


**CABINET MEMORANDUM REQUESTING APPROVAL FOR  
PARLIAMENTARY RATIFICATION OF AGREEMENTS FOR  
THE WAIVER OF VISA REQUIREMENTS FOR HOLDERS  
OF DIPLOMATIC AND SERVICE PASSPORTS**

We forward, herewith, for your attention and necessary action, fifty-five (55) copies of a duly signed Cabinet Memorandum on agreements for the waiver of visa requirements signed with the under-listed governments:

- (i) People's Republic of China
- (ii) Republic of Cuba
- (iii) Republic of The Sudan
- (iv) Republic of Seychelles
- (v) Republic of Turkey

2. It would be appreciated if your esteemed office would bring this to the attention of Cabinet for consideration and necessary action.

3. Please accept, Sir, the assurances of our highest consideration.

  
FOR: MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
AND REGIONAL INTEGRATION  
**AMB. LESLIE K. CHRISTIAN**  
CHIEF DIRECTOR

**SECRETARY TO THE CABINET  
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
FLAGSTAFF HOUSE  
ACCRA**

Acc No : 1284 G5  
Class No R/M/FARI/15

**CONFIDENTIAL**

**MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
AND REGIONAL INTEGRATION  
ACCRA-GHANA**



**CABINET MEMORANDUM**

**FROM THE**

**MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND  
REGIONAL INTEGRATION**

**ON THE**

**APPROVAL FOR PARLIAMENTARY RATIFICATION  
OF BILATERAL AGREEMENTS FOR THE WAIVER  
OF VISA REQUIREMENTS FOR HOLDERS OF  
DIPLOMATIC AND SERVICE PASSPORTS**

**15<sup>TH</sup> MAY, 2015**

## **ACTION REQUIRED**

This Memorandum is submitted for the consideration of Cabinet and approval for Parliamentary ratification of Bilateral Agreements for the Waiver of Visa Requirements in respect of Diplomatic and Service Passport holders signed with the under-listed governments:

- People's Republic of China
- Sudan
- Seychelles
- Cuba
- Turkey

## **BACKGROUND**

The Ministry on behalf of the Government of Ghana signed the above-mentioned agreements after discussions with the Missions/Representatives of the various States listed. The purpose of these discussions and the corresponding agreements is to facilitate travel to these countries for Official Business and in accordance with Constitutional provisions, is seeking approval for Parliamentary ratification for the coming into force of the agreements.

These agreements were negotiated and signed at different times as follows; with China in February this year, Sudan – 20<sup>th</sup> August, 2014, Seychelles was signed in May, 2014, Cuba, in October, 2013 and Turkey in March, 2011.

These agreements must be approved and ratified before we should complete the required legal and administrative processes for the implementation of the arrangements on reciprocal basis. Until their ratification, Diplomats and officials traveling for government business abroad, would still be required to obtain requisite visas for the purpose of their travels to these countries, and as such we are of the opinion that it would be useful to allow the process to move forward.

### **KEY PROVISIONS**

- Each of these agreements allow holders of Diplomatic and Service passports or other official passports to enter and to spend up to 90 days from the date of first entry into the concerned country without a visa. Beyond 90 days, affected persons are required to obtain the requisite immigration permits for their continued stay, exit or entry.
- Accredited staff of Diplomatic Missions and Consular posts as well as staff of International Organizations are expected to comply with the necessary accreditation formalities of the receiving State for the period of their accreditation, and therefore will not be affected by these exemptions.
- These agreements also require holders of Diplomatic and Service Passports to use approved ports of international

passenger traffic and to comply with the border control laws and regulations of the concerned state.

- The parties reserve the right to abrogate the agreement or suspend it in whole or in part on grounds of security, public safety and public order, upon giving notice in writing of the intention to do so.
- These provisions notwithstanding, each party reserves the right to refuse the entry into or stay in its territory of any person it finds unsuitable or who is considered a persona non grata.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

The agreements strictly speaking do not create rights and obligations under international law. They are founded upon the mutual understandings and goodwill of the parties. Therefore, any misunderstandings or disputes arising from their interpretation or implementation shall be resolved through negotiations and other diplomatic channels.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct financial expenditures to be incurred under these agreements. Visas are already granted on gratis basis for official purposes.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Visa waiver arrangements are a common feature in diplomatic relations where a sufficient relationship of trust, in the credibility of the systems in place for the issuance of Diplomatic and Service Passports has been established, Diplomats and Officers traveling outside on the official business of government are able to attend to matters in a timely manner without first having to go through the complex and sometimes lengthy procedures for obtaining visas.

Time is also freed up for Consular Officers who must otherwise spend considerable time processing frequently repeated requests for visas by Diplomats and Government Officials.

Overall, these arrangements are demonstrative of mutual trust and are a useful vehicle for the conduct of business between Government/Public Officials of states. I hereby invite my colleagues to give due consideration to these agreements and endorse these agreements for ratification by Parliament.

  
**HANNA SERWAAH TETTEH (MP)**  
**MINISTER**