whoever finds an abandoned child must immediately inform the nearest police or gendarmerie station, the nearest health centre, the social affairs service, the family service or the child protection service.

(2) The criminal investigation officer, the head of the health centre, the head of the social service, the family service or the child protection service, as the case may be, shall draw up a report stating, besides the date, time, place and circumstances of the discovery, the sex and apparent age of the child, which must be confirmed by a doctor, any information that may help to identify the child and the identity of the person who found the child.

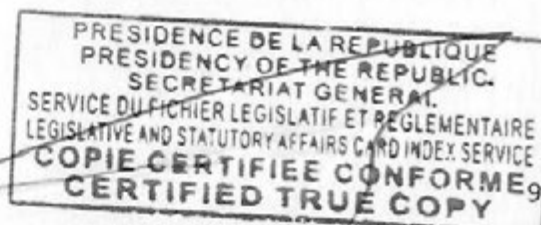
(3) The persons referred to in (2) above shall be required to declare the birth to the civil status registrar within 90 (ninety) days from the date of discovery of the child. In the event of default, the civil status registrar may register the declaration only at the request of the State Counsel.

## II - DECLARATION, REGISTRATION AND PUBLICATION OF MARRIAGE INTENT

**SECTION 16:** (1) At least 30 (thirty) days to the solemnization of the marriage, the prospective spouses shall send a declaration of intent to the civil status registrar.

(2) The declaration of marriage intent shall contain the following information for each prospective spouse:

- full name;
- age, nationality and place of birth;



- sex;
- place of residence;
- occupation.

**SECTION 17:** (1) The civil status registrar to whom the matter has been referred shall immediately publish the declaration of intent to marry by posting it at the civil status registry office of the place where the marriage is to be solemnized and, where appropriate, on the website of the council where the marriage is to be solemnized.

(2) Notices of the publication of the declaration of intent to marry shall be sent to the civil status registrars of the places of birth of the prospective spouses and the last place of residence of each of them, either in paper or in electronic form.

(3) The civil status registrars referred to in (2) above shall check whether one of the prospective spouses is bound by a previous marriage which could prevent the marriage from being solemnized. They shall forward the results of their enquiries and any objections to the civil status registrar in paper or electronic form.

**SECTION 18:** (1) The territorially competent State Counsel may, for serious reasons of expediency, grant total or partial dispensation from the publication of the declaration of intent to marry.

(2) The request for dispensation from the prospective spouses or their legal representatives, if they are unavailable or incapacitated, shall be made by any means that leaves a written paper trail or by electronic means. It must be reasoned.

**SECTION 19:** Rejection of an application for dispensation from publication of the declaration of intent shall not be appealable.

**SECTION 20:** No dispensation from the publication of the declaration of intent to marry may be granted where an objection has been lodged with the civil status registrar who is to solemnize the marriage within the period preceding the decision of the State Counsel. Where the marriage is solemnized, it shall be annulled if the competent court finds that the objection is well-founded.

### III - DECLARATION AND REGISTRATION OF DEATH

**SECTION 21:** (1) A death shall be declared within 90 (ninety) days by the deceased's parents, spouse, children or any person having a legitimate interest

in or knowledge of the death to the registrar of the place where it occurred or the place of birth, residence or burial of the deceased.

(2) Any declaration of death must be attested by 2 (two) witnesses.

(3) Where the declarant has no identity papers, the declaration of death shall be based on the testimony of the traditional ruler of the area. A note of such testimony shall be made in the margin of the death certificate.

(4) The declaration of death shall state in particular:

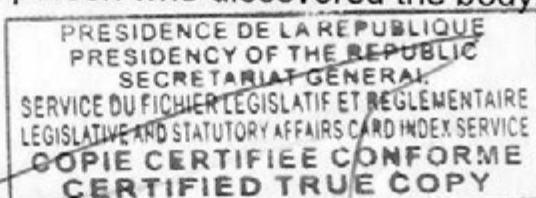
- the full name of the deceased;
- the sex of the deceased;
- the date and place of birth of the deceased;
- the date and place of death;
- the place of residence of the deceased;
- the marital status of the deceased;
- information about the declarant and witnesses and their relationship with the deceased.

**SECTION 22:** (1) Where death occurs in a health or prison facility, the head of the facility or, failing that, the doctor or other staff member who witnessed the death or has definite knowledge of it must declare it to the civil status registrar within 30 (thirty) days of its occurrence.

(2) In failing to act, the spouse, parents, children, relatives, if any, or any other person with a legitimate interest shall have an additional period of 60 (sixty) days to report the death.

(3) In the event of death in a community, the declaration shall be made within 90 (ninety) days by the rightful claimants of the deceased, the traditional ruler of the area or any person with definite knowledge of the death.

**SECTION 23:** (1) Where the body of a deceased person is found and the remains can be identified, the competent criminal investigation officer shall draw up a detailed report stating, besides the date, time, place and circumstances of the discovery, the name, apparent age and sex of the deceased and the identity of the person who discovered the body.





(2) The criminal investigation officer shall be obliged to report the death within 30 (thirty) days to the civil status registrar of the place where the body was found or the place where the death occurred or the place of residence of the deceased. In the absence of such notification, the rightful claimants shall have 60 (sixty) days within which to make the declaration.

(3) Where the remains of the deceased cannot be identified, the criminal investigation officer shall draw up a detailed report stating the date, time, place and circumstances of the discovery, the name, apparent age and sex of the deceased, and the identity of the person who discovered the body. He/she must also report the death to the civil status registrar within 30 (thirty) days.

**SECTION 24:** Where a child dies before his/her birth has been registered, the birth must first be declared and registered before the death is declared and registered so that the civil status registrar can issue the birth and death certificates.

**SECTION 25:** In the event of war or military operations inside or outside the national territory, declarations of the death of servicemen and servicewomen killed in action may be made by the Military Authority or by their rightful claimants within 90 (ninety) days of their death.

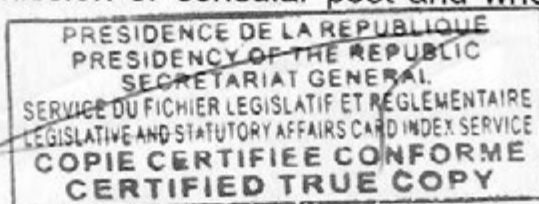
**SECTION 26:** (1) At the request of the State Counsel or any person with a legitimate interest, the death of a person of Cameroonian nationality who has been legally declared missing in Cameroon or abroad shall be registered by the territorially competent civil status registrar.

(2) The provisions of (1) above shall apply to the legally declared death of an alien, refugee or stateless person on Cameroonian territory.

**SECTION 27:** (1) Any national resident or domiciled in a foreign country shall be bound to notify the head of the diplomatic mission, the head of the consular post or the acting diplomat of the death of his/her father, mother, children or dependants in such country.

(2) The death certificate may be issued in the country of residence, even where there is no diplomatic or consular representation. The said certificate shall be authentic if drawn up in the form prescribed by the laws in force in such country.

(3) Nationals resident or established in countries where there is no Cameroonian diplomatic mission or consular post and who are unable to





have a death certificate issued by the competent authorities must, within 12 (twelve) months of their return to Cameroon and under penalty of forfeiture, declare the death of their parent, child or dependant to the civil status registry office of their place of residence or birth in Cameroon.

(4) The declaration must be accompanied by supporting documents. In the absence of such documents, the death certificate shall be drawn up on the basis of a declaration of death issued by the competent court.

### **CHAPTER III** **DRAWING UP CIVIL STATUS DOCUMENTS**

#### **I - GENERAL PROVISIONS**

**SECTION 28:** The following shall constitute civil status documents:

- birth certificates;
- marriage certificates; and
- death certificates.

**SECTION 29:** (1) Civil status documents shall be issued in printed or electronic form.

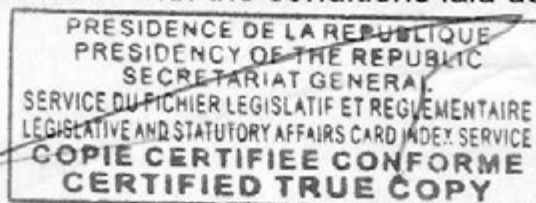
(2) Civil status documents in electronic form shall contain the same information as those in paper form.

(3) Civil status documents in printed and electronic form shall be considered as equivalent and shall have the same legal force and evidential value.

(4) The documents referred to in (2) above shall be issued and kept in accordance with standards that guarantee at all times the originality, authenticity, integrity, legibility, durability and confidentiality of the said documents during their processing and transmission or the issuing of copies and extracts.

(5) The conditions and procedures for issuing civil status documents in electronic form shall be laid down by regulation.

**SECTION 30:** Civil status documents shall be recorded either in civil status registers or in the National Civil Status Database where they shall be issued, centralized and filed in accordance with the conditions laid down in this law.



## II - COMMON PROVISIONS FOR DRAWING UP CIVIL STATUS DOCUMENTS

**SECTION 31:** (1) Civil status documents shall be drawn up by the civil status registrar, assisted by one or more secretaries.

(2) Civil status documents shall state in particular the date of the facts they record, the date of the declaration, the date of registration, the date of signature, as well as the full names, sex, occupation and domicile or residence of the persons concerned.

(3) Witnesses, where necessary, shall be presented by persons wishing to have a civil status documents made. However, in the event of death, witnesses may come forward voluntarily or at the request of the territorially competent State Counsel.

(4) Witnesses must be of full age and capacity and must have actually witnessed the facts to which they testify or must hold evidence of such facts.

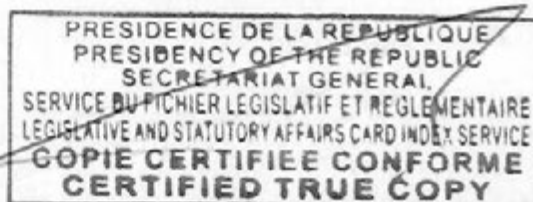
**SECTION 32:** (1) When the civil status certificate has been drawn up and before it is signed, the civil status registrar shall read it out to:

- the mother and/or father, and to the witnesses, in the case of legitimation of a child born out of wedlock, for the birth certificate;
- the declarant and witnesses, for the death certificate;
- the prospective spouses and witnesses, for the marriage certificate.

(2) In the event of an error or omission, the persons referred to in (1) above may, forthwith, request the civil status registrar to make the necessary corrections.

(3) Where an error is discovered before the certificate is signed, the sheet containing the error shall be cancelled in the three (3) registers and a new certificate drawn up, signed by the civil status registrar and secretary. It shall be countersigned by the parties in the case of a marriage certificate.

(4) The rectified certificate approved by the parties and witnesses, if any, shall then be signed by them, the civil status registrar and secretary and recorded.



**SECTION 33:** (1) Birth and death certificates shall be signed jointly by the civil status registrar and secretary.

(2) Marriage certificates shall be signed jointly by the civil status registrar and secretary of the marriage venue, as well as by the spouses and their witnesses.

**SECTION 34:** (1) Civil status documents in electronic form shall be drawn up by means of a qualified electronic certificate made available by the body responsible for managing civil status.

(2) Qualified electronic certificates shall be produced by the public body responsible for certification and electronic security.

**SECTION 35:** (1) Civil status registrars shall be prohibited from drawing up documents concerning them personally or their ascendants, direct descendants or direct collaterals.

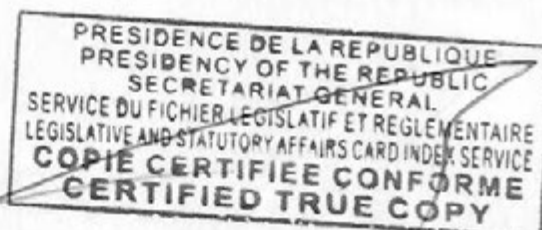
(2) In the case provided for in (1) above, the civil status registry shall be replaced by:

- (a) an officer from the same centre in the case of a main civil status registry office;
- (b) a civil status registrar from the main civil status centre of the area, in the case of a secondary or specialized civil status registry.

(3) Civil status documents drawn up in breach of (1) above shall be null and void, without prejudice, where applicable, to criminal proceedings for forgery of public and authentic documents.

**SECTION 36:** (1) Civil status documents shall be entered in the civil status register in a row, without blank spaces, erasures or overwriting. They shall be numbered by order of entry, with the same series of numbers kept in each civil registration office for the entire calendar year and for the same category of register.

(2) Nothing shall be written in abbreviated form and dates shall be entered in figures and in words.



(3) Information relating to vital events already recorded in a civil status document may be amended or deleted only in accordance with the conditions laid down by this law.

(4) Any marginal or subsequent entries made in the civil status document shall be based on the facts and information contained in the supporting documents issued by the competent authorities.

(5) Any decision or other document amending a civil status document must be forwarded to the competent civil status registrar with a copy to the body responsible for managing civil registration within 30 (thirty) days of its signature.

(6) The civil status registrar shall check the authenticity and conformity of the documents received before recording the events or data relating thereto.

(7) Any alteration or falsification of a civil status certificate or any entry of vital events other than in civil status registers or out of the national civil status database intended for that purpose may give rise to a claim for damages by the aggrieved parties, without prejudice to criminal penalties.

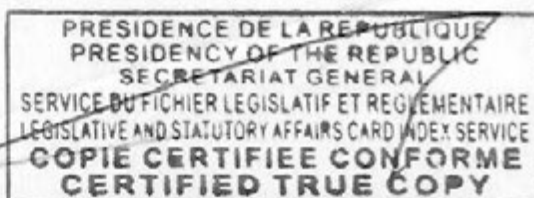
### III - SPECIFIC PROVISIONS FOR DRAWING UP A BIRTH CERTIFICATE

#### PARAGRAPH 1

#### BIRTH CERTIFICATE ENTRIES

**SECTION 37:** The birth certificate shall contain the following entries:

- the words Republic of Cameroon, the motto, the region and division in which the main civil status centre is located and, for the secondary or specialized civil status centre, the main civil registration centre of the area;
- the name and code of the main, secondary or specialized civil status centre and, where applicable, that of the main civil status centre of the area;
- the unique personal identifier number, where applicable;
- the child's full name, sex, date and place of birth;
- the full name, age, nationality, occupation, domicile or residence of the child's mother and father, where applicable;





- documents proving the nationality of the child's father and mother and references of such documents;
- the full names and signatures of the civil status registrar and secretary;
- the date of birth declaration, the date of receipt of the request from the State Counsel, or the execution copy of the judgment;
- the name of the declarant, the health facility, the traditional ruler, the State Counsel, or the President of the Court of First Instance;
- the date of recording of the declaration;
- the date of signature of the certificate.

**SECTION 38:** (1) Where, as a result of an error or fraud, the name of a person is entered as father or mother on the birth certificate of a child, such person may seek rectification of the certificate before the territorially competent court of the civil registration centre where the certificate was drawn up, under the conditions laid down by this law.

(2) In the event of death or incapacity of the person whose name has been entered by error or fraud, the action shall be brought by their rightful claimants or by the guardian or curator of the incapacitated person.

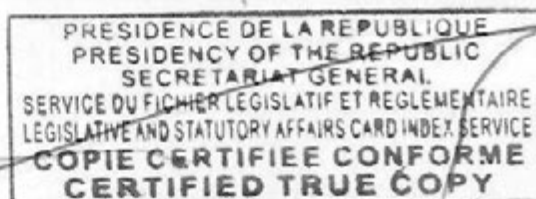
**SECTION 39:** (1) Where the father or mother of the child is a foreign national, the birth certificate shall specify, for each of them, whether they are a resident, on stay, in transit or passing through Cameroon or whether they are a refugee.

(2) Where the nationality of the parents is not known at the time of the birth declaration, the space reserved for this information shall be left blank. However, where the nationality of the parents is subsequently established, they may apply to the competent court to have the said nationality included in the birth certificate.

#### PARAGRAPH II

#### DRAWING UP THE BIRTH CERTIFICATE OF A FOUNDLING

**SECTION 40:** (1) In case of a foundling whose birth declaration has been made under the conditions laid down in Section 15 above, the civil status registrar shall draw up a birth certificate at the request of the State Counsel. The registrar shall assign full names to the child in accordance with the laws in force.



(2) Where the child's parents or guardian are subsequently found or the birth had previously been recorded with another civil status registrar, the birth certificate referred to in Sub-Section (1) above shall be cancelled or rectified, as appropriate, by decision of the competent court.

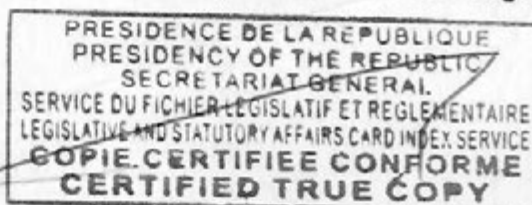
#### IV - SPECIFIC PROVISIONS FOR DRAWING UP A MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE

##### PARAGRAPH I ENTRIES OF THE MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE

**SECTION 41:** The marriage certificate shall contain the following entries:

- the words Republic of Cameroon, the motto, the region and division in which the main civil status centre is located and, for the secondary civil status centre, the civil status centre of the area;
- the name and code of the main or secondary civil status centre, entry of the nature of the certificate, the serial number of the certificate in the register and, where applicable, that of the main civil status centre of the area;
- the full name, date and place of birth, nationality, and occupation of the spouses and, where applicable, the unique personal identifier number (UPIN) of each of the spouses;
- the marriage date (in words) and venue;
- documents proving the nationality of the spouses;
- the place of residence of the spouses;
- the full names of the spouses' parents;
- an indication of the matrimonial system or form of marriage: polygamy or monogamy;
- an indication of the matrimonial or property regime;
- the full names of the spouses' witnesses;
- the signatures of both spouses;
- the signatures of witnesses;
- the full names and signatures of the civil status registrar and secretary.

(2) The marriage certificate in paper form shall bear the signatures of the spouses, the spouses' witnesses, the civil status registrar and



secretary. Where it is drawn up electronically, the signatories and the signature methods shall be specified by regulation.

(3) An original copy from the civil status register or a copy of the certificate from the civil status register, as the case may be, shall be handed to each of the spouses.

## PARAGRAPH II OBJECTIONS TO MARRIAGE SOLEMNIZATION

**SECTION 42:** (1) Objections may be made orally, in writing or electronically to the civil status registrars who published the declaration of marriage intent or the application for transcription of customary marriage. The objection may be made when the marriage is solemnized.

(2) Non-objection or objection notices may be sent to civil status registrars of the places of birth of the prospective spouses by any written or electronic means.

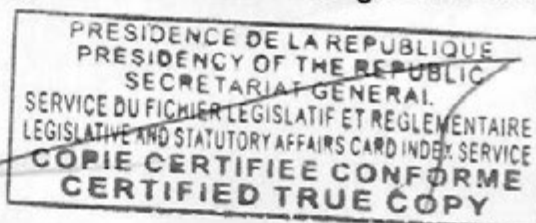
(3) Where the objection is made orally, the civil status registrar shall draw up a report signed by the objector.

(4) The statement of objection shall state:

- the full names of the objector;
- his/her address;
- the capacity conferring them the right to file the objection;
- references of the publication of the declaration of marriage intent;
- detailed reasons for the objection.

**SECTION 43:** The civil status registrar shall suspend the marriage solemnization and forward to the President of the Court of First Instance, in writing or by electronic means, the objections received and the findings of his/her investigations which are such as not to allow the marriage solemnization. The registrar shall also notify the prospective spouses of the objection.

**SECTION 44:** The President of the Court shall rule on the objection to the marriage solemnization within 10 (ten) days of the matter being referred to the





court. S/he shall prohibit the marriage solemnization or dismiss the objection by order rendered without costs, after hearing the parties.

**SECTION 45:** The order prohibiting or authorizing the marriage solemnization may be appealed before the competent court, on the initiative of the parties.

### III - MARRIAGE SOLEMNIZATION

**SECTION 46:** (1) Marriage shall be solemnized by the civil status registrar of the place of birth or residence of either of the prospective spouses.

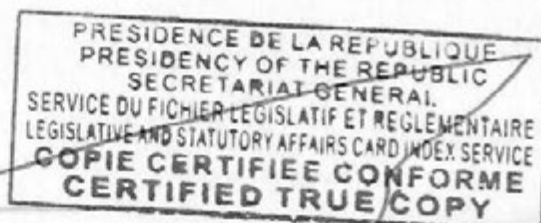
(2) Thirty (30) days after publication of the declaration of marriage intent and after establishing that there are no objections or impediments or that the objections have been withdrawn, the civil status registrar shall proceed with solemnization of the marriage in the premises designated for that purpose at the civil status centre.

(3) Notwithstanding the provisions of Sub-Section (2) above, the marriage may be solemnized by the civil status registrar in their area of jurisdiction in a place open to the public, subject to compliance with the rules governing public events.

**SECTION 47:** (1) At the end of the solemnization, the civil status registrar shall give each of the spouses an original paper copy of the marriage certificate. The registrar may also issue a family record booklet to the spouses at their request.

(2) The family record booklet referred to in Sub-Section (1) above shall include excerpts from the marriage certificate and, as appropriate, excerpts from the birth certificate of the child born before the marriage and legitimated at the time of the marriage. The booklet shall subsequently be completed as a vital event occurs.

**SECTION 48:** Any national resident in a foreign country, who got married before the competent authorities of that country, shall be required to declare the marriage and have it recorded in the civil status register kept by the head of the diplomatic mission or consular post.





**PARAGRAPH IV**  
**TRANSCRIPTION OF CUSTOMARY MARRIAGES**

**SECTION 49:** (1) The spouses must declare their customary marriage to the civil status registrar for transcription. The declaration may be made to the civil status registrar of the place of birth or of residence of the spouses, or of the place where the customary marriage was concluded.

(2) The civil status registrar shall publish the application for transcription of the customary marriage by posting up and shall communicate same to the civil status registrars of the places of residence and birth of the spouses.

(3) Any person having a legitimate interest may object to the transcription of the customary marriage within 30 (thirty) days of the application for transcription. The civil status registrar must forward any objections received to the president of the competent court.

(4) The President of the Court seized shall rule on an objection to the transcription of a customary marriage within 10 (ten) days. Upon hearing the parties, the President of the court shall issue an order without costs prohibiting the transcription of the customary marriage or dismissing the objection.

**SECTION 50:** (1) On the expiry of the period of 30 (thirty) days after publication of the application for transcription of the customary marriage and after establishing that there is no objection or impediment or that the objections have been dismissed, the civil status registrar shall proceed to transcribe the customary marriage in the civil register.

(2) Such transcription shall be noted in the margin of the marriage certificate.

(3) The words "customary marriage" shall be entered in the margin of the birth certificate of the spouses.

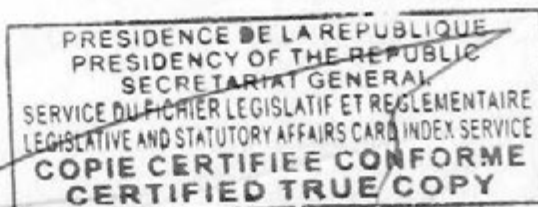
**SECTION 51:** Prospective spouses may file appeal against an order prohibiting or authorizing the transcription of a customary marriage within 15 (fifteen) days

of the order or notification of the order. The President of the competent court shall rule within 30 (thirty) days of the date of appeal.

## **V- SPECIFIC PROVISIONS FOR DRAWING UP A DEATH CERTIFICATE**

**SECTION 52:** (1) The death certificate shall bear the following information:

- the words "Republic of Cameroon", the motto, region and division in which the main civil status centre is located and, for the secondary or specialized civil status centre, the civil status centre of the area;
- the name and code of the main, secondary or specialized civil status centre and, where applicable, that of the main civil status centre to which it is attached;
- the full name, date and place of birth, nationality, sex, marital status, occupation and residence of the deceased;
- the full name of the deceased's mother and father, where applicable;
- the unique personal identification number, where applicable;
- the date and place of death;
- the full name, occupation, status and place of residence of the declarant;
- the full name, occupation and place of residence of any witnesses;
- the date of declaration of the death;
- the date of registration of the declaration;
- information on the declarant, the health facility, the traditional ruler, the State Counsel, or the President of the Court of First Instance;
- the date of signature of the document;
- the full names and signatures of the civil status registrar and civil status secretary.



(2) Where the deceased is of foreign nationality, the death certificate must specify whether the person is a refugee or a foreign national residing in, staying in, on transit in, established in or passing through Cameroon.

**SECTION 53:** (1) Where the remains of an identifiable person are found under the conditions laid down in Section 23 above, the death certificate shall be drawn up by the civil status registrar of the presumed place of death, regardless of the time interval between the death and discovery of the body.

(2) The death certificate shall bear the key information contained in the police report, in particular, the date, time, place and circumstances of discovery of the body, the name, apparent age and sex of the deceased.

**SECTION 54:** (1) Where the remains of the deceased person cannot be identified, a death certificate bearing the information contained in the police report shall be drawn up by the civil status registrar. The spaces for the full name of the deceased shall be left blank.

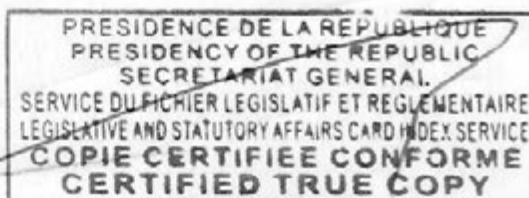
(2) Where the deceased is subsequently identified, the death certificate shall be rectified by an order without costs of the president of the competent court issued at the behest of the State Counsel or the civil status registrar.

**SECTION 55:** Where a person's death certificate has been drawn up in error and it is subsequently established that such person is not dead, the competent court, at the request of the person concerned, their rightful claimants at the request of the Legal Department, shall order the invalidation of the death certificate or the supplementary judgment of the death certificate.

#### **CHAPTER IV**

#### **CONDITIONS FOR THE JUDICIAL DECLARATION, RECTIFICATION AND RECONSTITUTION OF CIVIL STATUS CERTIFICATES**

##### **I- LATE ADMINISTRATIVE RECONSTITUTION OF CIVIL STATUS CERTIFICATES OR LATE REGISTRATION OF VITAL EVENTS**





**SECTION 56:** (1) In the event of war, armed conflict, natural disaster or any other serious emergency, and Sections 58 and 61 below notwithstanding, births, marriages and deaths which occur in the affected parts of the country may be registered beyond the prescribed time limit and civil status certificates reconstituted through administrative procedures.

(2) In the cases referred to in (1) above, the territorially competent Senior Divisional Officer shall order the civil status registrar of the place where the event occurred to record, and draw up the certificates of, persons whose birth or death is undoubted, at the request of any interested person. A copy of the Senior Divisional Officer's order shall be forwarded to the State Counsel for information.

(3) The civil status registrar shall make a note of such administrative order in the margin of every birth or death certificate issued.

## **II- JUDICIAL DECLARATION, RECTIFICATION AND RECONSTITUTION OF CIVIL STATUS CERTIFICATES**

**SECTION 57:** (1) Persons who are internally displaced by war, armed conflict, natural disaster or any other emergency may, through an application submitted to the territorially competent State Counsel in the new place of residence or in their host locality, request for the late registration of vital events concerning them or the reconstitution of their civil status certificates.

(2) The application referred to in (1) above must be accompanied with supporting documents or be attested to by two duly identified witnesses.

In particular it shall include:

- the applicant's full name, date and place of birth as well as habitual place of residence;
- the full name, filiation, date and place of birth of the party interested in the application for late registration or reconstitution of a civil status document;
- detailed reasons supporting the late registration or reconstitution;
- the civil status centre where the declaration of the vital event or the drawing up of the required civil status certificate was or ought to have been done;
- any other information likely to prove the reality of the events declared.



(3) Where the application is deemed to be founded, the State Counsel shall request the civil status registrar of the displaced person's current place of residence or host locality to register the vital events and draw up the civil status certificates. The civil status registrar shall make a note of the State Counsel's request on the margin of every certificate.

(4) A civil status certificate drawn up under the conditions laid down in (1), (2) and (3) above may be annulled by the competent court, either by order of the Legal Department or at the request of the interested party. Annulment shall be pronounced in the following cases:

- where the certificate was drawn up unlawfully;
- where the information is false or irrelevant;
- where serious errors vitiating the essence of the certificate are found;
- where the lost certificate has been found.

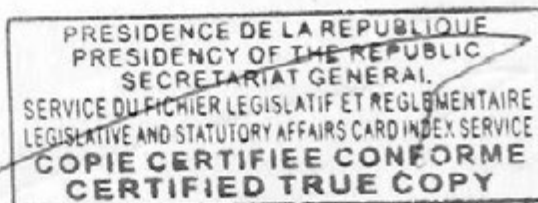
**SECTION 58:** (1) The civil status registrar may rectify or reconstitute civil status documents and record declarations of vital events as provided for in Sections 13 and 27 above only by virtue of a rectifying, reconstituting or declaratory judgment, as the case may be.

(2) The competent court shall be that of the place where:

- the event occurred;
- the event was or would have been registered;
- the certificate was drawn up;
- the certificate should have been drawn up.

**SECTION 59:** A civil status certificate shall be rectified where it contains erroneous information which could not be corrected at the time the certificate was drawn up or signed, or where any other event occurs subsequent to the drawing up or signature of the certificate.

**SECTION 60:** A civil status certificate shall be reconstituted in case of loss, destruction or alteration of all or part of the paper version of the civil status certificate.



**SECTION 61:** A declaratory judgment shall be delivered where the birth or death certificate has not been drawn up within the time-limits provided for by this law.

**SECTION 62:** (1) Where someone loses the original paper copy of their civil status certificate, the complete carbon-copy of the certificate from the civil status register, signed by the competent authority of the main civil status centre where the said carbon-copy was drawn up, kept or filed, shall be considered authentic until proven false.

(2) Where the initial original copy is lost, a subsequent copy may be requested and issued on the basis of the national civil status database.

(3) In case of loss of a paper civil status certificate that has been digitized, a copy thereof may be requested from the national civil status database.

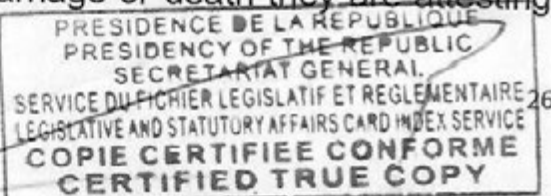
**SECTION 63:** (1) An application for rectification or reconstitution of a civil status certificate shall be made by any person with a legitimate interest.

(2) The application for rectification or reconstitution shall state:

- the full name of the applicant;
- the full name, filiation, date and place of birth of the person concerned by the rectification or reconstitution;
- detailed reasons supporting the rectification or reconstitution;
- full names, age and place of residence of witnesses, as the case may be; and
- the civil status centre where the certificate was drawn up.

**SECTION 64:** (1) Before handing down any decision, the court shall forward the application to the State Counsel for investigation, to ensure that:

- (a) another civil status certificate of the same type does not already exist for the same person;
- (b) the witnesses presented by the applicant are likely either to have actually witnessed the birth, marriage or death they are attesting to, or have proof of the same;



(c) the declaratory judgment sought will not lead to a fraudulent change in the full name, filiation, date of birth or of death, or a fraudulent change in marital status.

(2) The investigation provided for in (1) above shall not be obligatory in case of applications concerning minors less than 15 (fifteen) years old.

(3) Where the date of birth cannot be determined after the investigation, or where the certificate of apparent age is not clear, the date declared by the applicant shall be considered authoritative and must be recorded.

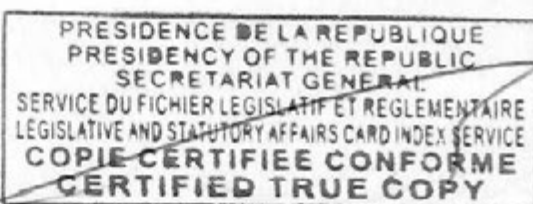
(4) The Court shall rule within a time-limit of no more than 6 (six) months of referral. Its decision shall be appealable before the Court of Appeal with jurisdiction within a period of 30 (thirty) days from the date the decision is delivered or notification served. The Court of Appeal shall rule on the appeal within a time-limit of no more than of 6 (six) months from the date of referral.

**SECTION 65:** (1) Civil status certificates drawn up or transcribed in Cameroon's diplomatic missions and consular posts shall be rectified, reconstituted, transcribed and marginal notes added on them or subsequently, based on an order by the President of the Court of First Instance of the Yaounde - Administrative Centre.

(2) The same shall apply to the late registration of births or deaths that occur abroad.

**SECTION 66:** (1) Rectification and reconstitution of civil status certificates, transcription and the addition of marginal notes or subsequent entries made in accordance with Section 65 above shall be binding on third parties.

(2) In all cases where an entry must be made on the margin of a civil status certificate, it shall be made as of right or at the initiative of any interested party.



## CHAPTER V

### REGISTRATION OF VITAL EVENTS RELATING TO NATURAL FILIAION

**SECTION 67:** Judgements recognizing and legitimating children as well as those determining paternity shall be transcribed as marginal entries in birth certificates.

**SECTION 68:** (1) The recognition by the father of a child born out of wedlock shall be made by declaration before the civil status registrar at the time of declaration of birth, under the conditions laid down by the legislation in force.

(2) The declaration referred to in (1) above shall be made as provided for in Section 9 above. It shall state the full name, date and place of birth and residence of the father, as well as the grounds for recognition.

(3) The civil status registrar shall identify the child's parents and file the declaration in a register kept in paper form, referenced and initialled by the President of the Court of First Instance for that purpose.

(4) The declaration of recognition shall be signed by the father and mother of the child, the witnesses and the civil status registrar before the birth certificate is drawn up.

(5) The declaration of recognition of a child before the civil status registrar shall be entered in the margin of the birth certificate.

## CHAPTER VI

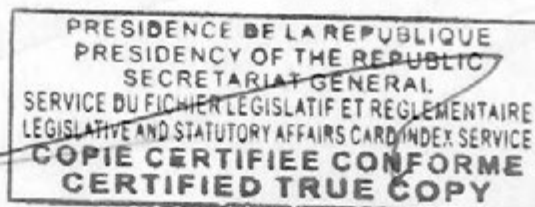
### KEEPING AND RECONSTITUTION OF CIVIL STATUS REGISTERS

#### I- KEEPING OF CIVIL STATUS REGISTERS

**SECTION 69:** (1) The 3 (three) categories of civil status registers shall be:

- birth registers;
- marriage registers;
- death registers.

(2) Birth registers shall also be used to register adoptions, legitimations, recognitions and naturalizations.





**SECTION 70:** (1) Civil status registers shall be in hardcopies.

(2) Where a civil status centre is fully computerized, it shall be exempted from keeping the registers referred to in (1) above.

**SECTION 71:** Each civil status register shall be available from 1 January of each year and kept in 3 (three) counterfoiled copies, marked and initialled by the territorially competent President of the Court of First Instance.

**SECTION 72:** (1) Civil status registers shall be closed on 31 December of each year by the civil status registrar and secretary.

(2) Civil status registers from secondary civil status centres shall be forwarded to their main civil status centres within 15 (fifteen) days of their closure.

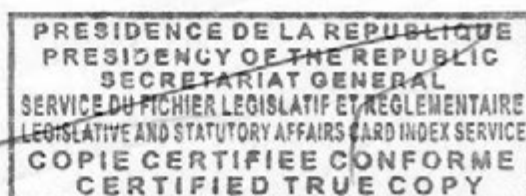
(3) Civil status registers from the main centre, as well as those from its secondary, shall be forwarded to the territorially competent State Counsel by 31 January of the following year at the latest.

(4) Within 3 (three) months of receipt and after stamping and cancelling any unused sheets, the State Counsel shall return the first copy of each register to the main civil status centre for safekeeping, archiving and issuing of copies. The second copy shall be forwarded to the civil status management body. The third copy shall be filed at the registry of the competent Court of First Instance.

**SECTION 73:** (1) The registers opened at diplomatic missions or consular posts shall, once closed, be returned to the Ministry in charge of external relations, which shall forward them to the State Counsel at the Court of First Instance of the Yaounde-Administrative Centre.

(2) After the stamping and cancellation of the unused pages, the State Counsel shall forward:

- the first copy of each register to the Yaounde City Council, for archiving and issuance of copies;
- the second copy to the civil status management body;
- the third copy to the Registry of the Yaounde -Administrative Centre for filing.



**SECTION 74:** Any alteration or falsification of civil status records or any entry of vital events other than in the registers intended for that purpose may give rise to damages to the injured parties, without prejudice to criminal proceedings.

**SECTION 75:** (1) As part of their duties, government services, regional and local authorities, judicial authorities, public establishments and corporations and public officials may verify civil status data provided by users with civil status registrar.

(2) The civil status registrar to whom the matter is referred shall check that the information received corresponds to that contained in the civil status record in his possession. He shall communicate the result of his check to the applicant by any means that leaves a paper trail.

## II- RECONSTITUTION OF CIVIL STATUS REGISTERS

**SECTION 76:** (1) Where all or part of a civil status register has been destroyed, it may only be reconstituted by order of the territorially competent President of the Court of First Instance.

(2) Where all or part of a civil status register kept or archived by a civil status centre or in the national civil status database is destroyed, the civil status registrar or civil status management body shall initiate the reconstitution procedure by submitting an application to the territorially competent State Counsel.

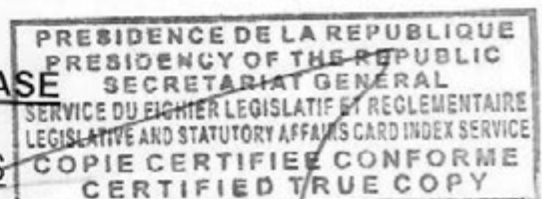
(3) Where the registers to be reconstituted were kept at the Registry, the State Counsel shall inform the President of the Court.

(4) To reconstitute civil status registers, government services, regional and local authorities and natural and legal persons in possession of civil status documents or any other supporting document shall be required to forward them to the civil status management body or officer.

## CHAPTER VII NATIONAL CIVIL STATUS DATABASE

### I- GENERAL PROVISIONS

**SECTION 77:** (1) The civil status management body shall keep a national civil status database.



(2) In addition to civil status certificates, the national civil status database shall include all information, data, documents, copies or forms, in paper or digital form, relating to the declaration of vital events, the drawing up of civil status documents or the making of a marginal or subsequent entry.

(3) The national civil status database shall be kept under the supervision and control of the Ministry in charge of justice, under the terms and conditions laid down by regulation.

**SECTION 78:** (1) The national civil status database shall comprise:

- birth database;
- marriage database;
- death database.

(2) The national civil status database shall centralize information and intelligence from:

- council civil status databases;
- civil status databases of diplomatic missions and consular posts.

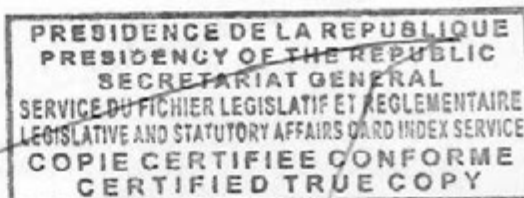
(3) The databases referred to in (2) above shall be kept and used either hardcopy or electronically by the civil status management body.

(4) The national civil status database shall be exempted from the listing, initialling, stamping and cancellation procedures.

**SECTION 79:** The conditions and procedures regarding access to data in the national civil status database and the production, issuance and certification of copies and extracts of civil status certificates from the national civil status database shall be laid down by regulation.

## II- AUTOMATED DATA PROCESSING AND CONTROL OF THE NATIONAL CIVIL STATUS DATABASE

**SECTION 80:** (1) The declaration of vital events, the drawing up, issuance and archiving of civil status documents and the production of civil status statistics may be automated.



(2) The conditions for automated processing shall be laid down by regulation.

**SECTION 81:** (1) An alphanumeric code, known as the "Unique Personal Identification Number", abbreviated to "UPIN", shall be generated and assigned to each person when their birth is recorded in the national civil database.

(2) A Unique Personal Identification Number shall be progressively assigned to any person with a hard-copy birth certificate, where such certificate was drawn up prior to the national civil status database.

(3) The characteristics of the Unique Personal Identification Number and the conditions for assigning and using it shall be laid down by regulation.

### III- PROTECTION, CONSULTATION AND CHECKING OF PERSONAL CIVIL STATUS DATA

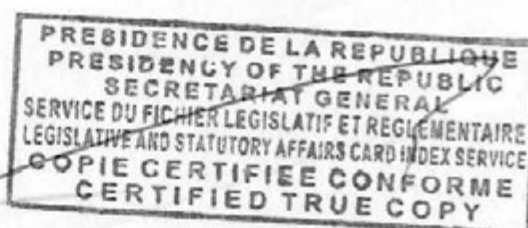
**SECTION 82:** (1) Personal civil status data contained in the national civil status database shall be protected pursuant to the laws on personal data protection.

(2) Civil status registrars and secretaries shall have direct access to civil status data concerning their civil status centres.

(3) Notwithstanding the provisions of (1) above, access to consult personal civil status data shall be granted to the public administrations concerned with the national civil status system. Such access may be for general or limited consultation, as the case may be.

(4) The administrations referred to in (3) above and the procedures for their access to the database shall be specified in a separate instrument.

**SECTION 83:** The technical characteristics of and procedure for electronic communication of civil status data must comply with the law governing electronic communications.





**CHAPTER VIII**  
**NATIONAL CIVIL STATUS SYSTEM**

**I-ORGANIZATION OF THE NATIONAL CIVIL STATUS SYSTEM**

**PARAGRAPH I**  
**CIVIL STATUS CENTRES**

**SECTION 84:** Civil status centres shall comprise:

- main civil status centres;
- secondary civil status centres;
- specialized civil status centres.

**SECTION 85:** A main civil status centre shall be established in each council, city council, subdivisional council, diplomatic mission or consular post of Cameroon.

**SECTION 86:** (1) Secondary civil status centres may be set up, where circumstances so require, in the territorial jurisdiction of some council areas, by order of the Minister in charge of civil status, after consulting the territorially competent Senior Divisional Officer and the Mayor of the council concerned.

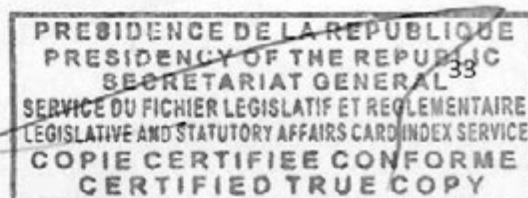
(2) The order establishing a secondary civil status centre shall specify its seat, territorial jurisdiction and name.

**SECTION 87:** (1) Specialized civil status centres attached to a main centre may be set up, by order of the Minister in charge of civil status, within first, second, third or fourth category health facilities as defined in the health organization.

(2) The specialized civil status centres referred to in (1) above shall be competent only to register births and deaths occurring within such facilities and to draw up the corresponding civil status certificates.

**SECTION 88:** (1) Copies of the order setting up a secondary or specialized civil status centre shall be forwarded to the President of the relevant Court of First Instance, the State Counsel of the said Court, the Senior Divisional Officer, the Mayor of the council of the area and the civil status management body.

(2) A copy of the order setting up a specialized civil status centre shall also be forwarded to the Ministry in charge of public health.



**SECTION 89:** (1) By order, the Minister in charge of civil status may change the territorial jurisdiction, group together or close secondary civil status centres.

(2) By order, he may also close specialized civil status centres.

(3) The head of the civil status management body, the Senior Divisional Officer or the territorially competent Mayor may propose the establishment, change of territorial jurisdiction, amalgamation or closure of secondary civil status centres to the Minister in charge of civil status.

**SECTION 90:** (1) A specific registration code shall be assigned to each civil status centre by the Minister in charge of civil status.

(2) A decree of the President of the Republic shall lay down the conditions for the establishment, organization and functioning of secondary and specialized civil status centres.

PARAGRAPH II  
CIVIL STATUS REGISTRARS AND SECRETARIES

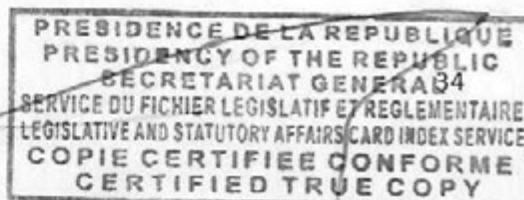
**SECTION 91:** (1) The following shall be registrars of main civil status centres:

- the City Mayor and his deputies;
- the Mayor and his deputies;
- the head of the diplomatic mission or consular post or the diplomat acting as such.

(2) The President of the Republic may, by decree, appoint other civil status registrars from among diplomats serving in a diplomatic mission or consular post.

(3) The civil status registrars referred to in (1) above shall discharge their duties under the supervision of the territorially competent State Counsel.

**SECTION 92:** (1) In the event of war, armed conflict or serious calamity, the President of the Republic may, by decree, appoint other civil status registrars. The said decree shall lay down the territorial jurisdiction within which they shall exercise their powers and how such powers shall be exercised.



(2) Where any obstacle or remoteness makes communication between the capital and part of the council area difficult, dangerous or temporarily impossible, a special deputy position may be established there by reasoned decision of the municipal council, subject to the prior approval of the State representative, to discharge the duties of civil status registrar.

(3) These functions shall cease when the situation is restored. Such cessation shall be declared by a municipal council deliberation.

(4) Where a special delegation is set up in a council and until the municipal council is reconstituted, the chair and vice-chair of the said delegation shall perform the duties of civil status registrar.

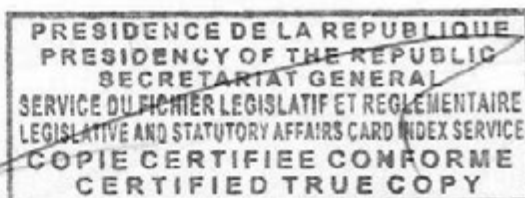
**SECTION 93:** (1) In secondary and specialized civil status centres, the function of civil status registrar shall be performed by persons appointed by order of the Minister in charge of civil status for a term of 5 (five) years, renewable at the request of the civil status registrar.

(2) Copies of the deeds designating civil status registrars of secondary and specialized centres shall be notified to those concerned as appropriate, forwarded to the President of the Court of First Instance, to the State Counsel of the said court, to the Senior Divisional Officer, to the Subdivisional Officer, to the Mayor of the attached councils, as well as to the organ in charge of civil status management and to the Minister in charge of public health in the case of specialized civil status centres.

(3) In case of a vacancy of the post of a civil status registrar of a secondary civil status centre, the duties of the registrar of the said centre shall be discharged, on an interim basis, by a deputy mayor duly appointed by the head of the council executive for this purpose.

**SECTION 94:** The duties of civil status registrar in secondary and specialized civil status centres shall be incompatible with the duties of a registrar at a main civil status centre, except when the main registrar is acting to fill a vacancy at a secondary or specialized civil status centre.

**SECTION 95:** (1) Before exercising his duties, the civil status registrar must take an oral oath or, exceptionally, in writing, before the territorially competent Court of First Instance.





(2) The Head of Diplomatic Mission or Consular Post, or the diplomat acting as such, where applicable, shall take the oath orally or in writing before the Yaounde Administrative Centre Court of First Instance.

**SECTION 96:** (1) When the oath is taken orally by civil status registrars, except for members of the council executive, the president of the court shall briefly read out the relevant legal provisions and keep the legal instrument conferring the status of civil status registrar to the person concerned.

(2) The person concerned, standing with his right hand raised and ungloved, shall declare as follows:

*"I (name of the officer...), swear on my honour to fulfil loyally and faithfully, in accordance with the law, the duties of civil status registrar conferred to me by my appointment/election as ..."*

(3) A record of the oath shall be kept in the court minutes. A copy shall be issued to the person concerned and to the organ in charge of civil status management.

**SECTION 97:** (1) The written oath of the persons mentioned in Section 96 above shall be made in the form of a document signed by the concerned and addressed to the President of the competent Court of First Instance, in the following terms:

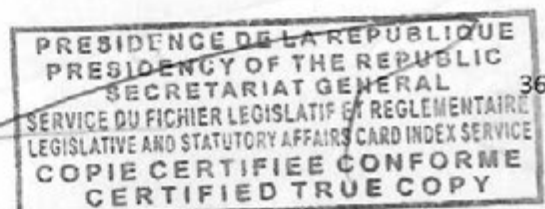
*"Dear President,*

*I, the undersigned (Reference to the appointment instrument or minutes of the election), swear on my honour and hereby undertake to perform loyally and faithfully the duties of civil status registrar conferred to me, in accordance with the law".*

(2) A record of the oath shall be kept in the court minutes. A copy shall be issued to the person concerned and to the body in charge of civil status management.

**SECTION 98:** (1) Civil status registrars, except heads of diplomatic mission or consular post, and persons exercising the said function under the conditions laid down in Sections 91 and 92 above, shall be under the authority of the Ministry in charge of civil status.

(2) Civil status registrars may be inspected by the Ministry in charge of civil status or the body in charge of civil status management. Such





inspection may extend to the head of diplomatic mission or consular post or the diplomat acting as such, in matters relating to civil status.

**SECTION 99:** (1) The civil status registrar shall be assisted by 1 (one) or more civil status secretaries in performing his duties.

(2) Before assuming their duties, civil status secretaries take an oath before the competent court, in the form, terms and conditions set out in Sections 96 and 97 above.

**SECTION 100:** Certificates drawn up by a civil status registrar and secretary outside of their territorial jurisdiction shall be null and void.

**SECTION 101:** The conditions for appointing, exercising duties and deputizing, as well as the disciplinary procedures for civil status registrars and secretaries shall be laid down by separate instruments.

**SECTION 102:** (1) Secondary and specialized civil status centres shall regularly send vital statistics to the main civil status centres of their area.

(2) Main civil status centres shall produce vital statistics and centralize those of secondary and specialized civil status centres, which they shall regularly send to the body in charge of civil status management.

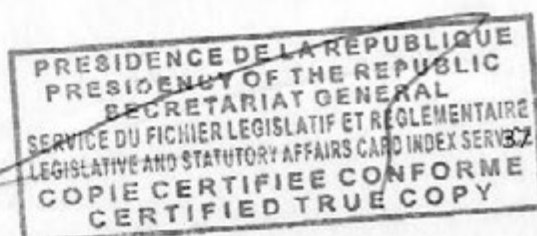
(3) The conditions for collecting, processing, transmitting and sharing vital statistics shall be laid down by regulation.

**SECTION 103:** Civil status registrars and secretaries of secondary and specialized civil status centres shall be entitled to a monthly allowance in accordance with the terms and conditions laid down by a separate instrument.

### III- BODY IN CHARGE OF CIVIL STATUS MANAGEMENT

**SECTION 104:** Civil status management, the supervision, regulation, control and assessment of the national civil status system shall be entrusted to a body whose duties, organization and functioning shall be laid down by decree of the President of the Republic.

**SECTION 105:** (1) Persons responsible for managing the national civil status register shall take an oath before exercising their duties.



(2) The persons referred to in (1) above shall take an oath before the territorially competent Court of First Instance, standing with their right hand raised and ungloved, in the following words:

*I (full name of the authority) swear to keep secret the content of the vital statistics to which I may have access in the exercise of my duties and to not communicate them, save where expressly authorized by a competent authority or by law or regulation".*

(3) A record of the oath shall be kept in the court minutes. A copy shall be issued to the person concerned and to the organ in charge of civil status management.

**SECTION 106:** The staff of the body in charge of civil status management responsible for collecting, processing and monitoring civil status centres and keeping and archiving vital statistics shall be bound by professional secrecy

**SECTION 107:** Regional and local authorities, public and private administrative services and bodies, health facilities, penitentiary establishments, traditional authorities and judicial institutions shall assist the body in charge of civil status management in setting up and managing the national civil registration data base and in collecting, processing, producing and storing vital data and statistics.

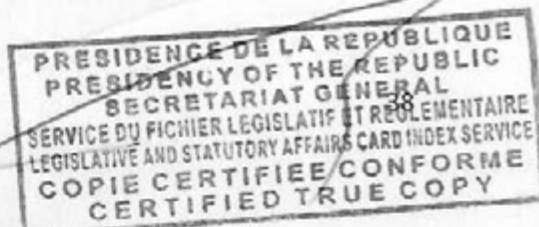
## CHAPTER II

### FINANCING THE NATIONAL CIVIL STATUS POLICY

**SECTION 108:** (1) The national civil status policy shall be financed by a funding mechanism created within the body in charge of civil status management.

(2) The activities covered by such funding shall be the following:

- implementing the computerization of the national civil status system;
- carrying out information and awareness-raising programmes for civil status system stakeholders and the general public;
- training for national civil status system stakeholders;
- functioning of the body in charge of civil status management;
- constructing and operating secondary civil status centres, and;
- payment of staff engaged in running civil status registration.



**SECTION 109:** (1) The resources of the national civil status policy funding mechanism shall mainly comprise:

- a special State contribution for the financing of civil status to be fixed each year by the Finance Law;
- fees from issuance of subsequent copies and extracts from the National civil status database;
- contributions from development partners, and
- any other resource provided for or allocated by law.

(2) The resources referred to in sub-Section (1) above shall be public funds managed in accordance with the rules laid down by the financial regime of the State and other public entities. However, contributions from development partners shall be managed in accordance with the related conventions and agreements.

(3) The organization and functioning of the funding mechanism, as well as the conditions for the collection and distribution of its resources, shall be laid down by regulation.

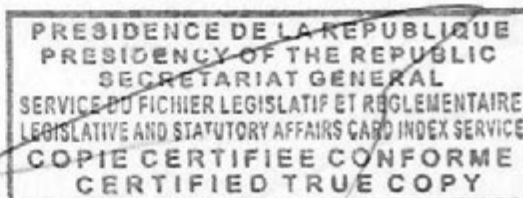
## **PART IX** **ADMINISTRATIVE AND PENAL SANCTIONS**

### **CHAPTER I** **ADMINISTRATIVE SANCTIONS**

**SECTION 110:** Civil status registrars and secretaries of main civil status centres shall be subject to penalties under the conditions laid down by the law applicable to regional and local authorities.

**SECTION 111:** Heads of diplomatic mission or consular post or any authority acting in their stead may be sanctioned in accordance with the conditions laid down by the rules in force.

**SECTION 112:** The regime of sanctions for civil status registrars and secretaries of secondary and specialized civil status centres shall be laid down by regulation.



## CHAPTER II CRIMINAL PENALTIES

**SECTION 113:** Any civil status registrar or secretary who requests, accepts or receives offers, promises, gifts or presents to record a vital event or draw up and issue a civil status certificate shall be liable to the sanctions provided for in Section 134 of the Penal Code.

**SECTION 114:** (1) Any civil status registrar who draws up a marriage certificate without:

- a) ensuring that the consents required for its validity have been given, and
- b) observing any prescribed waiting period,

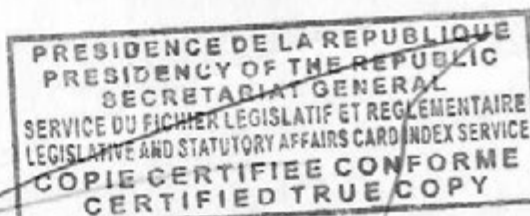
shall be liable to the penalties provided for in Section 149 of the Penal Code.

(2) The offence shall be punishable regardless of the civil consequences of the irregularity.

**SECTION 115:** (1) Civil status registrars shall be liable to the sanctions provided for in Section 150 of the Penal Code where they:

- (a) register their certificates elsewhere than in the relevant registers or fail to register them;
- (b) fail to transcribe a declaration of birth or death after receiving such;
- (c) solemnize a marriage for which they do not have territorial jurisdiction;
- (d) make an undue entry;
- (e) deliberately transcribe into civil status registers or the national civil status database a marriage that has not been subject of a declaration of marriage intent or for which objection has been not been lifted, and
- (f) transcribe a customary marriage unattested by the customary authorities of the two spouses.

(2) Any person bound to declare a vital event under the law who, without a legitimate reason, fails to do so or declares a false or inaccurate event shall be liable to the sanctions provided for in sub-Section (1) above.





**SECTION 116:** Whoever, by making false statements with respect to a birth, marriage or death certificate, influences the conduct of a civil status registrar or secretary shall be liable to the sanctions provided for in Section 162 of the Penal Code.

**SECTION 117:** Whoever destroys or damages civil status registers or the national civil status database shall be liable to the sanctions laid down in Section 188 of the Penal Code.

**SECTION 118:** (1) Whoever falsifies, forges or alters a civil status document, either in its substance or in the signatures and dates, or uses a document thus forged or altered, shall be liable to the sanctions provided for in Section 205 of the Penal Code.

(2) A civil status registrar or secretary who draws up a civil status certificate concerning them personally, or their ascendants, direct descendants or direct collaterals, shall be liable to the same sanctions.

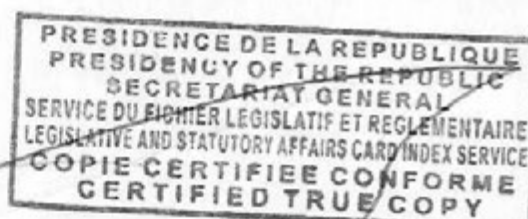
**SECTION 119:** Whoever forges or falsifies a family record book shall be liable to sanctions set out in Section 206 of the Penal Code.

**SECTION 120:** (1) Whoever usurps the functions of a civil status registrar or secretary or performs acts relating to the exercise of these duties shall be liable to sanctions provided for in Section 216 of the Penal Code.

(2) Any civil status registrar or secretary who continues to work after official notification of the temporary or permanent suspension of their duties shall be liable to the same sanctions provided for in Section 120 (1) above.

**SECTION 121:** Whoever discloses or reveals, even after ceasing to hold office, information or personal data relating to civil status of which they have become privy to during or in the course of their duties shall be liable to sanctions provided for in Section 310 of the Penal Code.

**SECTION 122:** (1) Any person whose actions result in a child being deprived of proof of parentage shall be liable to the sanctions provided for in Section 341 of the Penal Code.



(2) The same sanction provided for in (1) above shall apply to whoever attempts to deprive a child of proof of parentage.

(3) It shall also apply to whoever undermines the security, integrity and functionality of the national civil status system.

**SECTION 123:** Several entries in the national civil status database of a person under many identities shall expose such person to the penal sanctions provided for by the laws in force.

## **PART X**

### **MISCELLANEOUS, TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS**

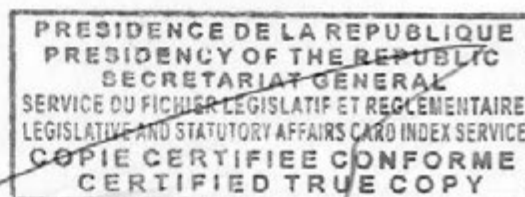
**SECTION 124:** No individual shall own 2 (two) birth certificates. Where a person is in possession of 2 (two) birth certificates, only the older one in terms of issuance date will be taken into account, without prejudice to criminal prosecution.

**SECTION 125:** At the behest of the State Counsel or any person with a legitimate interest, the competent court shall cancel a birth certificate that does not accurately record the actual occurrence of a vital event.

**SECTION 126:** Civil status certificates drawn up in electronic form in some civil status centres as part of the pilot operations undertaken to computerize the civil status and reform the national civil status system shall be valid and be proof of the events they record.

**SECTION 127:** Pending cases and files on the date of enactment of this law, relating to the declaration of vital events, the drawing up, issuance and rectification of civil status certificates as well as the reconstitution of civil status registers, shall remain governed by the procedures in force at the time of their introduction where the said procedures are more favourable. Otherwise, the provisions of this law shall apply.

**SECTION 128:** Separate instruments shall lay down, as and when necessary, the conditions for applying this law.



**SECTION 129:** All previous provisions repugnant hereto are hereby repealed, in particular Ordinance No. 81/2 of 29 June 1981 on the organization of civil status and various provisions relating to the status of natural persons, as amended and supplemented by Law No. 2011/11 of 6 May 2011 on civil status.

**SECTION 130:** This law shall be registered, published according to the procedure of urgency and inserted in the Official Gazette in English and French.



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