



BORDER MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY (BMA) MEDIA STATEMENT ON THE EVENTS THAT TOOK PLACE AT THE BEITBRIDGE BORDER POST ON THE 2ND AND 3RD DECEMBER 2023

1. In our media statement issued on 3rd December 2023, we stated that the Border Guards, working with members of the Home Affairs Counter Corruption Unit and the South African Police Services (SAPS), stopped and searched 42 buses at Beit bridge and found 443 unaccompanied children.
2. As a result, the BMA denied those children entry into South Africa. They did not meet the necessary requirements for entering the country.

The BMA wishes to state that it stands by what it said on Sunday the 3rd December in as far as the number of children affected is concerned.

3. The BMA does not wish to enter into a numbers game debate. There are legislative requirements for minor children to cross borders anywhere in the world.

As a country, South Africa remains obliged to look after every child within our borders as guided by the children's Act, the Prevention and Combating of Trafficking in Persons Act, the UN Convention on the Rights of the child and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the child

4. The BMA has the responsibility to implement the prescripts of the Immigration Act 13 of 2002 as amended, and its accompanying regulation as presented by the Department of Home Affairs.
5. For ease of reference we wish to present a table of requirements for children travelling through South African ports of entry, be it Land, Sea or Airports.

When it comes to unaccompanied minors, these requirements apply to South African children and Non South African children alike and will be implemented without fear, favour or prejudice.

For demanding these requirements, the BMA is unapologetic:

CATEGORY	SOUTH AFRICAN CHILD	FOREIGN VISA EXEMPT CHILD
CHILD ACCOMPANIED BY BOTH PARENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • valid passport • copy of a birth certificate / equivalent document or passport containing the details of the parent or parents of the child 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • valid passport
CHILD ACCOMPANIED BY ONE PARENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • valid passport • copy of a birth certificate/equivalent document • parental consent letter • copy of the passport / identity document of the absent parent • contact details of the absent parent • <i>where applicable-</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ copy of a court order granting full parental responsibilities and rights or legal guardianship in respect of the child. ○ copy of a death certificate of the deceased parent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • valid passport
CHILD TRAVELLING WITH PERSON WHO IS NOT HIS / HER BIOLOGICAL PARENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • valid passport • copy of a birth certificate/equivalent document • parental consent letter(s) • copy of the passport(s)/ identity document(s) of the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) • contact details of the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) • <i>where applicable-</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ copy of a death certificate ○ copy of an adoption order ○ copy of a court order granting full parental responsibilities and rights / legal guardianship in respect of the child. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • valid passport
UN-ACCOMPANIED CHILD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • copy of his /her birth certificate • parental consent letters • copy of the passport(s)/identity document(s) of the parent(s) / legal guardian(s) • contact details of the parent(s)/ legal guardian(s) • letter from the person who is to receive the child in the Republic, containing his / her residential address and contact details in the Republic where the child will reside. • copy of the identity document / valid passport and visa or permanent residence permit of the person who is to receive the child in the Republic. • <i>where applicable-</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ copy of an adoption order ○ copy of a death certificate of the deceased parent/ parents or legal guardian; ○ copy of a court order granting full parental responsibilities and rights or legal guardianship in respect of the child 	
CHILD IN ALTERNATIVE CARE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • valid passport • letter from the Provincial Head of the Department of Social Development where the child resides authorising his or her departure from the Republic as contemplated in section 169 of the Children's Act (Act No. 38 of 2005). 	

The Border Management Authority has intensified its operations during this festive period.

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ISSUED BY THE BORDER MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

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