

No. 13 of 2016.

*Common Reporting Standard
(Automatic Exchange of Financial
Account Information) Act, 2016.*

Saint Christopher
and Nevis.

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Saint Christopher
and Nevis.

I assent,



SAMUEL WEYMOUTH TAPLEY SEATON
Governor-General

21st December, 2016.

SAINT CHRISTOPHER AND NEVIS

No. 13 of 2016

AN ACT to give effect to the Agreement for the Implementation of the Standard of Automatic Exchange of Financial Account Information in Taxation Matters.

[Published 21st December 2016, Extra-Ordinary Gazette No. 61 of 2016.]

BE IT ENACTED by the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the National Assembly of Saint Christopher and Nevis and by the authority of the same as follows:

1. Short title.

This Act may be cited as the Common Reporting Standard (Automatic Exchange of Financial Account Information) Act, 2016.

2. Interpretation.

(1) In this Act,

“Agreement” means the Convention on Mutual Administrative Assistance in Tax Matters, which provides for the exchange of information on an automatic basis as described in the Standard, as set out in Schedule 1;

“Commissioners” means persons appointed as Inland Revenue Commissioners pursuant to section 41 of the Tax Administration and Procedures Act, Cap. 20:52;

“Competent Authority” means the Financial Secretary or the Financial Secretary’s authorized representative;

“Department” means the Inland Revenue Department of Saint Christopher and Nevis;

“designated officer” means, with respect to any function, the officer of the Department designated to carry out that function;

“financial account” has the meaning given to that expression by Section VIII of the Standard;

“information return” means a report, setting out certain information as specified by Regulations made under this Act, which a reporting financial institution is required to file with the Competent Authority;

“Minister” means the Minister of Finance;

“non-reporting financial institution” means any category of Saint Kitts and Nevis financial institution as set out in Schedule 2, that is specifically excluded from being required to report information on the basis that it poses a low risk of tax evasion;

“reporting financial institution” means any Saint Christopher and Nevis financial institution that is not a non-reporting financial institution;

“Standard” means the Common Reporting Standard, including the Commentaries thereon, approved by the Council of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development on 15 July 2014, which contains reporting and due diligence procedures for the exchange of information on an automatic basis.

(2) For the purposes of the Standard, wherever the expression “Jurisdiction Financial Institution” occurs in subparagraph (A) (1) of Section VIII, of the Standard, it shall be interpreted as follows:

“Jurisdiction Financial Institution” means,

- (i) any Financial Institution that is resident in Saint Christopher and Nevis, but excludes any branch of that Financial Institution that is located outside of Saint Christopher and Nevis; and
- (ii) any Financial Institution has a branch that is located in Saint Christopher and Nevis.”.

(3) Any word or expression which has a meaning given to it by the Standard shall, where it is used in this Act or Regulations made under this Act and unless the contrary intention appears, have the same meaning in this Act or those Regulations as it has in the Standard.

2. Agreement to have the force of law.

The Agreement has the force of law in Saint Christopher and Nevis.

3. Inconsistent Laws.

Where there is any inconsistency between the provisions of this Act or the Agreement and the following Acts, then the provisions of this Act and the Agreement shall prevail to the extent of the inconsistency

- (a) the Income Tax Act, Cap 20.22;
- (b) the Tax Administration and Procedures Act, Cap 20.52; or
- (c) the Saint Christopher and Nevis (Mutual Exchange of Information on Taxation Matters) Act, Cap. 20.60.

(d) the Confidential Relationships Act, Cap. 21.02.

5. Information Returns by Financial Institutions.

A reporting financial institution shall collect and report required information in respect of certain financial accounts as prescribed by Regulations made under this Act.

6. Functions and Powers of Competent Authority.

(1) For the purposes of this Act, the Competent Authority is the Financial Secretary or his or her representative.

(2) The Competent Authority, shall, subject to the general directions of the Minister, administer and enforce compliance with the provisions of the Agreement, this Act and any Regulations made under this Act.

(3) The Competent Authority may exercise all powers vested in it under the Saint Christopher and Nevis (Mutual Exchange of Information on Taxation Matters) Act to administer and enforce compliance with the provisions of the Agreement, this Act and any Regulations made under this Act.

(4) The Competent Authority may delegate, in writing, to any designated officer any power or duty conferred on the Competent Authority by this Act.

(5) Subject to subsection (6), the Competent Authority or any designated officer may, for the purposes of this Act, request information from a reporting financial institution.

(6) The Competent Authority or designated officer may, at a reasonable time, enter any premises or place of business of a reporting financial institution in order to:

- (a) determine whether information submitted in an information return by the reporting financial institution is correct and complete
- (b) determine whether necessary information was excluded;
- (c) examine the procedures put in place by the reporting financial institution to verify its compliance with this Act.

7. Confidentiality.

(1) The provisions of the Confidential Relationships Act, shall not preclude the disclosure of information by a reporting financial institution to the Competent Authority that is required to be included in an information return filed under this Act or the Regulations made under this Act.

(2) A person who

- (a) having a duty or being employed in the administration or enforcement of this Act or the Regulations made under this Act; or
- (b) any person who formerly had a duty or was formerly so employed in the administration or enforcement of this Act or the Regulations made under this Act

(c) is engaged as a third party service provider for the purposes of this Act shall treat information received from a reporting financial institution under this Act or those Regulations as confidential and shall only disclose such information as may be necessary for the purpose of the administration or enforcement of the Agreement, this Act or under any Regulations made pursuant to this Act.

(3) A person who discloses or divulges any information or produces any document relating to the information received from a person, reporting financial institution or from the tax authorities of a foreign country under the Agreement, this Act or the Regulations made under this Act in contravention of subsection (2) commits an offence and is liable, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding twenty thousand dollars or to imprisonment for a period not exceeding one year.

8. Penalties.

(1) Every reporting financial institution that fails to file an information return as and when required under this Act or under the Regulations made under this Act is liable to a penalty not exceeding one hundred thousand dollars.

(2) Every person who makes a false statement or omission in respect of any information required to be included on an information return, under this Act or under any Regulations made under this Act, is liable to a penalty of thirty thousand dollars for each such failure, unless in the case of information required in respect of another person, a reasonable effort was made by the person to obtain the information from the other person.

(3) Every person who does not comply with the requirement of the Competent Authority or a designated officer in the exercise or performance of the Competent Authority or officer's powers or duties under this Act or under Regulations made under this Act is liable to a penalty not exceeding one hundred thousand dollars.

9. Liability to penalties.

(1) Liability to a penalty under section 8 does not arise if the person or reporting financial institution satisfies the Competent Authority or Commissioners that there is a lawful or reasonable excuse for the failure to comply with the provisions of this Act

(2) If a person or a reporting financial institution had a lawful or reasonable excuse for a failure but the excuse has ceased, the person is to be treated as having continued to have the excuse if the failure is remedied without unreasonable delay after the excuse ceased.

10. Right to appeal against penalties.

A person or reporting financial institution that disagrees with the liability to penalty pursuant to section 8, may appeal to the Commissioners in writing not later than one month after the date of the notice of the Comptroller's decision.

11. Grounds for Appeal.

Subject to section 12, a person or reporting financial institution may appeal against a penalty

- (a) on the grounds that liability to a penalty under section 8 does not arise; or
- (b) as to the amount of such a penalty.

12. Procedure on appeal against penalty

(1) Notice of an appeal under section 11 shall be provided to the Competent Authority, in writing, within thirty days of receipt of the notification of the liability to a penalty pursuant to section 8.

(2) The notice of appeal shall contain particulars of the grounds of appeal.

(3) Where an appeal has been lodged with the Commissioners, pursuant to section 11(a), the Commissioners may confirm or cancel the decision of the Competent Authority in relation to the liability of the reporting institution.

(4) Where an appeal has been lodged with the Commissioners pursuant to section 11(b), the Commissioners may confirm the assessment or substitute another in place of the original assessment.

13. Appeals to the High Court.

(1) Either party to any proceedings before the Commissioners who is dissatisfied with the decision of the Commissioners may, within one month from the date of being notified of the decision, file a notice of appeal with the Registrar of the High Court.

(2) The party appealing the decision of the Commissioners shall serve a copy of the notice of appeal on the other party to the proceedings before the Commissioners.

(3) An appeal from the Commissioners may be made only on a point of law and shall be by way of case stated.

14. Enforcement of penalties.

(1) A penalty under this Act shall be paid to the Department within thirty days after

- (a) the date on which notification under section 8 is provided in respect of the penalty, or
- (b) the date on which an appeal against the liability to a penalty pursuant to section 9 is finally determined or withdrawn.

(2) If any amount in respect of a penalty is not paid by the due date described in subsection (1), interest on the amount owing shall be computed and charged for the period during which that amount is outstanding.

(3) The rate of interest charged under subsection (2) shall be five per cent per annum.

15. Immunity from Suit.

(1) The Competent Authority, its authorized representative or a person acting under its authority who discloses confidential information in compliance with section 6 does not commit an offence under the Confidential Relationships Act or any other law in force in Saint Christopher and Nevis by reason only of the disclosure.

(2) A disclosure referred to in subsection (1) is not a breach of a confidential relationship between the person who discloses the information and any other person, and no claim or action whatsoever lies against the person making the disclosure by reason of the disclosure.

16. Anti-avoidance.

If a person enters into an arrangement or engages in a practice, where it may be reasonably inferred that the main purpose of that arrangement or scheme is to avoid complying with an obligation under this Act or any regulations made thereto, the person shall be equally subject to the obligation as if the person had not entered into the arrangement or engaged in the practice.

17. Regulations.

(1) The Minister may make Regulations for carrying out the objects of this Act to give effect to the provisions of the Agreement and this Act.

(2) Regulations made pursuant to subsection (1) shall be subject to negative resolution of the National Assembly.

SCHEDULE 1

The Agreement

THE MULTILATERAL CONVENTION ON MUTUAL ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANCE IN TAX MATTERS

Text amended by the provisions of the Protocol amending the Convention on Mutual Administrative Assistance in Tax Matters, which entered into force on 1st June 2011.

Preamble

The member States of the Council of Europe and the member countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), signatories of this Convention,

Considering that the development of international movement of persons, capital, goods and services – although highly beneficial in itself – has increased the possibilities of tax avoidance and evasion and therefore requires increasing co-operation among tax authorities;

Welcoming the various efforts made in recent years to combat tax avoidance and tax evasion on an international level, whether bilaterally or multilaterally;

Considering that a co-ordinated effort between States is necessary in order to foster all forms of administrative assistance in matters concerning taxes of any kind whilst at the same time ensuring adequate protection of the rights of taxpayers;

Recognising that international co-operation can play an important part in facilitating the proper determination of tax liabilities and in helping the taxpayer to secure his rights;

Considering that fundamental principles entitling every person to have his rights and obligations determined in accordance with a proper legal procedure should be recognised as

applying to tax matters in all States and that States should endeavour to protect the legitimate interests of taxpayers, including appropriate protection against discrimination and double taxation;

Convinced therefore that States should carry out measures or supply information, having regard to the necessity of protecting the confidentiality of information, and taking account of international instruments for the protection of privacy and flows of personal data;

Considering that a new co-operative environment has emerged and that it is desirable that a multilateral instrument is made available to allow the widest number of States to obtain the benefits of the new co-operative environment and at the same time implement the highest international standards of co-operation in the tax field;

Desiring to conclude a convention on mutual administrative assistance in tax matters,
Have agreed as follows:

Chapter I – Scope of the Convention

Article 1 – Object of the Convention and persons covered

1. The Parties shall, subject to the provisions of Chapter IV, provide administrative assistance to each other in tax matters. Such assistance may involve, where appropriate, measures taken by judicial bodies.
2. Such administrative assistance shall comprise:
 - a. exchange of information, including simultaneous tax examinations and participation in tax examinations abroad;
 - b. assistance in recovery, including measures of conservancy; and
 - c. service of documents.
3. A Party shall provide administrative assistance whether the person affected is a resident or national of a Party or of any other State.

Article 2 – Taxes covered

1. This Convention shall apply:
 - a. to the following taxes:
 - i. taxes on income or profits,
 - ii. taxes on capital gains which are imposed separately from the tax on income or profits,
 - iii. taxes on net wealth, imposed on behalf of a Party; and
 - b. to the following taxes:
 - i. taxes on income, profits, capital gains or net wealth which are imposed on behalf of political subdivisions or local authorities of a Party

- ii. compulsory social security contributions payable to general government or to social security institutions established under public law, and
- iii. taxes in other categories, except customs duties, imposed on behalf of a Party, namely:
 - A. estate, inheritance or gift taxes, B. taxes on immovable property,
 - C. general consumption taxes, such as value added or sales taxes,
 - D. specific taxes on goods and services such as excise taxes,
 - E. taxes on the use or ownership of motor vehicles,
 - F. taxes on the use or ownership of movable property other than motor vehicles,
 - G. any other taxes;
- iv. taxes in categories referred to in sub-paragraph iii. above which are imposed on behalf of political subdivisions or local authorities of a Party.

2. The existing taxes to which the Convention shall apply are listed in Annex A in the categories referred to in paragraph 1.

3. The Parties shall notify the Secretary General of the Council of Europe or the Secretary General of OECD (hereinafter referred to as the “Depositaries”) of any change to be made to Annex A as a result of a modification of the list mentioned in paragraph 2. Such change shall take effect on the first day of the month following the expiration of a period of three months after the date of receipt of such notification by the Depositary.

4. The Convention shall also apply, as from their adoption, to any identical or substantially similar taxes which are imposed in a Contracting State after the entry into force of the Convention in respect of that Party in addition to or in place of the existing taxes listed in Annex A and, in that event, the Party concerned shall notify one of the Depositaries of the adoption of the tax in question.

Chapter II – General definitions

Article 3 – Definitions

1. For the purposes of this Convention, unless the context otherwise requires:
 - a. the terms “applicant State” and “requested State” mean respectively any Party applying for administrative assistance in tax matters and any Party requested to provide such assistance;
 - b. the term “tax” means any tax or social security contribution to which the Convention applies pursuant to Article 2;
 - c. the term “tax claim” means any amount of tax, as well as interest thereon, related administrative fines and costs incidental to recovery, which are owed and not yet paid;

- d. the term “competent authority” means the persons and authorities listed in Annex B;
- e. the term “nationals” in relation to a Party means:
 - i. all individuals possessing the nationality of that Party, and
 - ii. all legal persons, partnerships, associations and other entities deriving their status as such from the laws in force in that Party.

For each Party that has made a declaration for that purpose, the terms used above will be understood as defined in Annex C.

2. As regards the application of the Convention by a Party, any term not defined therein shall, unless the context otherwise requires, have the meaning which it has under the law of that Party concerning the taxes covered by the Convention.
3. The Parties shall notify one of the Depositaries of any change to be made to Annexes B and C. Such change shall take effect on the first day of the month following the expiration of a period of three months after the date of receipt of such notification by the Depositary in question.

Chapter III – Forms of assistance

SECTION I – EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION

Article 4 – General provision

1. The Parties shall exchange any information, in particular as provided in this section, that is foreseeably relevant for the administration or enforcement of their domestic laws concerning the taxes covered by this Convention.
2. Deleted.
3. Any Party may, by a declaration addressed to one of the Depositaries, indicate that, according to its internal legislation, its authorities may inform its resident or national before transmitting information concerning him, in conformity with Articles 5 and 7.

Article 5 – Exchange of information on request

1. At the request of the applicant State, the requested State shall provide the applicant State with any information referred to in Article 4 which concerns particular persons or transactions.
2. If the information available in the tax files of the requested State is not sufficient to enable it to comply with the request for information, that State shall take all relevant measures to provide the applicant State with the information requested.

Article 6 – Automatic exchange of information

With respect to categories of cases and in accordance with procedures which they shall determine by mutual agreement, two or more Parties shall automatically exchange the information referred to in Article 4.

Article 7 – Spontaneous exchange of information

1. A Party shall, without prior request, forward to another Party information of which it has knowledge in the following circumstances:
 - a. the first-mentioned Party has grounds for supposing that there may be a loss of tax in the other Party;
 - b. a person liable to tax obtains a reduction in or an exemption from tax in the first-mentioned Party which would give rise to an increase in tax or to liability to tax in the other Party;
 - c. business dealings between a person liable to tax in a Party and a person liable to tax in another Party are conducted through one or more countries in such a way that a saving in tax may result in one or the other Party or in both;
 - d. a Party has grounds for supposing that a saving of tax may result from artificial transfers of profits within groups of enterprises;
 - e. information forwarded to the first-mentioned Party by the other Party has enabled information to be obtained which may be relevant in assessing liability to tax in the latter Party.
2. Each Party shall take such measures and implement such procedures as are necessary to ensure that information described in paragraph 1 will be made available for transmission to another Party.

Article 8 – Simultaneous tax examinations

1. At the request of one of them, two or more Parties shall consult together for the purposes of determining cases and procedures for simultaneous tax examinations. Each Party involved shall decide whether or not it wishes to participate in a particular simultaneous tax examination.
2. For the purposes of this Convention, a simultaneous tax examination means an arrangement between two or more Parties to examine simultaneously, each in its own territory, the tax affairs of a person or persons in which they have a common or related interest, with a view to exchanging any relevant information which they so obtain.

Article 9 – Tax examinations abroad

1. At the request of the competent authority of the applicant State, the competent authority of the requested State may allow representatives of the competent authority of the applicant State to be present at the appropriate part of a tax examination in the requested State.
2. If the request is acceded to, the competent authority of the requested State shall, as soon as possible, notify the competent authority of the applicant State about the time and place of the examination, the authority or official designated to carry out the examination and the procedures and conditions required by the requested State for the conduct of the examination. All decisions with respect to the conduct of the tax examination shall be made by the requested State.

3. A Party may inform one of the Depositories of its intention not to accept, as a general rule, such requests as are referred to in paragraph 1. Such a declaration may be made or withdrawn at any time.

Article 10 – Conflicting information

If a Party receives from another Party information about a person's tax affairs which appears to it to conflict with information in its possession, it shall so advise the Party which has provided the information.

SECTION II - ASSISTANCE IN RECOVERY

Article 11 – Recovery of tax claims

1. At the request of the applicant State, the requested State shall, subject to the provisions of Articles 14 and 15, take the necessary steps to recover tax claims of the first-mentioned State as if they were its own tax claims.

2. The provisions of paragraph 1 shall apply only to tax claims which form the subject of an instrument permitting their enforcement in the applicant State and, unless otherwise agreed between the Parties concerned, which are not contested.

However, where the claim is against a person who is not a resident of the applicant State, paragraph 1 shall only apply, unless otherwise agreed between the Parties concerned, where the claim may no longer be contested.

3. The obligation to provide assistance in the recovery of tax claims concerning a deceased person or his estate, is limited to the value of the estate or of the property acquired by each beneficiary of the estate, according to whether the claim is to be recovered from the estate or from the beneficiaries thereof.

Article 12 – Measures of conservancy

At the request of the applicant State, the requested State shall, with a view to the recovery of an amount of tax, take measures of conservancy even if the claim is contested or is not yet the subject of an instrument permitting enforcement.

Article 13 – Documents accompanying the request

1. The request for administrative assistance under this section shall be accompanied by:
 - a. a declaration that the tax claim concerns a tax covered by the Convention and, in the case of recovery that, subject to paragraph 2 of Article 11, the tax claim is not or may not be contested,
 - b. an official copy of the instrument permitting enforcement in the applicant State, and
 - c. any other document required for recovery or measures of conservancy.
2. The instrument permitting enforcement in the applicant State shall, where appropriate and in accordance with the provisions in force in the requested State, be accepted, recognised,

supplemented or replaced as soon as possible after the date of the receipt of the request for assistance, by an instrument permitting enforcement in the latter State.

Article 14 – Time limits

1. Questions concerning any period beyond which a tax claim cannot be enforced shall be governed by the law of the applicant State. The request for assistance shall give particulars concerning that period.
2. Acts of recovery carried out by the requested State in pursuance of a request for assistance, which, according to the laws of that State, would have the effect of suspending or interrupting the period mentioned in paragraph 1, shall also have this effect under the laws of the applicant State. The requested State shall inform the applicant State about such acts.
3. In any case, the requested State is not obliged to comply with a request for assistance which is submitted after a period of 15 years from the date of the original instrument permitting enforcement.

Article 15 – Priority

The tax claim in the recovery of which assistance is provided shall not have in the requested State any priority specially accorded to the tax claims of that State even if the recovery procedure used is the one applicable to its own tax claims.

Article 16 – Deferral of payment

The requested State may allow deferral of payment or payment by instalments if its laws or administrative practice permit it to do so in similar circumstances, but shall first inform the applicant State.

SECTION III – SERVICE OF DOCUMENTS

Article 17 – Service of documents

1. At the request of the applicant State, the requested State shall serve upon the addressee documents, including those relating to judicial decisions, which emanate from the applicant State and which relate to a tax covered by this Convention.
2. The requested State shall effect service of documents:
 - a. by a method prescribed by its domestic laws for the service of documents of a substantially similar nature;
 - b. to the extent possible, by a particular method requested by the applicant State or the closest to such method available under its own laws.
3. A Party may effect service of documents directly through the post on a person within the territory of another Party.
4. Nothing in the Convention shall be construed as invalidating any service of documents by a Party in accordance with its laws.

5. When a document is served in accordance with this article, it need not be accompanied by a translation. However, where it is satisfied that the addressee cannot understand the language of the document, the requested State shall arrange to have it translated into or a summary drafted in its or one of its official languages. Alternatively, it may ask the applicant State to have the document either translated into or accompanied by a summary in one of the official languages of the requested State, the Council of Europe or the OECD.

Chapter IV – Provisions relating to all forms of assistance

Article 18 – Information to be provided by the applicant State

1. A request for assistance shall indicate where appropriate:
 - a. the authority or agency which initiated the request made by the competent authority;
 - b. the name, address, or any other particulars assisting in the identification of the person in respect of whom the request is made;
 - c. in the case of a request for information, the form in which the applicant State wishes the information to be supplied in order to meet its needs;
 - d. in the case of a request for assistance in recovery or measures of conservancy, the nature of the tax claim, the components of the tax claim and the assets from which the tax claim may be recovered;
 - e. in the case of a request for service of documents, the nature and the subject of the document to be served;
 - f. whether it is in conformity with the law and administrative practice of the applicant State and whether it is justified in the light of the requirements of Article 21.2.g.
2. As soon as any other information relevant to the request for assistance comes to its knowledge, the applicant State shall forward it to the requested State.

Article 19 – Deleted

Article 20 – Response to the request for assistance

1. If the request for assistance is complied with, the requested State shall inform the applicant State of the action taken and of the result of the assistance as soon as possible.
2. If the request is declined, the requested State shall inform the applicant State of that decision and the reason for it as soon as possible.
3. If, with respect to a request for information, the applicant State has specified the form in which it wishes the information to be supplied and the requested State is in a position to do so, the requested State shall supply it in the form requested.

Article 21 – Protection of persons and limits to the obligation to provide assistance

1. Nothing in this Convention shall affect the rights and safeguards secured to persons by the laws or administrative practice of the requested State.

2. Except in the case of Article 14, the provisions of this Convention shall not be construed so as to impose on the requested State the obligation:

- a. to carry out measures at variance with its own laws or administrative practice or the laws or administrative practice of the applicant State;
- b. to carry out measures which would be contrary to public policy (ordre public);
- c. to supply information which is not obtainable under its own laws or its administrative practice or under the laws of the applicant State or its administrative practice;
- d. to supply information which would disclose any trade, business, industrial, commercial or professional secret, or trade process, or information the disclosure of which would be contrary to public policy (ordre public);
- e. to provide administrative assistance if and insofar as it considers the taxation in the applicant State to be contrary to generally accepted taxation principles or to the provisions of a convention for the avoidance of double taxation, or of any other convention which the requested State has concluded with the applicant State;
- f. to provide administrative assistance for the purpose of administering or enforcing a provision of the tax law of the applicant State, or any requirement connected therewith, which discriminates against a national of the requested State as compared with a national of the applicant State in the same circumstances;
- g. to provide administrative assistance if the applicant State has not pursued all reasonable measures available under its laws or administrative practice, except where recourse to such measures would give rise to disproportionate difficulty;
- h. to provide assistance in recovery in those cases where the administrative burden for that State is clearly disproportionate to the benefit to be derived by the applicant State.

3. If information is requested by the applicant State in accordance with this Convention, the requested State shall use its information gathering measures to obtain the requested information, even though the requested State may not need such information for its own tax purposes. The obligation contained in the preceding sentence is subject to the limitations contained in this Convention, but in no case shall such limitations, including in particular those of paragraphs 1 and 2, be construed to permit a requested State to decline to supply information solely because it has no domestic interest in such information.

4. In no case shall the provisions of this Convention, including in particular those of paragraphs 1 and 2, be construed to permit a requested State to decline to supply information solely because the information is held by a bank, other financial institution, nominee or person acting in an agency or a fiduciary capacity or because it relates to ownership interests in a person.

Article 22 – Secrecy

1. Any information obtained by a Party under this Convention shall be treated as secret and protected in the same manner as information obtained under the domestic law of that Party and, to the extent needed to ensure the necessary level of protection of personal data,

in accordance with the safeguards which may be specified by the supplying Party as required under its domestic law.

2. Such information shall in any case be disclosed only to persons or authorities (including courts and administrative or supervisory bodies) concerned with the assessment, collection or recovery of, the enforcement or prosecution in respect of, or the determination of appeals in relation to, taxes of that Party, or the oversight of the above. Only the persons or authorities mentioned above may use the information and then only for such purposes. They may, notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 1, disclose it in public court proceedings or in judicial decisions relating to such taxes.

3. If a Party has made a reservation provided for in sub-paragraph a. of paragraph 1 of Article 30, any other Party obtaining information from that Party shall not use it for the purpose of a tax in a category subject to the reservation. Similarly, the Party making such a reservation shall not use information obtained under this Convention for the purpose of a tax in a category subject to the reservation.

4. Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraphs 1, 2 and 3, information received by a Party may be used for other purposes when such information may be used for such other purposes under the laws of the supplying Party and the competent authority of that Party authorises such use. Information provided by a Party to another Party may be transmitted by the latter to a third Party, subject to prior authorisation by the competent authority of the first-mentioned Party.

Article 23 – Proceedings

1. Proceedings relating to measures taken under this Convention by the requested State shall be brought only before the appropriate body of that State.

2. Proceedings relating to measures taken under this Convention by the applicant State, in particular those which, in the field of recovery, concern the existence or the amount of the tax claim or the instrument permitting its enforcement, shall be brought only before the appropriate body of that State. If such proceedings are brought, the applicant State shall inform the requested State which shall suspend the procedure pending the decision of the body in question. However, the requested State shall, if asked by the applicant State, take measures of conservancy to safeguard recovery. The requested State can also be informed of such proceedings by any interested person. Upon receipt of such information the requested State shall consult on the matter, if necessary, with the applicant State.

3. As soon as a final decision in the proceedings has been given, the requested State or the applicant State, as the case may be, shall notify the other State of the decision and the implications which it has for the request for assistance.

Chapter V – Special provisions

Article 24 – Implementation of the Convention

1. The Parties shall communicate with each other for the implementation of this Convention through their respective competent authorities. The competent authorities may communicate directly for this purpose and may authorise subordinate authorities to act on

their behalf. The competent authorities of two or more Parties may mutually agree on the mode of application of the Convention among themselves.

2. Where the requested State considers that the application of this Convention in a particular case would have serious and undesirable consequences, the competent authorities of the requested and of the applicant State shall consult each other and endeavour to resolve the situation by mutual agreement.

3. A co-ordinating body composed of representatives of the competent authorities of the Parties shall monitor the implementation and development of this Convention, under the aegis of the OECD. To that end, the co-ordinating body shall recommend any action likely to further the general aims of the Convention. In particular it shall act as a forum for the study of new methods and procedures to increase international co-operation in tax matters and, where appropriate, it may recommend revisions or amendments to the Convention. States which have signed but not yet ratified, accepted or approved the Convention are entitled to be represented at the meetings of the co-ordinating body as observers.

4. A Party may ask the co-ordinating body to furnish opinions on the interpretation of the provisions of the Convention.

5. Where difficulties or doubts arise between two or more Parties regarding the implementation or interpretation of the Convention, the competent authorities of those Parties shall endeavour to resolve the matter by mutual agreement. The agreement shall be communicated to the co-ordinating body.

6. The Secretary General of OECD shall inform the Parties, and the Signatory States which have not yet ratified, accepted or approved the Convention, of opinions furnished by the co-ordinating body according to the provisions of paragraph 4 above and of mutual agreements reached under paragraph 5 above.

Article 25 – Language

Requests for assistance and answers thereto shall be drawn up in one of the official languages of the OECD and of the Council of Europe or in any other language agreed bilaterally between the Contracting States concerned.

Article 26 – Costs

Unless otherwise agreed bilaterally by the Parties concerned:

- a. ordinary costs incurred in providing assistance shall be borne by the requested State;
- b. extraordinary costs incurred in providing assistance shall be borne by the applicant State.

Chapter VI – Final provisions

Article 27 – Other international agreements or arrangements

1. The possibilities of assistance provided by this Convention do not limit, nor are they limited by, those contained in existing or future international agreements or other arrangements

between the Parties concerned or other instruments which relate to co-operation in tax matters.

2. Notwithstanding paragraph 1, those Parties which are member States of the European Union can apply, in their mutual relations, the possibilities of assistance provided for by the Convention in so far as they allow a wider co-operation than the possibilities offered by the applicable European Union rules.

Article 28 – Signature and entry into force of the Convention

1. This Convention shall be open for signature by the member States of the Council of Europe and the member countries of OECD. It is subject to ratification, acceptance or approval. Instruments of ratification, acceptance or approval shall be deposited with one of the Depositaries.

2. This Convention shall enter into force on the first day of the month following the expiration of a period of three months after the date on which five States have expressed their consent to be bound by the Convention in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 1.

3. In respect of any member State of the Council of Europe or any member country of OECD which subsequently expresses its consent to be bound by it, the Convention shall enter into force on the first day of the month following the expiration of a period of three months after the date of the deposit of the instrument of ratification, acceptance or approval.

4. Any member State of the Council of Europe or any member country of OECD which becomes a Party to the Convention after the entry into force of the Protocol amending this Convention, opened for signature on 27th May 2010 (the “2010 Protocol”), shall be a Party to the Convention as amended by that Protocol, unless they express a different intention in a written communication to one of the Depositaries.

5. After the entry into force of the 2010 Protocol, any State which is not a member of the Council of Europe or of the OECD may request to be invited to sign and ratify this Convention as amended by the 2010 Protocol. Any request to this effect shall be addressed to one of the Depositaries, who shall transmit it to the Parties. The Depositary shall also inform the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe and the OECD Council. The decision to invite States which so request to become Party to this Convention shall be taken by consensus by the Parties to the Convention through the co-ordinating body. In respect of any State ratifying the Convention as amended by the 2010 Protocol in accordance with this paragraph, this Convention shall enter into force on the first day of the month following the expiration of a period of three months after the date of deposit of the instrument of ratification with one of the Depositaries.

6. The provisions of this Convention, as amended by the 2010 Protocol, shall have effect for administrative assistance related to taxable periods beginning on or after 1 January of the year following the one in which the Convention, as amended by the 2010 Protocol, entered into force in respect of a Party, or where there is no taxable period, for administrative assistance related to charges to tax arising on or after 1 January of the year following the one in which the Convention, as amended by the 2010 Protocol, entered into force in respect of a Party.

Any two or more Parties may mutually agree that the Convention, as amended by the 2010 Protocol, shall have effect for administrative assistance related to earlier taxable periods or charges to tax.

7. Notwithstanding paragraph 6, for tax matters involving intentional conduct which is liable to prosecution under the criminal laws of the applicant Party, the provisions of this Convention, as amended by the 2010 Protocol, shall have effect from the date of entry into force in respect of a Party in relation to earlier taxable periods or charges to tax.

Article 29 – Territorial application of the Convention

1. Each State may, at the time of signature, or when depositing its instrument of ratification, acceptance or approval, specify the territory or territories to which this Convention shall apply.

2. Any State may, at any later date, by a declaration addressed to one of the Depositaries, extend the application of this Convention to any other territory specified in the declaration. In respect of such territory the Convention shall enter into force on the first day of the month following the expiration of a period of three months after the date of receipt of such declaration by the Depositary.

3. Any declaration made under either of the two preceding paragraphs may, in respect of any territory specified in such declaration, be withdrawn by a notification addressed to one of the Depositaries. The withdrawal shall become effective on the first day of the month following the expiration of a period of three months after the date of receipt of such notification by the Depositary.

Article 30 – Reservations

1. Any State may, at the time of signature or when depositing its instrument of ratification, acceptance or approval or at any later date, declare that it reserves the right:

- a. not to provide any form of assistance in relation to the taxes of other Parties in any of the categories listed in sub-paragraph b. of paragraph 1 of Article 2, provided that it has not included any domestic tax in that category under Annex A of the Convention;
- b. not to provide assistance in the recovery of any tax claim, or in the recovery of an administrative fine, for all taxes or only for taxes in one or more of the categories listed in paragraph 1 of Article 2;
- c. not to provide assistance in respect of any tax claim, which is in existence at the date of entry into force of the Convention in respect of that State or, where a reservation has previously been made under sub-paragraph a. or b. above, at the date of withdrawal of such a reservation in relation to taxes in the category in question;
- d. not to provide assistance in the service of documents for all taxes or only for taxes in one or more of the categories listed in paragraph 1 of Article 2;
- e. not to permit the service of documents through the post as provided for in paragraph 3 of Article 17;

- f. to apply paragraph 7 of Article 28 exclusively for administrative assistance related to taxable periods beginning on or after 1 January of the third year preceding the one in which the Convention, as amended by the 2010 Protocol, entered into force in respect of a Party, or where there is no taxable period, for administrative assistance related to charges to tax arising on or after 1 January of the third year preceding the one in which the Convention, as amended by the 2010 Protocol, entered into force in respect of a Party.
2. No other reservation may be made.
 3. After the entry into force of the Convention in respect of a Party, that Party may make one or more of the reservations listed in paragraph 1 which it did not make at the time of ratification, acceptance or approval. Such reservations shall enter into force on the first day of the month following the expiration of a period of three months after the date of receipt of the reservation by one of the Depositaries.
 4. Any Party which has made a reservation under paragraphs 1 and 3 may wholly or partly withdraw it by means of a notification addressed to one of the Depositaries. The withdrawal shall take effect on the date of receipt of such notification by the Depositary in question.
 5. A Party which has made a reservation in respect of a provision of this Convention may not require the application of that provision by any other Party; it may, however, if its reservation is partial, require the application of that provision insofar as it has itself accepted it.

Article 31 – Denunciation

1. Any Party may, at any time, denounce this Convention by means of a notification addressed to one of the Depositaries.
2. Such denunciation shall become effective on the first day of the month following the expiration of a period of three months after the date of receipt of the notification by the Depositary.
3. Any Party which denounces the Convention shall remain bound by the provisions of Article 22 for as long as it retains in its possession any documents or information obtained under the Convention.

Article 32 – Depositaries and their functions

1. The Depositary with whom an act, notification or communication has been accomplished, shall notify the member States of the Council of Europe and the member countries of OECD and any Party to this Convention of:
 - a. any signature;
 - b. the deposit of any instrument of ratification, acceptance or approval;
 - c. any date of entry into force of this Convention in accordance with the provisions of Articles 28 and 29;
 - d. any declaration made in pursuance of the provisions of paragraph 3 of Article 4 or paragraph 3 of Article 9 and the withdrawal of any such declaration;
 - e. any reservation made in pursuance of the provisions of Article 30 and the withdrawal of any reservation effected in pursuance of the provisions of paragraph 4 of Article 30;

- f. any notification received in pursuance of the provisions of paragraph 3 or 4 of Article 2, paragraph 3 of Article 3, Article 29 or paragraph 1 of Article 31;
 - g. any other act, notification or communication relating to this Convention.
2. The Depository receiving a communication or making a notification in pursuance of the provisions of paragraph 1 shall inform immediately the other Depository thereof.

In witness whereof the undersigned, being duly authorised thereto, have signed the Convention.

Done at Strasbourg, the 25th day of January 1988, in English and French, both texts being equally authentic, in two copies of which one shall be deposited in the archives of the Council of Europe and the other in the archives of OECD. The Secretaries General of the Council of Europe and of OECD shall transmit certified copies to each member State of the Council of Europe and of the member countries of OECD.

SCHEDULE 2

Non-Reporting Financial Institutions (Section VIII B (1) of the Standard)

The term “Non-Reporting Financial Institution” means any Financial Institution that is:

- (a) A Governmental Entity, International Organisation or Central Bank, other than with respect to a payment that is derived from an obligation held in connection with a commercial financial activity of a type engaged in by a Specified Insurance Company, Custodial Institution, or Depository Institution;
- (b) A Broad Participation Retirement Fund; a Narrow Participation Retirement Fund; a Pension Fund of a Governmental Entity, International Organisation or Central Bank; or a Qualified Credit Card Issuer;
- (c) Any other Entity that presents a low risk of being used to evade tax, has substantially similar characteristics to any of the Entities described in subparagraphs (a) and (b) and to the extent that its designation or status as a non-reporting financial institution does not frustrate the purposes of the Standard;
- (d) An Exempt Collective Investment Vehicle; or
- (e) A trust to the extent that the trustee of the trust is a Reporting Financial Institution and reports all information required to be reported pursuant to Section 1 with respect to all Reportable Accounts of the Trust.

ANTHONY MICHAEL PERKINS
Speaker

Passed by the National Assembly this 13th day of December, 2016.

JOSÉ LLOYD
Clerk of the National Assembly