

## II PROTOCOL

### 1 Introduction

Protocol codifies the rules governing diplomatic ceremonial in relations between sovereign States by giving each of the participants the prerogatives, privileges and immunities to which he is entitled. Protocol is involved in the numerous details associated with this ceremonial as well as in the daily routine of diplomatic missions and consulates.

In essence, protocol is a matter of common sense, a knowledge of the basic rules, consideration of differences, cultural and social and, ultimately, tact.

### 2 Accreditation of ambassadors and high commissioners

#### (a) Ambassador

Because of the importance, both official and personal, of the position of ambassador, usage dictates that the sending State obtain the agreement of the receiving government before making an appointment. Agreement is requested officially through the head of mission in the receiving State or the chargé d'affaires temporarily in charge of the mission, as the case may be. The head of mission of the sending State then notifies the Office of Protocol of the receiving State of the expected date and time of arrival of the new ambassador.

A head of mission is considered to be *incognito* until he presents his credentials, and there is therefore no official ceremony to mark his arrival. Nevertheless, his passage through customs is facilitated and an official from the Office of Protocol is on hand to welcome him. These courtesies are determined by local usage.

As soon as possible after his arrival, the new ambassador pays a courtesy call on the Chief of Protocol to present the true copies of his letter of credence and of his predecessor's letter of recall. Originals of letters of credence and letters of recall, together with certified copies of these documents, are prepared for Canadian ambassadors by the Department of External Affairs in Ottawa.