

## ARTICLE 17

(1) Where, under the legislation of one Contracting State, documents submitted to an authority or institution of that Contracting State are partly or fully exempt from administrative charges, including consular fees, this exemption shall also apply to documents which are submitted to an authority or institution of the other Contracting State in accordance with its legislation.

(2) Documents which, in the application of the legislation specified in Article 2(1), must be submitted to an authority or institution of one Contracting State, may be submitted to an authority or institution of the other Contracting State without authentication or any other similar formality.

## ARTICLE 18

In applying the legislation specified in Article 2(1), and in implementing this Agreement, the agencies referred to in Article 16(1) may communicate in their respective official languages directly with each other as well as with persons concerned and with their representatives. Decisions of courts and notifications from an institution of one Contracting State may be communicated directly to persons residing in the territory of the other Contracting State and may be sent registered mail with return receipt.

## ARTICLE 19

(1) If a claim for a benefit payable under the legislation of one Contracting State has been submitted to an agency of the other Contracting State which, under the legislation of the latter State, is competent to receive an application for a corresponding benefit, that application shall be deemed to have been submitted to the competent institution of the first Contracting State. This provision shall apply, as appropriate, to other claims, notices or appeals.

(2) A claim, notice or appeal received by an agency of one Contracting State shall be forwarded by that agency without delay to the competent agency of the other Contracting State.

(3) A claim for a benefit payable under the legislation of one Contracting State shall be deemed to be an application for the corresponding benefit payable under the legislation of the other Contracting State. However, the foregoing shall not apply if the applicant explicitly requests that the determination of entitlement under the legislation of the latter State be deferred in cases where, under the legislation of the latter State, he may choose the date which is to be used in determining when the conditions for entitlement have been met.