Limits on Birr and Foreign Currency Holding in the Territory of Ethiopia (As Amended)

Directive No. FXD/87/2024

Whereas, it has become necessary to limit the Birr holding amount for a person entering into and departing from Ethiopia;

Whereas, it has also become necessary to set the conditions, limitations and circumstances under which an Ethiopian, resident of Ethiopia, and a non-resident or any other person who may possess and utilize foreign currency;

Now, therefore, pursuant to Articles 18(6), 20 (2) and 27(2) of the National Bank of Ethiopia Establishment (as Amended) Proclamation No. 591/2008, the National Bank of Ethiopia has issued this directive.

1. **Short Title**

This directive may be cited as "**Limits on Birr and Foreign Currency Holding in the territory of Ethiopia (as Amended) Directive No. FXD/87/2024.**"

2. **Definition**

In this Directive unless the context requires otherwise:

1) **"Immigration and Citizenship Service"** means the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Immigration and Citizenship Service.

2) **"Bank"** means a company licensed by the National Bank of Ethiopia to undertake banking business or a bank owned by the Government;

3) **"National bank"** means the National Bank of Ethiopia;

ሱዳን ጎዳና SUDAN STREET 5550/2048 +251-11-551-7430 +251-11-551-4588 nbe.gov.et SWIFTCODE NBETETAA

4) **"Person residing in Ethiopia"** means an Ethiopian National Residing in Ethiopia and a foreigner registered and has got a permanent or temporary residence permit to be Ethiopian resident by Immigration and Citizenship Service as per the Immigration laws of the Country;

5) **" Person not residing in Ethiopia"** means an Ethiopian National not Residing in Ethiopia or a foreigner not registered and has not got a permanent or temporary residence permit to reside in Ethiopia by Immigration and Citizenship Service as per the Immigration laws of the Country;

6) **"Territory of Ethiopia"** refers to the territory of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia;

7) **"Travel Document"** means any passport or other travel document, issued by the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Ministry of Foreign Affairs or the Immigration and Citizenship Service or by foreign state recognized by the Government of Ethiopia or international or Regional organization, bearing the identity and nationality of the holder;

8) **"Foreigner"** means any person who is neither Ethiopian national nor Foreign National of Ethiopian Origin;

9) **"Foreign National of Ethiopian Origin"** means a foreign national of Ethiopian Origin as defined under Providing Foreign Nationals of Ethiopia Origin with certain Rights to be exercised in their Country of Origin Proclamation No. 270/2002 and hold a valid identity card which attests he/she is a foreign national of Ethiopian origin;

10) **"Entry Stamp"** means the date of entry which is placed on the travel document by the Immigration and Citizenship Service when the passenger arrives in the territory of Ethiopia;

NATIONAL BANK OF ETHIOPIA 14

11) **"Foreign Currency"** means a currency Cash Notes other than Ethiopia legal tender which is legal tender in any country and declared to be convertible by the National bank of Ethiopia for payment;

12) **"Neighboring country"** means a country which shares a boundary with the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia;

13) **" Other Foreign Currency"** means a currency Cash Notes other than Ethiopia legal tender which is legal tender in any country and not declared to be convertible by the National bank of Ethiopia for payment;

14) **"Person"** means any natural or juridical person.

15) **"Transit passenger"** means passengers who stay for 24 hours or less in Ethiopia and continues his or her flight to the next destination on a same or different aircraft or airline.

3. The Birr Holding Limit for a Person departing from or entering into Ethiopia

The Birr holding limit for:-

1) A person Entering into and departing from Ethiopia may hold up to a maximum of Birr 3,000.00 (Birr Three Thousand) per travel to and from Ethiopia;

2) Notwithstanding the limit set under sub-article 3.1 of this article, a person travelling to Djibouti may hold up to a maximum amount of Birr 10,000 (Birr Ten Thousand) per travel.

4. Time Limit for holding and conversion of Foreign Currency

1) a person residing in Ethiopia enters into the territory of Ethiopia carrying a foreign currency shall convert all foreign currency at an authorized forex bureau for the equivalent sum in Birr or deposit to his/her foreign currency

saving account within 30 days from date of entry stamped on the travel document by the Immigration and Citizenship Service. However, he/she has to present customs declaration if the foreign currency amount exceeds USD 4,000 (USD Four Thousand) or equivalent in any other convertible foreign currency while depositing into foreign currency account.

2) Notwithstanding sub-article 4(1) of this Article, the Foreign National of Ethiopian Origin or Ethiopian National not residing in Ethiopia who enters Ethiopia carrying foreign currency and intends to stay for more than ninety days, shall deposit such a foreign currency into his/her Non-resident (NR) Foreign Currency Account, his/her Foreign Exchange saving account within ninety days from date of entry stamped on the travel document by the Immigration and Citizenship Service. However he/she has to present customs declaration if the foreign currency amount exceeds USD 10,000 (USD Ten Thousand) or equivalent in any other convertible foreign currency while depositing into foreign currency account or convert it at an authorized forex bureau for the equivalent sum in Birr.

3) a foreigner not residing in Ethiopia enters into the country carrying foreign currency may hold the foreign currency in his/her possession up to the visa validity period.

4) a person residing in Ethiopia who purchase foreign currency from a bank, may carry such foreign currency for a period of thirty (30) days from the date of a bank advice and has to convert it at an authorized forex bureau for the equivalent sum in Birr within thirty(30) days.



5. Customs Declaration of Foreign Currency

1) Customs Declaration of Foreign Currency

a) A person residing in Ethiopia entering into the country from abroad carrying foreign currency exceeding USD 4,000(USD Four Thousand) or equivalent in any other convertible foreign currency shall declare by using foreign currency Customs Declaration Form prepared for this purpose on arrival at Airport or any other entry point in to the country.

b) Foreign national of Ethiopian Origin, Ethiopian National or foreigner not resident in Ethiopia, who enters into the country carrying foreign currency exceeding USD 10,000 (USD Ten Thousand) or equivalent in any other convertible foreign currency shall declare the foreign currency in his/her possession by using foreign currency Customs Declaration Form prepared for this purpose on arrival at Airport or any other entry point in to the country.

c) Notwithstanding sub-article 1b of this Article, a transit passenger is exempted from foreign currency declaration requirement.

2) Permissible amount of Foreign Currency for Travel Abroad

a) Person residing in Ethiopia is allowed to travel abroad by carrying a foreign currency if he /she present a bank advice issued for the purchase of the foreign currency within a period of thirty (30) days from the date of a bank advice.

b) Non-resident Foreign National of Ethiopian Origin and Ethiopian National not residing in Ethiopia is allowed to travel abroad by carrying a foreign currency

i) if he /she present a bank advice issued for the purchase of the foreign currency within a period of thirty (30) days from the date of a bank advice.

ii) If he/she enters into the territory of Ethiopia carrying a foreign currency from abroad and travel back within 90 days from date of entry stamped on the travel document by the Immigration and Citizenship Service, however he/she has to present customs declaration if the foreign currency amount exceeds USD 10,000 (USD Ten Thousand) or equivalent in any other convertible foreign currency

c) Embassy Employee, Temporary Worker of different foreign institution or workshop participant or trainer who entered into the country can carry foreign currency exceeding USD 10,000 (USD Ten Thousand) or the equivalent in other convertible foreign currencies only when he/she can produce a bank advice or employer's letter or a supporting letter from workshop coordinator which justifies the acquisition of the foreign currency is from a legal source.

6. Other Foreign Currency Holding

A person entering into the territory of Ethiopia from a neighboring country using land transport carrying other foreign currency having value more than or equivalent of USD 500 (USD Five Hundred) in conversion shall declare at the border Customs' branches or stations and may travel abroad by carrying such declared amount by presenting customs declaration.

7. Reporting Requirement

1) The Ethiopian Customs Commission is required to send a copy of every foreign currency customs declaration to the National Bank of Ethiopia every month within the first five working days of the next month.

2) The Ethiopian Customs Commission is also required to submit any other report related to foreign currency customs declaration in hard and soft copy when requested by the National Bank of Ethiopia.

8. Prohibition

1) Unless otherwise provided by this directive or pertinent laws or without authorization of the National Bank, a person may not transfer or pay foreign currency in cash to a third party either as donation or gift or to discharge any obligation.

2) Unless otherwise provided by this directive or pertinent laws or without authorization of the National Bank, a person may not hold or carry foreign currency.

3) It is prohibited to undertake any transaction in other foreign currency in the territory of Ethiopia.

9. Penalty

1) Any person who fails to comply with the provisions of this directive shall be punished in accordance with Article 26 of the National Bank of Ethiopia Establishment (as Amended) Proclamation No. 591/2008.

2) Where the offense is committed by the body corporate, it shall be punished in accordance with the Article 26 of the National Bank of Ethiopia Establishment(as Amended) proclamation No.591/2008.



10. Repealed Directive and Inapplicable Practices

1) Limits on Birr and Foreign Currency Holding Directives No. FXD/81/2022 is hereby repealed and replaced by this directive.

2) No circular letters or customary practices inconsistent with the provisions of this directive shall have force with respect to matters provided for in this directive.

11. Transitory Provision

Any person who acquired foreign currency by donation or gift before the coming into force of this directive shall convert all foreign currencies in his/her possession through an authorized forex bureau against the payment to him/her of the equivalent sum in Birr within 30 days from the effective date of this directive.

12. Effective Date

This directive shall enter into force as of February 22, 2024.

Mamo Esmelealem Mihretu
Governor

NATIONAL BANK OF ETHIOPIA 14