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THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

**OFFICE OF THE MINISTER OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS**

21<sup>st</sup> January 2025

Rt Hon Speaker,  
Honourable Members,

**STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS TO PARLIAMENT ON THE EXPIRY OF UGANDAN NATIONAL IDENTIFICATION CARDS**

I present this statement in relation to the expired Ugandan National Identification Cards and provide clarity on the measures taken by the Ministry of Internal Affairs to address this issue.

Section 69(4) of the Registration of Persons Act, Cap 332, provides that a national identification card shall be valid for such a period as the Minister may prescribe by regulations. Previously, under Regulation 19 of the Registration of Persons Regulations, S.I No. 67 of 2015,

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the validity of the national identification card was prescribed as ten (10) years.

However, in recognition of the need for immediate intervention, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, issued **The Registration of Persons (Amendment) Regulations, No. 67 of 2024**, which extended the validity period of all National Identification Cards issued by the National Identification and Registration Authority (NIRA) by one (1) additional year. Consequently, all identification cards initially issued with a validity period of ten (10) years are now valid for eleven (11) years from the date of issuance.

Right Honourable Speaker and Honourable Members, the inclusion of expiry dates on Uganda's national identification cards serves practical, legal, and security purposes as justified below:

**1.Updating Security features.** Technology and security measures evolve rapidly. An expiry date ensures that identification cards can be periodically updated to incorporate advanced security features, making them less susceptible to forgery or misuse.

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Regular renewal cycles are a proactive measure to maintain the integrity of the national identification system.

**2. Data Accuracy and Currency.** Over time, personal details such as physical appearance, addresses, and contact information may change. An expiry date encourages citizens to update their information periodically, ensuring that NIRA maintains an accurate and up-to-date database.

**3. Wear and Tear.** Physical identification cards are subject to wear and tear over time due to regular use. An expiry date allows for the timely replacement of cards to ensure their functionality and readability, which is critical for verifying identity.

**4. International Standards Compliance.** Section 5 (2) of the Registration of Persons Act, Cap 332, provides that NIRA shall observe generally accepted information security practices and procedures, and specific industry or professional rules and regulations. Doc 9303 -International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Machine Readable Travel Documents (MRTD) 8<sup>th</sup> Edition, 2021, Part 9:

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16



Deployment of Biometric Identification and Electronic Storage of Data in MRTDs. – Section 2.2 provides for the validity period of MRTD under which identification cards fall. This therefore aligns Uganda with international standards and facilitates the use of the national identification card for cross-border travel and other international purposes.

Right Honourable Speaker and Honourable Members, Section 69(5) of the Registration of Persons Act imposes a duty on NIRA to renew expired cards upon application by the holders. In addition, Regulation 23 of the Registration of Persons Regulations requires that holders of national identification cards apply to NIRA for renewal at least two (2) months before the expiry of their cards.

The expiry of a national identification card does not, under any circumstances, amount to the expiry of a person's citizenship. Section 69(5) of the Registration of Persons Act makes this clear, and Section 68(2) affirms that an individual's **National Identification Number (NIN)** is prima facie evidence of citizenship. The NIN is



a lifetime number, which remains valid until a citizen's death.

Right Honourable Speaker and Honourable Members, the Ministry is aware of the challenges faced by citizens holding expired identification cards, particularly while using them as travel documents within the East African Community (EAC). These challenges are inspite of the extension of the validity period here in Uganda. To address this challenge, the Ministry engaged the Ministry of East African Affairs and that of Foreign Affairs, to signal the other EAC member states about this provisional time bound measure. Our aim is to secure acceptance of this interlude measure of extended cards for travel purposes within the region. Nonetheless, we are also soon starting the mass enrolment and renewal exercise, albeit slightly later than earlier planned, but nevertheless still within the stipulated time to renew all the expired national identity cards and also enlist fresh eligible entrants on the national identity information register.

I wish to inform this House that NIRA, is actively developing new technological advancements to enhance



the **National Security Information System (NSIS)** and improve the security features of our national identification cards before the commencement of the mass enrolment exercise. The long-term plan, is to introduce **e-IDs with no expiry**, a measure that will save costs and reduce the inconvenience associated with mass physical card renewals.

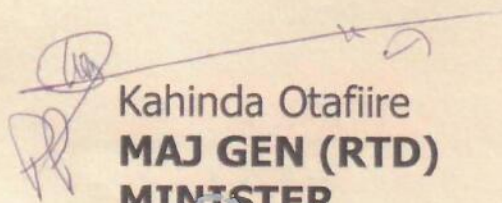
Right Honourable Speaker and Honourable Members, the extension of the validity period by an extra period of one year provides the necessary timeframe to integrate these upgrades into the renewal process, as well as mitigating any of the arising inconveniences to service delivery before renewal, thus improving the overall functionality and security of the system and cards. The extension therefore is a provisional stop gap measure and not a substitute for new national identity cards.

Right Honourable Speaker and Members, I assure you that the Ministry of Internal Affairs is committed to ensuring that the identity and rights of Ugandan citizens are protected and upheld. The Ministry of Internal Affairs shall continue working tirelessly to ensure a smooth mass



renewal and mass enrolment exercise of the National Identity Cards.

I beg to submit Rt Hon Speaker and Honourable members.



Kahinda Otafiire  
**MAJ GEN (RTD)**  
**MINISTER**

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