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TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP ON MACHINE READABLE TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

Sixteenth Meeting

(Montreal, 26 to 28 September 2005)

Agenda Item 1: Development of specifications for MRTDs

Agenda Item 1.3: Report of the Document Content and Format Working Group

ALTERNATIVE DOCUMENTS (FANTASY AND CAMOUFLAGE PASSPORTS)

(Presented by the Document Content and Format Working Group)

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Besides forged, counterfeit and fraudulently-obtained passports, other documents are in circulation purporting to be valid for international travel, but which are issued outside a governmental authority.

1.2 There have long been Alternative Documents to which people have turned to when they not wish to use a genuine passport indicating their true identity or/and nationality. As a rule, the holders of such documents present a potential risk in terms of illegal immigration, with the intention to be granted free movement, travel facilities and social or financial benefits, among others.

1.3 Authorities have to bear in mind that Fantasy and Camouflage passports have absolutely no value whatsoever as travel documents. Nevertheless, these documents are often presented as a means of identification, in an attempt to induce the controlling authorities into accepting them as genuine documents.

2. TERMS OF REFERENCE

2.1 The following three main categories of alternative documents can be identified:

2.1.1 *Fantasy Passports*: These documents have the physical appearance of a passport or of an identity document, but come from organisations with no authority and to whom no official recognition is afforded. They are, therefore, not an acceptable statement of either nationality or identity. (Examples include the “World Service Authority”, “Khalistan”, “U.N.O.” and “Koneuwe”, among many others.)

2.1.2 *Camouflage Passports*: Camouflage passports are unofficial travel documents issued in the name of countries, which no longer exist under that designation. By-and-large they are delivered by organisations with commercial purposes, and do not confer proof of either identity or nationality to its holder. (Examples include Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) and British Honduras (now Belize)).

2.1.3 *Passports of Convenience*: This term refers to genuine documents, which, although usually issued by the proper authorities, are granted in return for some form of investment or compensation in the host country. They are intended to offer travel facilities, which might otherwise be denied. Most of the cases refer to investments or financing programmes, some examples have to do with the need for settlement in inner and most remote areas of a country. (Examples include or included Belize, Dominican Republic, Cape Verde and Swaziland.)

2.2 Reference Terms

2.2.1 Designations other than the ones referred to above should be read as synonyms, bearing in mind that the above-mentioned terms are the most consensual and worldwide used. Examples include:

- a) **Bogus Passports**, for Camouflage and Fantasy documents;
- b) **Phoney Passports**, for Camouflage and Fantasy documents;
- c) **Spurious Documents**, for Camouflage and Fantasy documents;
- d) **Fictitious Passports**, for Camouflage and Fantasy documents; and
- e) **Pseudo Documents**, as a collective noun in lieu of Alternative Documents (not consensual).

2.2.2 The concepts and definitions referred to above result from a large consensus on this issue among several concerned fora, mainly within the EU framework.

3. ACTION BY THE TAG/MRTD

3.1 The TAG/MRTD is invited to:

- a) recommend that ICAO should consider including a provision in Annex 9 requiring States to seize fantasy or camouflage documents or marking them as invalid travel

documents, as suggested in TAG/MRTD-14/WP21, in order to draw the attention of border control officers that these documents are not valid for travel; and

- b) support DCFWG in the process of compiling and, continuously updating, a list of Fantasy and Camouflage Passports, and to work on the inclusion of such a list in the Document Checker, developed by Keesings Reference System, which has expressed its willingness to include such category of documentation in a separate link in its web-based Document Checker data base (www.documentchecker.com).

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