

and to transmit judicial documents, and to inspect and to extend assistance to vessels having the nationality of the sending State and to settle disputes on board. The consulate must ascertain by all lawful means conditions and developments in the commercial, economic, cultural and scientific life of the receiving State and report thereon to its government. It must also encourage exchanges in these various fields between its country and the receiving State. Finally, it exercises all functions assigned to consular posts by the sending State that are not prohibited by the receiving State.

These powers apply in full within the district designated at the time the post is established.

The authorities of the receiving State may not enter that part of the consular premises which is used exclusively for the purpose of the work of the consulate — it is inviolable — except with the consent of the head of the consular post, his designee or the head of the diplomatic mission of the sending State. Such consent, however, may be assumed in case of fire or other disaster requiring prompt protective action.

The receiving State must take all appropriate measures to protect the consular premises against any intrusion or damage and to prevent any disturbance of the peace of the consular post or impairment of its dignity. The consular premises, their furnishings, the property of the consular post and its means of transport are immune from any form of requisition for purposes of national defence or public utility.

2 Head of consular post

Heads of consular posts are divided into four classes, namely: (a) consuls-general, (b) consuls, (c) vice-consuls, (d) consular agents.

Heads of consular posts are appointed by the sending State and are admitted to the exercise of their functions by the receiving State. The terms and conditions of the appointment and the admission of the head of the consular post are established by the respective laws, regulations and usages of the sending and receiving States. Two administrative instruments are indispensable to a consul for the exercise of his functions. He is provided with a "commission" or similar instrument by the sending State which indicates his title and defines briefly the area in which he is to exercise his functions. By the issue of the "exequatur", the receiving State grants him the free exercise of the powers provided by local legislation and the terms of the Convention, as well as the enjoyment of the privileges and immunities to which he is entitled. A State may refuse to issue an exequatur and is not obliged to give reasons for such refusal.