



THE PROTOCOL ADVANTAGE

Glossary of Diplomatic Terms

Functioning in today's global environment requires an ability to deal with people of diverse backgrounds and customs. Having a working knowledge of different traditions and sensitivity to cross-cultural distinctions can be critical to achieving success. [The Protocol Advantage](#) is a continuing series that provides executives and officials with the orientation they need to be informed and at ease when interacting and negotiating with international counterparts, here and abroad.

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agrément

the host government's acceptance of the nomination of an ambassador to the country

ambassador-designate

a diplomatic agent who has been designated by the President as his/her choice as personal representative but who has not yet been confirmed by the Senate and who has not taken the oath of office

ambassador

an official envoy or diplomatic agent of the highest rank accredited to a foreign government as the official resident representative of his own government; or an official appointed for a special, often temporary, diplomatic assignment

Ambassador

capitalized when referring to a specific person (i.e. Ambassador Smith)

ambassador at large

an ambassador whose portfolio addresses specific issues rather than one specific country

ambassador extraordinaire and plenipotentiary

a diplomatic agent who is the personal representative of the head of one state accredited to the head of another state

attaché

a civilian or military technical expert or specialist on/at the mission

chancery

the embassy office building

chargé d'affaires

a diplomatic agent accredited by letter to the Minister of Foreign Affairs or Secretary of State of one country by his/her counterpart in lieu of a duly accredited ambassador



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chargé d'affaires ad interim

also referred to as chargé; a subordinate diplomat who substitutes for an ambassador or minister in his/her absence

chief of mission

principal officer of an overseas mission, with the title of Ambassador, Minister, or Chargé d'Affaires

consul

a consular officer of high rank, often at the First Secretary level, within an embassy

consul - general

a consular officer of the highest rank; senior official at the consulate general

consular agents

individuals who perform limited consular functions in cities where there is no mission

consulate

a constituent or subordinate post; also the office of the consul and his/her staff

consulate general

a large constituent or subordinate post

counselor

a diplomatic title accorded to a head of a section in the embassy, such as "Counselor for Political Affairs" or "Political Counselor"

demarche

a request or intercession with a foreign official, e.g., a request for support of a policy or a protest about the host government's policy or actions

deputy chief of mission (DCM)

the second in command at an embassy who becomes the chargé d'affaires in the ambassador's absence

diplomatic agent

a generic term denoting a person who carries out regular diplomatic relations of the nation he/she represents in the nation to which he/she has been accredited



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diplomatic note

a formal written means of communication among embassies

diplomatic corps

the collective heads of foreign diplomatic missions and their staff members

diplomatic immunity

exemption of foreign diplomatic agents or representatives from local jurisdiction

diplomatic ranks

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary

Ministers Plenipotentiary

Ministers

Chargé d'Affaires ad hoc or pro tempore

Chargé d'Affaires ad interim

Minister-Counselors

Counselors (or Senior Secretaries in the absence of Counselors)

Army, Naval and Air Attachés

Civilian Attachés

First Secretaries

Second Secretaries

Assistant Army, Naval and Air Attachés

Civilian Assistant Attachés

Third Secretaries and Assistant Attachés

dual accreditation

having two or more responsibilities, such as an ambassador who is simultaneously accredited to two nations

embassy

a diplomatic mission in the capital city of a foreign country headed by an ambassador

exequatur

written, official recognition of a consular officer issued by the government to which one is accredited

interest section

the office responsible for protecting the interests of the US, housed in a third country embassy, in a country with which the US has no formal diplomatic relations



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legation

a diplomatic mission in a foreign country headed by a minister. The US has none at present, but a few other countries do

mission

a generic term for embassy. Mission also describes the entirety of official US representation in a given foreign country which functions under the supervision of the Ambassador, including civilian and military personnel (except US military reporting to a unified command and official US representation to a multilateral organization).

passport

the official document issued to a person by his/her government certifying citizenship and requesting foreign governments to grant the individual safe passage, lawful aid and protection while under that government's jurisdiction

p.c.

used in written social correspondence, "pour condoler" (to express sympathy)

p.f.

used in written social correspondence, "pour féliciter" (to extend congratulations)

p.m.

used in written social correspondence, "pour memoire" (to remind)

p.p.

used in written social correspondence, "pour présenter" (to introduce)

p.p.c.

used in written social correspondence, "pour prendre congé" (to say goodbye)

p.r.

used in written social correspondence, "pour remercier" (to express thanks)

persona non grata

an individual who is unacceptable to or unwelcome by the host government

precedence - priority; the right to superior honor on a ceremonial or formal occasion; for ambassadors in a country, precedence is determined by the order in which they presented their credentials to the host government



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residence

the home/living quarters of the ambassador

secretary (third, second, first)

diplomatic rank of officers posted overseas, in ascending order of seniority

vice consul

a junior ranking consular officer

visa

a seal or endorsement made on a passport by the proper officials of a country which entitles the bearer to apply for entry into another country at the port of admission

