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COMMISSIONER FOR NRI AFFAIRS
(Cabinet Minister Rank)
GOVERNMENT OF GOA



D.O. No.Comm/NRI/~~457~~/14-15/1957

Date:- 06/11/2014

Dear Shri Swaminathan,

It was pleasure interacting with you during the High Level Meeting convened by the Hon'ble Home Minister on 29/10/2014 to discuss the Citizenship issue faced by Goans born before Liberation due to transcription of their birth records with the Central registry in Lisbon, Portugal which was also attended by the Hon'ble Minister for External Affairs, the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Goa and Senior Officials of the Ministries of Home and External Affairs so also Government of Goa.

On our return to Goa, we read the Press Conference given by the newly appointed Consul General of Portugal in Goa, Dr. Rui Carvalho Baceira on 29/10/2014, the same day as our meeting in New Delhi. This Conference was widely covered by all the local newspapers in Goa on 30/10/2014 wherein it is reported that the Consul General has clearly spelt out that if any Goan born before December 19, 1961 i.e. before the Liberation of Goa from the Portuguese regime, applies to the Portuguese Consulate for registering his birth in Portugal, and if his or her application duly supported by all the necessary documents, fulfills the criteria, then the Consulate is bound to respond positively to the application.

Secondly, not every Goan born before Liberation, become a Portuguese citizen by default and that his / her registration of birth in Portugal, as per the existing Portuguese Laws, will entitle the said person to possess "Cartao de Cidadao". **And it is this document only, namely "Cartao de Cidadao" which makes the applicant a Portuguese Citizen. This clearly implies that registration of birth is just the beginning of the process to obtain Portuguese Citizenship through "Cartao de Cidadao" and registration of birth by itself in no way gives the applicant the right to be a Portuguese Citizen.** "Bilhete de Identidade" or Identity Card has been withdrawn and instead now they have introduced "Cartao de Cidadao" which is identified as Portuguese Citizenship.

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Thirdly, the Portuguese passport is just a travel document that facilitates travel to Portugal and "**Cartao de Cidadao**" is the most important document as far as Portuguese citizenship is concerned. And that is why we repeatedly pointed out at our meeting convened by the Home Minister on October 29, 2014, that no Goan who has his birth registered in Portugal can travel to that country without obtaining a visa from the Portuguese Consulate in Goa. Those having "**Cartao de Cidadao**" do not need such a visa, which goes to show that only these people are considered by Portugal as having Portuguese Citizenship.

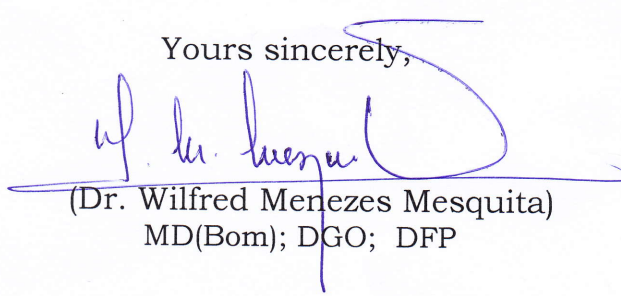
While we have forwarded the three English local newspapers namely, the Navhind Times, the Gomantak Times and Herald, all dated 30/10/2014 wherein the statement of the Consul General of Portugal in Goa have appeared to the Ministry of Home Affairs, I thought it appropriate to keep you informed of this development by sending herewith the relevant Press cuttings.

The perusal of the above statement will confirm that the same is in tune with the views expressed by the State Government that the mere registration or transcription of birth record of any Goan born in Goa before Liberation to the Central Registry in Lisbon, Portugal, cannot amount to acquisition of Portuguese Nationality or Citizenship, and consequently, cessation of Indian Citizenship. At the most it can be considered as the beginning of the process. Surely not the end.

In the light of the above, the Government of Goa would be highly obliged if the Government of India would take steps to either amend the Goa, Daman & Diu (Citizenship) Order, 1962 or Rule 40 of the Citizenship Rules, 2009 and Schedule III thereunder, as may be considered appropriate, in the circumstances of the case.

With Regards,

Yours sincerely,



(Dr. Wilfred Menezes Mesquita)
MD(Bom); DGO; DFP

To,

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