

Programme

Global Consular Forum 2015

Tuesday 26 – Thursday 28 May 2015 | WP1381

Held at the Hacienda Fiesta Americana San Antonio El Puente, Cuernavaca, Mexico

Synopsis

Building on the 2013 Global Consular Forum (GCF), this meeting will bring together senior consular officials from a broad range of countries to discuss ways in which to enhance or improve international consular policy and practice.

Through a mixture of plenary and breakout sessions this expert exchange will provide a forum to:

- promote and deepen understanding of the current issues facing consular services
- facilitate an expert exchange of experience, best practice and lessons learned
- identify areas of potential consensus with particular regard to future working
- consider creative opportunities and innovative approaches to maximise expertise and resources
- explore potential mechanisms to promote further development, co-operation and networking
- assess ways in which the GCF can assist developing and/or small countries to improve their consular services
- investigate the potential for future work with the private sector and non-governmental bodies

Drawing on practical experience, proposed themes for discussion to include: emergency management, vulnerable clients, the international legal and policy framework, migrant workers, family services, and a safe travel culture.

All discussion will be in English and will be conducted strictly off the record according to the Wilton Park Protocol.

This meeting is by invitation only.

Tuesday 26 May

0930

Participants meet at Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Address: SRE; Secretaria de Relaciones Exteriores, Plaza Juárez No. 20, Col. Centro, Deleg. Cuauhtémoc, Mexico City, 06010

Please use the entrance on Avenue Independencia, otherwise you will need to go through security.

1000

Participants depart Mexico City

1200

Arrival at Hacienda

1300-1430

Lunch

1400-1430

Briefing session: chairs/resource people for Session 3

1500-1515

Welcome and introduction

Reyna Torres Mendivil

Director General, Directorate General for Protection of Mexicans Abroad, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mexico City

Purpose of Forum. Brief overview of aims and objectives and proposed outcomes

William Crosbie

Assistant Deputy Minister, Consular, Security and Legal Branch, Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development (DFATD), Ottawa

Practical information about the format of the meeting and the Wilton Park protocol.

Julia Purcell

Programme Director, Wilton Park, Steyning

1515-1645

1. Emergency management: challenges and opportunities

Plenary session

How to engage to best effect with NGOs and the private sector to strengthen and broaden preparedness and response? What operational agreements would assist emergency management and crisis response? What are the challenges and opportunities presented by the rapidly evolving use of technology and social media and how do these impact on crisis response?

Willem van Ee

Director, Consular Affairs and Visa Policy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Hague

Ross Allen

Head, Consular Assistance Department, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, London

Huang Ping

Director General, Department of Consular Affairs, Beijing

1645-1715

Tea/coffee

1715-1845

2. Assisting vulnerable clients: how best to respond?

Plenary session

What are the particular needs of vulnerable clients and what skills, resources and agreements need to be in place to support them? How to ensure arrest and detention clients are responded to appropriately? And what are the cross-border implications? How to ensure that international frameworks, such as the Hague Convention, are pertinent to the needs of incapacitated or challenged adults? What are the particular challenges presented by dual nationality clients and in what ways can these best addressed?

Götz Schmidt-Bremme

Director, Legal and Consular Issues including Migration, Federal Foreign Office, Berlin

Jürg Burri

Director General of Consular Directorate, Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, Berne

Jane Tapley

Unit Manager, Case Management, Consular Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Wellington

- 1845 Session 1 and Session 2 working group members to meet with Julia Purcell and the Forum rapporteurs to collate outputs
- 1915 Buffet dinner

Wednesday 27 May

- 0700-0900 Breakfast
- 0900-1030 **3. International legal and policy frameworks: building on a solid foundation**
- 0900-0910 **Introduction in plenary**
- Jan Hutton**
Director Consular Policy and Training Section, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Barton ACT
- 0910-1030 **Break out session**
Practitioners rely on the provisions of the VCCR to enable and facilitate the delivery of consular services. It has proven to be a remarkably robust framework and there is no wish to open the VCCR; the consular perspective is that of practitioners, not legal counsel. However, many practitioners have entered into bilateral or plurilateral consular agreements to supplement the VCCR. Such agreements may resolve uncertainty by agreement on a common interpretation of VCCR provisions. They may deal with issues outside the scope of the VCCR (eg dual nationality), or with challenges best met through ratification of private law conventions (eg Hague conventions on children and incapacitated adults), or with operational matters (eg. role of locally-engaged staff, co-location of foreign missions).

What is the scope for those who are interested to advance common understanding for ways forward? And how best to build consensus in order to do this?
- 1030-1100 Tea/coffee
- 1100-1230 **4. Meeting the needs of migrant workers: what can consular services do?**
- Plenary session**
How far can consular services meet the needs of citizens of other states? What are the obligations and expectations of both sending and receiving countries? How to ensure safety and security, particularly with regard to expatriates and migrant workers? What innovative practices have emerged (eg provision of credible identification documents and information on safe/reliable remittance methods)? How best to facilitate migrant worker assistance (particularly in the area of local labour practices and processes and visa/status options)?
- Reyna Torres Mendivil**
Director General, Directorate General for Protection of Mexicans Abroad, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mexico City
- Özgür Gökmen**
Head, Department, Consular Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ankara
- Noel Servigon**
Assistant Secretary, Office of Personnel and Administrative Services, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Pasay

1230	Forum Photograph
1245	Session 3 chairs/resource people and Session 4 working group members to meet with Julia Purcell and the Forum rapporteurs to collate outputs
1245-1415	Lunch
1330-1400	Briefing session: chairs/resource people for Session 6
1415-1430	<p>5. International legal and policy frameworks: report back from discussion groups</p> <p>Plenary session Brief report back collated from outputs of Session 3 break outs</p>
1430-1600	<p>6. Promoting a safe travel culture: expectations and responsibilities</p>
1430-1445	<p>Introduction in plenary</p> <p>Karen Christensen Deputy Assistant Secretary, Overseas Citizen Services, Department of State, Washington DC</p> <p>Myungyul Lee Director General, Overseas Koreans and Consular Affairs Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Seoul</p>
1445-1600	Break out session
1600-1630	Tea/coffee
1630-1800	<p>7. Family services: assisting children at risk and parents in distress</p> <p>Plenary session While the VCCR only briefly mentions minors, consular assistance to children and families often pose special challenges and requires extensive resources and expertise. Children and parents caught up in cross-border custody disputes are growing in number. The 1980 Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction is the only multilateral treaty to assist left-behind parents who are seeking the return or access to children who have been wrongfully removed to or retained in another State Party to the Convention. What are the obstacles to more governments ratifying this convention? Can mediation be a stepping stone to build support for ratification?</p> <p>What can consular services also do to provide for children at risk in foreign jurisdictions? Instances of child maltreatment (abuse, neglect, abandonment, early and forced marriages) and other child welfare issues pose special challenges for Consular officials abroad. The provision of effective and timely consular services to children can be particularly difficult.</p> <p>Beyond legal action, what are the other tools, resources and networks that can be accessed by consular officials to ensure effective responses to complex child welfare challenges?</p> <p>Béatrice Maillé Director General, Consular Policy, Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development (DFATD), Ottawa</p> <p>Jan Hutton Director Consular Policy and Training Section, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Barton AC</p>

1800	Session 6 facilitators/chairs and Session 7 working group members to meet with Julia Purcell and the Forum rapporteurs to run through and collate outputs
TBA	Briefing session: chairs/resource people for Session 9
2000	Dinner

Thursday 28 May

0700-0900	Breakfast
0900-0915	<p>8. Promoting a safe travel culture: report back from discussion groups</p> <p>Plenary session Brief report back collated from outputs of Session 6 break outs</p>
0915-1045	<p>9. Improving consular services</p> <p>Break out session Identifying innovation, best practice or approaches that will be of wide interest to the GCF community and which may contribute to greater understanding, improved practice, enhanced cooperation or adoption of a common standard.</p>
1045-1115	Tea/coffee plus completion of eQuestionnaire.
1115-1230	<p>10. Reflections from break out groups and next steps</p> <p>Plenary session</p> <p>Chaired by: William Crosbie Assistant Deputy Minister, Consular, Security and Legal Branch, Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development (DFATD), Ottawa</p>
1230-1400	Lunch
1400	Participants depart for return to Mexico City
1700-1800	<p>11. Closing session of the Global Consular Forum with keynote address:</p> <p>Mexican Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mexico City</p> <p>Sergio Alcocer Undersecretary for North America, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mexico City</p> <p>Graco Ramírez-Garrido Abreu Governor, State of Morelos, Cuernavaca</p> <p>*Ahmed Saeed Alham Aldhaheeri Director, Consular Services Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Abu Dhabi</p> <p>William Crosbie Assistant Deputy Minister, Consular, Security and Legal Branch, Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development (DFATD), Ottawa</p> <p>José Antonio Meade Kuribreña Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mexico City</p>