

upon prior notification of the mission. This regulation applies equally to the families of diplomatic representatives. Administrative and technical staff are exempt from customs duties only with respect to articles imported at the time of first installation.

(B) CONSULAR RELATIONS

Some clauses in the Convention on Consular Relations are similar to those in the Convention on Diplomatic Relations¹, and for this reason, they will not be found below. The reader need only refer, if necessary, to the preceding pages.

1. Consular Post

The main functions of a consular post may be summarized as follows: it must protect the interests of the sending State and those of its nationals, both individuals and bodies corporate, within the limits of international law; it may issue passports and visas, perform the duties of civil registrar and notary, and take measures to safeguard the interests of its nationals in cases of inheritance and of persons lacking full capacity; it has the right to arrange representation for its nationals before tribunals 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 may 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 may 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/her 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.

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In particular, the clauses on the establishment of diplomatic and consular relations, on the size of missions, on the acceptance or rejection of the presence of members of the mission, on the use of the flag of the sending country, on provisions with respect to premises and staff in case of a severance of diplomatic and consular relations between the two countries and also in case of war, on the obligation to respect the laws and regulations of the receiving State, on freedom of communication, and, finally, on exemption from dues and taxes for the premises of the mission and for its members.