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## **NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

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### **CONTRIBUTION BY DIEDERIK VRIES, MP, (PDM) ON THE CIVIL REGISTRATION AND IDENTIFICATION BILL**

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**07 AUGUST 2024**

**Honourable Speaker**  
**Honourable Members**

Important civil information such as our places of birth, our names and who we generally are, defines our identity and therefore forms an integral part of who we are as people. In many countries around the world, births, marriages, divorces, and deaths are not regularly registered, and the causes of deaths are not documented. This means that people lack the documents they need to prove their identities to get access to basic services.

**Honourable Members**

Research by the World Bank shows that more than 1.1 billion people worldwide are unable to prove who they are and people in Namibia are no exception. It is therefore important to ensure that Namibia has an up-to-date Civil Register that will aid vital statistics.

**Honourable Speaker**  
**Honourable Members**

The absence of identification documents in one's life significantly hampers the basic activities of normal life like accessing social services, getting an education and opening a bank account amongst others. Additionally, birth certificates and proof of age is central to prevent child marriages, child labour, and prosecution of minors as adults.

Children without any identification documents are deprived of their right to an education and that of important social services. Moreover, the absence of death, marriage, and divorce certification also pose challenges of inheritance and the smooth transfer of properties.

**Honourable Speaker**  
**Honourable Members**

According to the Ministry of Home Affairs, Immigration, Safety and Security as reported in April this year, there are 141 048 (One hundred forty one thousand, and forty eight) people are stateless and undocumented. This situation of stateless and undocumented people in Namibia is of serious concern as it prevents the people from accessing important social services and also paints a poor planning picture. I therefore call on the ministry address this issue of stateless and undocumented people.

**Honourable Members**

In conclusion, I welcome the introduction of this Civil Registration and Identification Bill as it is extremely important for every Namibian citizen. The Civil Registration and Identification Bill will mainly ensure that our country will have a well-functioning Civil Register that will serve its purpose in registering important civil information.

I therefore fully support this Bill.

**I thank you.**