



# FICAC NEWS



October, 2008

## President John Kufuor Honoured

**Ghana President Kufuor received the FICAC Gold Star, the highest honour given only to distinguished world leaders.**



Seen above Ghana President John A.Kufuor being decorated by Hon. Arnold Foote at a Ceremony in the President's Palace in Accra, Ghana.



FICAC Directors seen above with Ghana President John A. Kufuor. From l-r are: Hon. Aykut Eken, Hon. Lamartine Hollanda, Hon. Arnold Foote, Hon. Amarkai Amarteifio, Hon. K. L. Ganju, Hon Virachai Techavijit, Hon. Costas Lefkaritis and Hon. Kartar Bhalla.

*President Arnold Foote in his address at the Presentation ceremony said:*

**S**omewhere I read that you are often referred to as the “gentle giant,” due in part to your obviously imposing height. Gentility is a quality not often associated with professional politicians, so the fact that you have been so regarded by many is an outstanding tribute. Certainly you are a giant in Ghanaian, West African and continental African political life

and development, and by extension in the wider world.

Your impressive public service and political credentials of over thirty years in Ghana is obvious, beginning with your service in Local Government (in the city of Kumasi) in the late 1960’s, followed by your election twice as a Member of Parliament during Ghana’s Second and Third Republics; your service as Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs from 1969-1972; your brief

service in 1982 as Secretary for Local Government (resigning after seven months on matters of principle); and your first election as President in December 2000 and again in December 2004. These are but glimpses of your service to Ghana, but now with your impending departure from the Presidential office at the end of the mandated two-term limit in January 2009, it seems fair to say that one of your lasting contributions to

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Ghanian political life and culture is your nurturing of the process of electoral democracy and associated leadership transitions.

In the West African arena, you will always be remembered for Ghana's central role in helping to bring peace and stability in war-torn Liberia, especially during your role as Chairman of ECOWAS (the Economic Commission of West African States) from 2003-2005. In the wider continental African context, your 2007 role as Chairman of the African Union further testifies to your qualities of statesmanship. It was especially significant and symbolic that you were chosen to chair the African Union in 2007, the year of the 50th anniversary of The Ghana's independence from British colonial rule, in 1957. That momentous event, the first of its kind in sub-Saharan Africa, had an enormous impact on subsequent decolonization initiatives elsewhere in sub-Saharan Africa and also in the African Diaspora (including

my native-land, Jamaica, the first Anglophone Caribbean colony to gain its independence in August 1962, undoubtedly inspired by Ghana's example). In that respect this tribute to you is also a tribute to the people of Ghana whom you lead and serve.

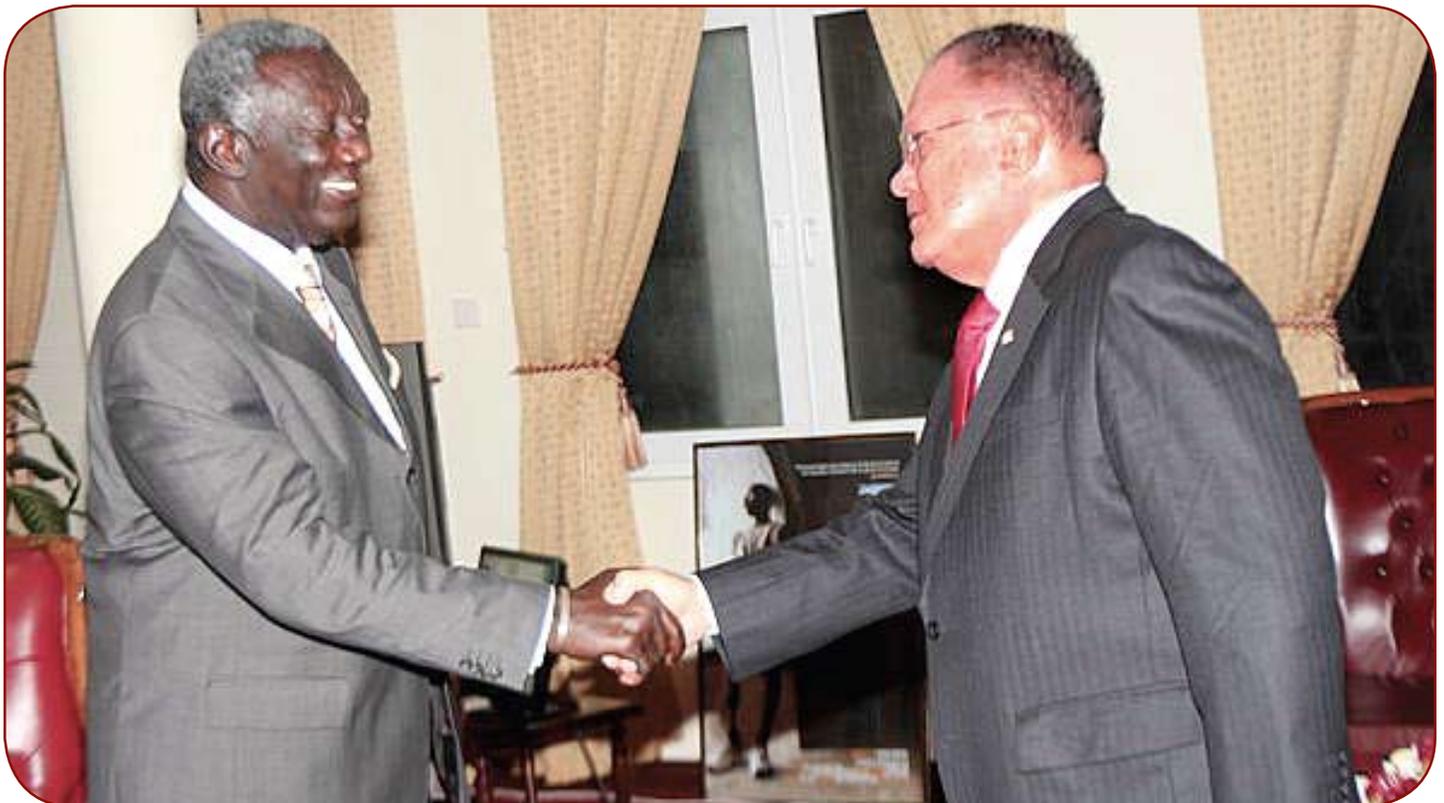
Tribute to you is also a tribute to the people of Ghana whom you lead and serve.

Given Africa's marginalization in world affairs for much of the modern era it stands to reason that efforts to reverse that situation should contribute significantly to the search for a more viable and harmonious world order. Your position, Mr. President, as recent Chairman of the African Union (in the process projecting African concerns into the wider international arena), and also your 2004 role as spokesperson for the six African leaders attending the G-8 summit in Georgia, are but two illustrations of your international involvement and distinction beyond the African continent, which

correlate with your global outlook. You have been quoted as saying that "The world is moving in a direction which requires leadership by vision, transcending tribal, national and even continental boundaries." Such a statement resonates well with us, the World Federation of Consuls, since we too are by definition globalist in mission and outlook. We are thus honoured to honour you, Mr. President with this award our highest honour given only to world leaders.

*President Kufuor in his reply to Hon. Arnold Foote said:*

**"I am truly touched by all the fine things you have said about me and then with all these decorations which are definitely meant for eternity, when I come to write my Memoirs, definitely there should be some space and I would perhaps say perhaps a whole chapter also."**



Ghanaian President Hon. John Kufuor welcomes Hon. Arnold Foote to his Castle for the ceremony.

# HISTORIC FICAC AFRICAN REGIONAL CONFERENCE A HUGE SUCCESS

**Twelve African countries participated.**

**Excellent representation from Europe, Asia, Latin America, USA and Caribbean**

*President Arnold Foote in his opening address at the conference said:*

I am deeply honoured to be here with you today at the first FICAC African Regional Consular Conference. This is the first time that my wife and I are visiting your beautiful country and we are very impressed with its beauty and with the excellent hospitality that we have received.

I would like to say a special thank you to the Vice President of the World Federation of Consuls who is also Dean of the Honorary Consular Corps of Ghana, Hon. Amarkai Amarteifio, Hon. Dimitri Avraam and the Organizing Committee who have done such a marvelous job in making this historic event a reality.

I would like to say a special word of welcome also to all Deans and Consuls from the region and overseas for making the special effort to attend this historic event.

The World Federation of Consuls was established in Copenhagen on 2nd October 1982 to bring together Consular Associations and Corps to share experiences and co-ordinate efforts to enhance the effectiveness and the status of the Consul, the oldest institution serving international bilateral relations.

It was the Consul General of Monaco in Denmark, Hon. Vagn Jespersen who took the initiative of forming the Federation and was ably assisted by Consul of Luxembourg, Hon. Ole Olsen and Vice President Consul General of Bolivia Hon. Poul Akerlund.

Countries present and first signatories of the Resolution were:



*President Arnold Foote addressing the first FICAC African Consular conference in Accra Ghana*

Finland, Greece, Iceland, Italy, Norway, Sweden and Denmark.

Hon. Consul General Vagn Jespersen served as President of the World Federation of Consuls for 13 years from the formation of the Federation in 1982 until 1995.

In 1995 the new President of FICAC was Consul General Andreas Mavrommatis. Five years later, in the year 2000 Consul General Peter Gad Naschitz of Israel was elected President. In 2003 at the World Congress in Athens, Consul General Roland Dahlman of Sweden was elected President.

In my acceptance speech as President of the World Federation of Consuls in 2006, I said then, that within FICAC, it is time to change the centres of influence to be more inclusive towards Asia, Africa and the Americas as well as Europe.

Even the FICAC Constitution speaks about 'equitable geographic representation' as being a desirable goal.

I am therefore very pleased to stand before you today, proud and happy and privileged to be part of the very 1st FICAC African Regional Consular Conference.

The formation of the FICAC African Regional Consular Committee concludes our programme for establishing our Federation in every region of the world. This reaffirms that the aim of the Federation is to achieve greater communication, understanding and unity between its members in order to secure, improve and consolidate the position of Consuls, so that the ideals and principles of the members will be promoted and protected.

We must be conscious of our

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Picture above are some of the members of the World Federation of Consuls who came from all over the world to participate in the historic first FICAC African Conference in Accra Ghana.

responsibility as Consuls as well as the principles of the superior aims and objectives that unite us. We should preserve, protect and develop the established and well-functioning Consular system, operating and acting for the benefit of the Sending and Receiving States.

Mutual respect and adherence to the principles recognized in the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations of 1963, should continue to be used to promote Consular cooperation in each member country.

We must learn from each other, cooperate with each other, and function as one well-established and strong system from which both the Sending and Receiving States can benefit.

I take this opportunity to urge our members to become responsible for spreading pertinent information about the Federation which can easily be obtained from our website and from the FICAC News. All Ministries of Foreign Affairs must become more aware of the valuable resources and possibilities available to them through their Consuls who have intimate knowledge of local conditions and international knowledge through their membership in the Federation.

There is no doubt that there is

worldwide recognition of the need to enhance the protection and safety of Consular representation. The changes of personnel in Ministries of Foreign Affairs worldwide are frequent, resulting in breaks in communication between the Consuls and Ministries. It is therefore important for us to maintain continuous contacts with the Ministries and reemphasize the duty of States to take all appropriate steps as required by international law; to protect the premises of Consular Missions, to prevent any attacks on Consular representatives, to apprehend the offenders and to bring them to justice.

The protection and the improvements of security, safety and immunity and working conditions for Consuls as laid down in the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations are of vital importance to us. We have formed a committee of knowledgeable and experienced Consuls to research and further develop this programme.

Our FICAC Consular Protection Committee will work with our members in developing this important communication with their Ministries of Foreign Affairs.

I am pleased to report that our FICACWORLD Website and FICAC

News publication have received positive comments internationally. The Pod casting on our Website has received many hits from all over the world and has become very popular. The hits on the website and the readership of the FICAC News is so strong at this time that we are seriously considering the selling of advertising space as part of our effort to raise funds for financing the operations of the Federation. Our Website is designed to carry news of Consular activities from every country in the world. I take this opportunity to urge all our members to send news releases, with or without photographs to: [secretariat@ficacworld.org](mailto:secretariat@ficacworld.org).

Our website is a critical tool in the development of our Federation. Please use it and contribute to it regularly.

In 2006 at the General Assembly of the 8th World Congress of Consuls, where I had the honour to be elected president, I made a pledge of outreach and expansion of membership. In keeping with this pledge we have:

- We have formed the FICAC East Asia Regional Committee, under the Chairmanship of Hon. Dr. Virachai Techavijit.
- We have formed the FICAC South Asia Regional Committee, under

the Chairmanship of Hon. Kartar Bhalla.

- We have formed the FICAC Latin America Regional Committee, under the Chairmanship of Hon. Lamartine Hollanda Jr.
- We have formed the FICAC Central America and Caribbean Regional Committee under the Chairmanship of Hon. Facundo Bacardi of Panama.
- We have formed the FICAC East European Regional Committee under the Chairmanship of Hon. Petr Vodvarka.
- We have formed the FICAC Middle East Regional Committee under the Chairmanship of Hon. Khaled Miqdadi.
- Last but not least, we have formed the FICAC Africa Regional Committee, under the Chairmanship of Vice President Hon. Amarkai Amarteifio.
- We have developed the FICAC/ UNICEF Programme to raise funds to benefit underprivileged children with HIV/AIDS.
- We have started discussions with the European Union on developing a partnership which will implement

Trade Agreements and create real business opportunities.

- We have organized trade promotional programmes which achieved huge success with the World Consular Fair in Bangkok and International Trade Expo in Jamaica.
  - We have successfully negotiated special discounts with British Airways for members of the World Federation of Consuls. If you are not aware of how to access these discounts, please contact our Secretariat for further and better particulars.
- Consular operations can no longer be confined to the issuance of travel documents and attention to the welfare of the Nationals of the countries that we represent, as globalization has altered the framework for bilateral and multilateral cooperation. Several Countries worldwide are closing their Embassies for budgetary reasons and are appointing Honorary Consuls to serve instead. Developing countries are appointing more Honorary Consuls to represent their countries.

Today, therefore, I would like to share some perspectives with you, on these key international developments.

- The role of the Honorary Consul must be expanded to encompass the full range of economic, political and diplomatic relations.
- This expanded role is particularly important for developing countries and small States who cannot afford global deployment of their Foreign Service.
- It is in this context that Consular representatives must constantly update the theory and practice of the craft, as we must become more relevant to the global struggle for peace, security and sustainable development.

A critically important component of the foundation of peace, democracy and development is economic growth.

In today's world economy, which is being transformed by a comprehensive process of advanced globalization, international trade is the engine of economic growth, and has assumed an increasingly prominent role in State to State relations.

The development of trade and its promotion is one of the main functions of the Consul, and is also an integral part of the objectives of this Administration. The World Federation of Consuls is potentially ideally suited to participate positively in trade promotion activity.

Indeed Consular Corps have a comparative advantage in undertaking trade promotion because Consular Corps have a much broader geographic deployment and can therefore provide more extensive coverage than the Diplomatic Corps. This is particularly so for developing countries who are unable to afford diplomatic representation in all the locations where they have important economic interests.



Ghana President John Kufuor thanking Hon. Arnold Foote and Hon. Amarkai Amarteifio for the FICAC Award



Delegates from the first FICAC African Regional Conference seen with President of Ghana His Excellency John A. Kufuor after he was presented with the FICAC Gold Star. From left: Dr. the Hon. Vilas Lokhandwala, Hon. Aykut Eken, Hon. Lamartine Hollanda Jr., Mrs. Patricia Foote, Hon. Arnold Foote, Dr. Mrs. K.L. Ganju, Hon. Amarkai Amarteifio, Mrs. Kartar Bhalla, Hon. K.L. Ganju, Hon. Virachai Techavijit and Hon. Costas Lefkaritis.

The Consular Corps has a presence in all major cities, in the centres of business and commerce, whereas the Diplomatic Corps is concentrated in capital cities which, in several cases, are political rather than economic centres.

The Consular Corps include a high proportion of persons with considerable business expertise, and they are therefore ideally suited to trade promotion.

The members of the Consular Corps are more immersed in communities in ways in which Ambassadors cannot be, and their knowledge of local conditions and local products can be useful in identifying niche markets, distribution networks and new tradeable goods and services. Consuls can be important conduits for information which can inform international trade negotiations and enhance the awareness and involvement of the public. We can make a meaningful contribution to the promotion of trade in this area, and I ask you all to give this matter serious consideration. The future lies in the development of fair trade in this region and in the world.

It is of critical importance for you to know that we abstain from all religious or political activities and from the practice of any

discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, colour, religion or other such grounds.

Participating in programmes developed by the World Federation of Consuls will bring members added benefits. Programmes such as;

- Education We have excellent contacts with the Centre d'Etudes Diplomatique et Strategique in Paris, a similar operation in London and Florida. Members who require particular educational programmes or background information can write to our Secretariat requesting such programme and material and a lecturer who is an expert in that particular field will be made available to them.

- Trade The development of trade is one of the most important functions of the Consul. Members can network effectively in this area. International Trade Fairs and Expos have been organized by members successfully in the countries in which they have the honour to serve and working documents on these projects are available on request. The countries that are doing this on an annual basis have seen the image and status of the consuls and consular Corps involved grow considerably. They have earned the respect of

the Government of the country and in particular the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade.

- Cultural Exchange Programmes International cultural events have brought similar results to Consular Corps who organize them. Working documents for these projects are also available at our Secretariat. Member countries can assist each other in organizing cultural event.

- Negotiations Members of FICAC have benefited from assistance with disputes and other irregularities between the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and the Consular Corps. We have successfully negotiated CC license plates and other benefits on behalf of members of the World Federation of Consuls.

- Travel Benefits The British Airways deal has been successfully negotiated by FICAC and several Consuls have benefited and are benefiting from the British Airways Deal. Discussions are taking place with the Hilton Hotel chain which hopefully will bring positive results soon as that chain is very interested in working out a deal with us.

- Information and Networking Information on member countries can easily be obtained either through their colleagues in that



Hon. Amarkai Amarteifio, Mrs. Dinah Amarteifio, Ghana's Minister of Tourism and Diasporan Relations Hon. Kofi Osei-Ameyaw, Mrs. Patricia Foote, Hon. Arnold Foote at the Welcome Dinner for all Deligates attending the first FICAC African Regional Consular Conference. Minister Hon. Kofi Osei-Ameyaw was the guest speaker at the banquet.

country or through our Secretariat. Sourcing of goods and services is one of the more frequent requests from members.

- Lobbying The fact that our membership has increased considerably, makes the Federation a very important organization in this area and shows that FICAC has become a strong source of influence worldwide.

- FICAC/UNICEF - Our Humanitarian Outreach Programme. Working Documents are available at our Secretariat (Either in Jamaica or in Brussels). This programme's Slogan is "Consuls turning Caring into Action" The programme involves the Consular Corps organizing a formal fundraising banquet and inviting all the Consuls, Dignitaries, Diplomats, Ministers of Government and Business Leaders to attend. The price per ticket would naturally be larger than normal in order to be able to make a reasonable profit which would be handed over to UNICEF in that particular country. This Black Tie affair will become a great social event and the publicity for FICAC and UNICEF will be

extremely strong and positive. This programme was successfully launched in Jamaica and Bangkok, Thailand. Other members are in the process of organizing similar programmes.

Being a member of FICAC lifts the status of the Consul by itself and I think that each Consul should promote the Federation by wearing a FICAC lapel pin when going to official functions.

I would like before closing, to say a few words about our Board of Directors. The Team that I have the honour to lead and to serve are exceptional gentlemen who have dedicated their time, energy and resources to the development of the World Federation of Consuls. We have had more meetings in 1 year than other Administrations have had in their 3-year term of Office. They are working very hard and making an excellent contribution to the development of your Federation. Please give them a big round of applause.

I would like to say how pleased I am that this African Regional Consular Conference is now a reality, as this

has been part of the initial major policy thrust of my Administration, as President, to reach out to the African region and to strengthen the Consular movements in this part of the world.

Our work in this modern world has taken on new and significant dimensions. Despite Emails, Web Cameras and Video Conferencing, there is no substitute for meeting someone face to face, making personal acquaintances, building on the networks and friendships that we already have and making new friends and contacts.

That process can only increase our effectiveness in the roles that we are called upon to play. That is one of the opportunities that we have here in Accra at this Conference.

And so, I welcome you.

I thank you for coming

I know you will find it worth your while and look forward to a productive and successful Conference.

Thank you very much.

# PRESIDENT OF THE HONORARY CONSULAR CORPS OF GHANA (HCCGH) HON. AMARKAI AMARTEIFIO'S WELCOME ADDRESS AT THE 1<sup>ST</sup> FICAC REGIONAL CONFERENCE



Seen above from L to R are: Hon. Virachai Techavijit, Hon. Arnold Foote, Nii La Dr. Kpobi Tettey-Tsuru III (King of Accra), Hon. Amarkai Amarteifio, Hon. Lamartine Hollanda and Hon. K L Ganju

*Hon. Amarkai Amarteifio is also Vice President of FICAC. In his welcome address said:*

Mr. Owusu Adj  
Honorable Minister for Foreign Affairs

Mr. Arnold Foote  
President, World Federation of Consuls

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

I am very pleased to address you on this very important day. This day marks a milestone in the growth of the World Federation of Consuls and the planting of its concept and ideals on the very fertile soil of Africa.

The Voice of Africa must be heard in the affairs of Honorary Consuls within the provisions of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations and other Global fractions and Conventions that facilitate the due performance of the work of the

Consul to the mutual benefit of the sending and receiving states.

Consuls on the African continent must realize the need to form Consular Associations with affiliation to the World Federation of Consuls so as to exert the influence necessary to effect improvements in communication with appropriate authority both in the receiving and sending states.

We aim to attain uniform and comprehensive interpretation and implementation of the principles that govern the execution of the functions of the Consul world wide. These are bound to be difficulties in the beginning of the work of the African Block in the face of traveling difficulties but these are compensated for by easy internet and other communication methods.

There is improvement in air communications and sufficient

roads are being constructed across Africa.

It is quite conceivable that very soon such difficulties will be a thing of the past.

Ghana offers opportunities for tourism.

I urge you to find time to sample the country, Ghana and consider investment in tourism in Ghana.

Ghana lies in the entre of the Earth. Just South of Guinea the Zero Equator. Tema is the closest land point to the centre of the earth forum.

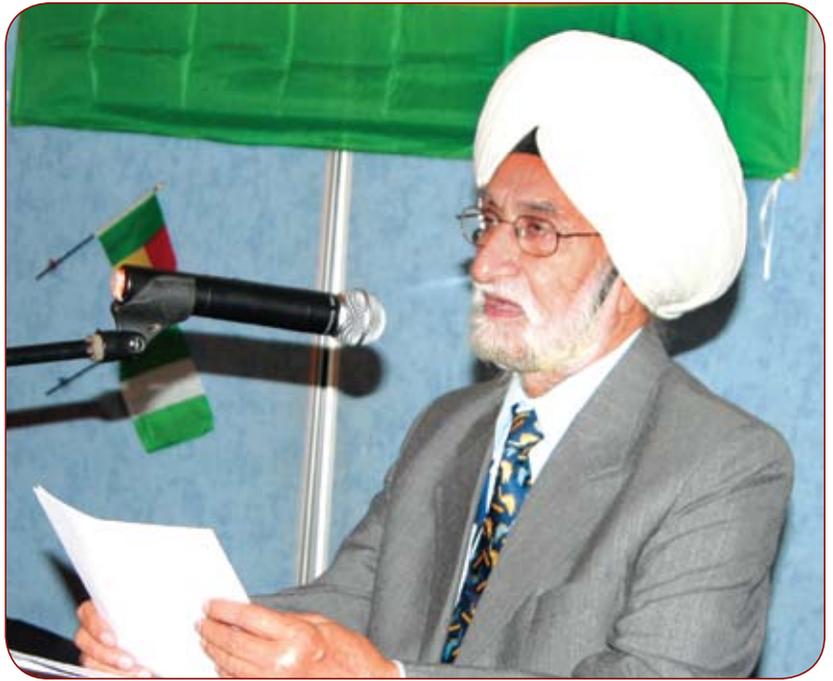
This phenomenon can form the basis of a tourist venture as people will like to come to the centre and obtain a Certificate that have done so.

My dear friends, while you are here please find time to enjoy yourselves.

Thank you

# Need For Review Of Vienna Convention On Consular Relations 1963 For More Effective Functioning Of Honorary Consuls

**-Hon. K. S. Bhalla**



*Hon. K.S. Bhalla, Secretary General of the Honorary Corps Consulaire Diplomatique-INDIA, Chairman of the South Asia Regional Committee addressing the conference.*

Honourable President of World Federation of Consuls, Honourable Dean of Ghana CC, Honourable Consuls, Distinguished ladies and Gentlemen:

Honorary consuls now exist in almost every country in the world.

They are emerging as significant components of diplomatic power in the scheme of traditional diplomacy exercised from embassies. Honorary consuls do exactly the same work as career diplomats of the same rank. In fact in capitals of the States, honorary consuls do the work of Ambassadors. The sending States do not have to incur any expenditure on staffing and other paraphernalia in the Consulates headed by honorary consuls. Most of the honorary consuls bear the entire expenditure on housing and running their Consulates.

Persons occupying the office of honorary consul are well-respected persons in prominent social positions. They are established businessmen, captains of industry, well-reputed professionals and former bureaucrats of high standing. They are persons of status

in society. They are persons of high caliber and level of their service is highly professional and in no way less than that of career consuls.

But it passes understanding why honorary consuls, who are highly educated, widely experienced and immensely mature, and who serve for free, are not treated at par with career consuls in certain essential matters under the Vienna Convention.

## **RESPECT AND DIGNITY**

Article 40 (Career Consul): The receiving State shall treat (career) consular officers with due respect and shall take all appropriate steps to prevent any attack on their person, freedom or dignity.

Article 64 (Honorary Consul): The receiving State is under a duty to accord to an honorary consular officer such protection as may be required by reason of his official position.

Article 40 of Vienna Convention says: "The receiving State shall treat (career) consular officers with due respect and shall take all appropriate steps to prevent any attack on their person, freedom or dignity." But Vienna Convention

does not feel the necessity of granting honorary consuls the same respect, the same dignity and the same protection from attack on their person as given to career consuls.

Corresponding Article 64 relating to honorary consuls says: "The receiving State is under a duty to accord to an honorary consular officer such protection as may be required by reason of his official position." Why is Vienna Convention silent on giving honorary consuls the same "respect" and the same "protection from attack on their person, freedom and dignity" as guaranteed to career consuls? It can be nobody's case that honorary consuls are inferior to career consuls in any way and do not deserve such courtesies. Then why should receiving States not be required to show honorary consuls the same "respect" as shown to career consuls? Why has Vienna Convention not shown the same concern for the "freedom and dignity" of honorary consuls as it has done for "freedom and dignity" of career consuls?

Both career consuls and honorary

consuls are heads of missions; both represent sovereign States; both do the same type work. There should be no reason why both honorary consuls and career consuls are not placed at par in the matter of respect, freedom and dignity?

Amendment suggested: Article 64 relating to honorary consuls should be worded on the lines of Article 40 relating to career consuls.

## 2. Freedom of movement:

Article 34: ( for both career consuls and honorary consuls): **FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT:-** Subject to its laws and regulations concerning zones entry into which is prohibited or regulated for reasons of national security, the receiving State shall ensure freedom of movement and travel in its territory to all members of the consular post.

Article 34 of Vienna Convention enjoins upon the receiving States to ensure freedom of movement and travel in its territory to all members of the consular post. This article applies to both career consuls and honorary consuls. Accordingly, freedom of movement is to be guaranteed to members of consular posts headed by career consuls as well as honorary consuls. Vienna Convention is, however, silent on the methodology to ensure the freedom of movement. There is a gap between theory and practice. In the case of career consular

posts, this gap has been filled up by issue of CD/CC number plates by receiving States. But there is no such mechanism in the case of honorary consular posts to ensure the free movement of their vehicles. Though a few States have started issuing CC number plates for vehicles of honorary consuls and have placed them at par with career consuls in this respect, in most of the States, honorary consuls do not enjoy this privilege. The result is that honorary consuls are not as free to move about and not as free to park their vehicles as career consuls. Their vehicles can be and are intercepted by traffic and security personnel thus obstructing their free movement, hurting their dignity and handicapping them in the discharge of their official functions. Obstruction of free movement is an infringement of Article 34.

As Article 34 gives privilege of free movement to both career consuls and honorary consuls, both categories of consular officers should be issued CC number plates by all States which is the passport for free movement recognized by traffic and security personnel all over.

Amendment suggested: To make this privilege available universally and as a matter of course, the following clause be added to Article 34: “ To ensure freedom

of movement as envisaged in this Article , distinctive and identical number plates shall be issued by a receiving State for the vehicles of consular posts of all sending States regardless of whether they are headed by career consuls or honorary consuls.

## 3. Exemption from taxation of Consular premises:-

Article 32 (Career Consul): 1. Consular premises and the residence of the career head of consular post of which the sending State or any person acting on its behalf is the owner or lessee shall be exempt from all national, regional or municipal dues and taxes whatsoever, other than such as represent payment for specific services rendered.

Article 60 (Honorary Consul): 1. Consular premises of a consular post headed by an honorary consular officer of which the sending State is the owner or lessee shall be exempt from all national, regional or municipal dues and taxes whatsoever, other than such as represent payment for specific services rendered.

In the matter of national, regional and municipal dues and taxes, Article 32 ( relating to premises of career consuls) and Article 60 ( relating to premises of posts headed by honorary consuls) make identical provisions in that consular premises of career consuls and honorary consuls have been exempted from all such taxes. While, on paper, career consuls and honorary consuls appear at par for the purpose of exemption of their premises from taxation , in actual practice it is not so. There is a catch in these Articles. Both the Articles say that consular premises are exempt from taxes only if they are owned or hired by the sending States. As we all know, consular premises of career consuls are always, I repeat always, owned or hired by sending States and thus



From left: Hon. Gonul Eken, Consul for St. Kitts; Hon. Aykut Eken, Treasurer of FICAC; Nii La Dr. Kpobi Tettey-Tsuru III (King of Accra) and Hon. Lamartine Hollanda, Director of FICAC



Hon. Kofi Osei-Ameyaw, Deputy Minister of Tourism and Diasporian Relations receives the FICAC Award of Appreciation which was presented to him by the president of the World Federation of Consuls Arnold Foote after his address at the delegates welcome reception and dinner. Looking on from left FICAC Director Dr. Hon. Virachai Techavijit and FICAC VP Hon. Amarkai Amarteifio.

qualify for exemption from taxes. But consular premises of honorary consuls are rarely, I repeat rarely, owned or hired by sending States. By and large, consular premises used by honorary consuls are owned or hired by honorary consuls themselves, not by their sending States. Consequently, consular premises used by honorary consuls do not qualify for exemption from taxes. The result is that honorary consuls have to pay taxes on premises which are used by them to serve the sending States. Why should it be so?

In the matter of taxation on consular premises, consular premises of both categories of consuls should be treated alike and be exempt from taxation irrespective of the fact whether these are owned or hired by sending States or by honorary consuls themselves.

Amendment suggested: Article 60 should be amended as follows:- For the words "the sending State", substitute the words "the sending State or the honorary consul".

4. Exemption of imported office equipment from customs duty:-

Article 50 (Career consul) : 1. The receiving State shall, in accordance with such laws and regulations as it may adopt, permit entry of and grant exemption from all customs duties, taxes, and related charges other than charges for storage, cartage and similar services, on :

articles for the official use of the consular post;

articles for the personal use of a consular officer or members of his family forming part of his household, including articles intended for his establishment. The articles intended for consumption shall not exceed the quantities necessary for direct utilization by the persons concerned.

Article 62 (Honorary Consul): The receiving State shall, in accordance with such laws and regulations as it may adopt, permit entry of, and grant exemption from all customs duties, taxes, and related charges other than charges for storage, cartage and similar services on the following articles, provided that they are for the official use of a consular post headed by an honorary consular officer: coats-of-arms, flags, signboards, seals and stamps, books, official printed matter, office furniture, office equipment and similar articles supplied by or at the instance of the sending State to the consular post Under Article 50 of Vienna Convention (relating to career consuls), articles imported for the official use of a Consular post headed by career consuls are exempt from customs duty. But, under corresponding Article 62 (which relates to honorary consuls), similar articles imported for official use of consular posts headed by

honorary consuls are not exempt from customs duty unless these articles are supplied by or at the instance of the sending States. Sending States rarely supply office equipments to honorary consular posts. As honorary consuls procure office equipments, locally or from overseas, from their own pocket, exemption from customs duty referred to in Article 62 is merely an eye wash so far as honorary consuls are concerned and is of no use to honorary consuls. When office equipment is procured for the same purpose, namely, running the consular post in the interest of the sending State, why should the equipment imported by honorary consuls be taxed and that imported by career consuls should be exempted. It amounts to double burden on honorary consuls in that they spend money from their own pocket on import of office equipment and over and above they are also required to pay customs duty on such equipment. Why so?

So long as office equipment is for the exclusive use of consular posts, all such equipment, whether supplied by sending States or imported by honorary consuls on their own, should be exempt from customs duty.

Amendment suggested: In Article 62, for the words "supplied by or at the instance of the sending State to the consular post" substitute the words "procured for the consular post by the sending State or by the head of the consular post."

Exemption of locally purchased articles from national, regional and municipal taxes:- Not only do honorary consuls face discrimination in the matter of taxation on imported equipment, they face similar discrimination in the matter of articles of office use procured locally.

Article 49 (re: career consuls):  
EXEMPTION FROM TAXATION:-

1. Consular officers and consular employees and members of their families forming part of their households shall be exempt from all dues and taxes, personal or real, national, regional or municipal, except:

indirect taxes of a kind which are normally incorporated in the price of goods or services; .....

2. Members of the service staff shall be exempt from dues and taxes on the wages which they receive for their services.

Article 66 : (re: honorary consuls):  
EXEMPTION FROM TAXATION:-

An honorary consular officer shall be exempt from all dues and taxes on the remuneration and emoluments which he receives from the sending State in respect of the exercise of consular functions.

Article 49 exempts career consuls and employees of their consular posts and members of their families from all dues and taxes, personal or real, national, regional or municipal, except: (a) indirect taxes of a kind which are normally incorporated in the price of goods or services; (there are some more such exceptions which are not relevant here.)

Article 66 ( relating to honorary consuls) exempts honorary consuls only from taxes on the remuneration and emoluments which they may

receive from the sending State in respect of the exercise of consular functions.

Thus not only the articles purchased by career consuls for the official use of their consular posts including liquors for service at national day receptions and other official functions are exempt from all taxes but articles purchased by them for their private use are also exempt from local taxes. In other words, career consuls do not have pay Sales Tax, VAT and other local taxes on any article whether purchased for official use or for private use.

Honorary consuls have no case to ask for exemption from taxes on articles purchased by them for their private use.

But when honorary consuls purchase office equipments or office furniture or other articles or liquors etc for official use of the consular post, they are required to pay Sales Tax, VAT and other local taxes, which in some countries are as high as 30%. Why this discrimination between career consuls and honorary consuls in the matter of taxes on articles for official use? This inequality casts double burden on honorary consuls and makes running of their consular posts unduly expensive.

Though honorary consuls were prepared to bear all expenditure on running their consulates when they accepted honorary consulship, additional burden of taxation on articles purchased for official use of consular posts pinches.

Both the categories of consuls run their consulates in the service of the sending States. When articles are purchased by honorary consuls in the interest of the sending States, there is no justification to inflict on them additional burden of local taxes, when similar articles in the hands of career consuls are exempt from taxes. Recognising the need for equality in the matter of taxation on articles and services procured for official use in consular posts, there is a strong case for inserting the following new Article in the Vienna Convention:-

“New Article: A consular post headed by an honorary consular officer shall be exempt from national, regional or municipal taxes, on goods, articles, and services required or procured for the use of the consular post including alcoholic beverages, food and other items required for use at its official functions, national day receptions and receptions held in honour of dignitaries from the sending State .”

Vienna Convention on Consular Relations was born in 1963. Four decades have passed since then. Honorary consular corps were not strong enough when this Convention was made. Times have changed. Expectations have changed. Pressures have changed. Environment has changed. Organs of United Nations are in for change. It is time that the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations is also taken up for a thorough review to bring it in tune with the changed times. It would be a time-consuming exercise. Let the beginning be made now .



Ghana President H. E. John A. Kufuor welcomes Hon. Kartar Bhalla and Mrs. Bhalla to his office before the World Federation of Consuls Presentation Ceremony.

# FICAC PRESIDENT FOOTE HONOURED IN GHANA



Seated in the front row second right Nii La Dr. Kpobi Tettey-Tsuru III, King of Accra, Mrs. Kpobi Tettey-Tsuru III, President Hon. Arnold Foote, Mrs. Patricia Foote and Vice President Hon. Amarkai Amarteifio surrounded by several Africans Chiefs and other dignitaries from Accra.

President of the World Federation of Consuls Hon. Arnold Foote was honoured in Accra by Nii La Dr. Kpobi Tettey III (King of Accra). Hon. Arnold Foote was named an Honorary Citizen of Accra and received this honour in his Ashanti Robe. A Reception was held at the Palace after the Ceremony.



From left to right: Hon. Amarkai Amarteifio, Nana Barima Kwame Nkyi XII, ruler of the Royal Assin Kingdom, Mrs. Patricia Foote, Hon. Arnold Foote, Ms. Richael Vanderpuye and Hon. Dr. Clifford Lamptey and Mr. Eleanor Amarteifio.

Foote then visited the ancient town of Assin Manso and met with Nana Barima Kwame Nkyi XII ruler of the Royal Assin Kingdom at the Minta Ebu Palace. At a Ceremony there, Nana Barima Kwame Nkyi XII declared Arnold Foote a descendant of the Royal Assin Kingdom and renamed him Nana Kobina Manso.

Hon. Arnold Foote, Mrs. Patricia Foote and Hon. Amarkai Amarteifio accompanied by Chiefs in the area visited the graves which contain the remains of 2 enslaved Africans that was found in Seville, St. Ann, Jamaica and transported to Assin Manso for burial in the ancestral graveyard. Wreaths were laid on both graves by them.

# FICAC President's Address at the Palace of Nana Kodwo Condua VI the Omanhene of Edina Traditional area.

**The Elmina Castle where slaves were kept for the Trans-Atlantic slave trade is in this area**

**E**lmina Castle, erected by the Portuguese in 1482 as a first European trading post in West Africa soon after became a major site of the trans-Atlantic slave trade. Our visit here today is thus fundamentally linked to a most significant episode in world history, with lasting memories and legacies even today. This year (2008) is remembered and recognized as the bicentennial of the official abolition of the trans-Atlantic Slave trade by the United States, 200 years ago. A similar recognition occurred last year - - the bicentennial of the official abolition of the trans-Atlantic Slave trade by Britain in 1807.

I deliberately use the term "official," since it was quite sometime after these events of 1807 and 1808 that the termination of the trans-Atlantic slave trade actually materialized, due to various circumstances and lax enforcement measures - - with the significant exception of Haiti which freed itself from French-imposed slavery and colonialism in its 1804 revolution.

It took almost another century for the institution of trans-Atlantic slavery to be finally abolished in the Americas - - beginning in the British colonial possessions (including my native land Jamaica) in the 1830's, through the United States in the 1860's, and finally to Cuba and Brazil in the 1880's.

It is necessary to place in global historical perspective the significance of the trans-Atlantic slave trade and associated patterns of enslavement. This was the largest involuntary population transfer in history, involving by many estimates at least 15-20 million Africans and perhaps more. It lasted over four centuries (from the initiation by Portugal of the sale

of Africans in Lisbon in 1441 to the abolition of the institution of slavery in Brazil in 1885). It involved all the major European Powers, in those early stages of European international expansion and emerging global domination.

African slave-labour was a fundamental ingredient of the economic foundations of the emerging "New World" especially in the United States, Brazil, and the Caribbean. This contributed economically to the emerging industrial revolution in Europe while simultaneously undermining and marginalizing Africa in the emerging modern international system.

The world experienced other patterns of slavery before and since trans-Atlantic slavery, but its most distinctive aspect was its racial foundations. The enslavers were of one color, the enslaved of another, which in the context of emerging European expansionism and global domination culminated in the institutionalization of racialized thought and practice, with echoes and residues still in the present.

But alongside (or beyond) the horrors and oppressions associated with trans-Atlantic slavery is another important factor, namely the constant struggles of enslaved Africans for dignity and freedom. It is not accidental that two of the six National Heroes recognized by my native-land Jamaica after the acquisition of political independence from Britain in 1962 are: Nanny (an 18th century female leader of the Maroon challenge to British imperialism) and Sam Sharpe (leader of a major slave revolt in 1832, the year preceding the official abolition of slavery in Jamaica).

The resistance and liberation struggles of enslaved Africans - - beginning from the shores of Africa across the Atlantic to the Americas - convey wider meanings, past and present as expressed in these words of a most distinguished African international personality, AMADOU - MATHAR M'BOW of Senegal in 1981, during his tenure as Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO): "...the resistance of the slaves shipped to America, the constant and massive participation of the descendants of Africans in the struggles for the initial independence of America and in national liberation movements, are rightly perceived for what they were: vigorous assertions of identity, which helped forge the universal concept of mankind."

M'BOW's statement continues to challenge our mission as the World Federation of Consuls, to help in forging the universal concept of humankind. Thank you.



Nana Kodwo Condua VI explaining to FICAC President details of the new Palace being erected near the Elmina Castle.

# The Role Of The Honorary Consul In Africa And The “Global Village” -Ambassador J. Aggrey



Ambassador J. Aggrey seen above addressing the first African Regional Conference held in Accra Ghana, Hon. Lamartine Hollanda Jr. (partially hidden), Hon. K.L. Ganju, Hon. Arnold Foote, Hon. Amarkai Amarteifio, Hon. Costas Lefkaritis, Hon. Aykut Eken and Hon. Virachai Techavijit

Minister For Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration And Nepad, in his address to the conference said:

Mr. Chairman

Hon. Minister of State

The Dean and Members of the Honorary Consular Corps

Nii mei, Naa mei, Nananom

Heads of Public Institutions

Invited Guests

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

**O**n behalf of the Government and people of Ghana and in my own name, I wish to welcome all of you to Ghana, the land of warmth, sunshine and proverbial hospitality.

I am informed that some of you have learnt a few local words since your arrival in our country. Permit me therefore to reiterate my welcome in local dialect by saying ‘AKWAABA’

I trust that while in the country for the conference, you will find time to savour the exotic Ghanaian cuisine, visit our pristine and uncrowded beaches and some of our historic and touristic sites, and also sample our rich culture. If you fail to do as much as possible on this trip, you have our open invitation to return and see more of this country during

subsequent visits.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The topic given to me (i.e. the Role of the Honorary Consul in Africa and the Global Village) required me to make some comments on the work of Honorary Consuls, the specific conditions of Africa which is the immediate environment in which you work as such and finally, on the meaning of the term “Global Village”. However, I have found it more expedient, and I trust you will allow me, to start by making my remarks in reverse order. This means I shall first speak about the “Global Village”, then the African environment with particular reference to the treatment of visitors and finally, about your work as Honorary Consuls. With this approach, I hope to be able to better situate the work of the Honorary Consul within the immediate and external environment in which he/she operates in Africa.

## GLOBAL VILLAGE

Behind the use of the term “global village”, lies the recognition that our world has become much smaller that it was before, in terms of distances. Advances in communications, technologies, transport as well as the spread of economic activities

and culture are the main contributory factors responsible for the shrinking of our world.

Perhaps one major area in which globalization has been most felt is in the field of “International Migration”. If it is regular or lawful, migration will necessarily involve acquisition of passports and visas. That area is one key duty that you are called upon to perform as Honorary Consular Corps on a routine basis.

A second traditional function involves the provision of actual consular services through which you bring hope and succor to many who may be filled with despondency as a result of some desperate circumstances in which they find themselves. In this respect, you are unsung heroes and heroines who reach out in kindness to destitute persons who are full of misery and despair for one reason or the other, especially those incarcerated for violating immigration rules of for being undocumented immigrants.

Many of you, on daily basis, make personal sacrifices for the consular protection of the citizens entrusted to your care. In a good number of cases, you undertake this noble work out of your own resources as

*continued on page 16*



Chairman of the organising committee of the FICAC African Regional Conference Hon. Dimitri Avraam discussing matters of importance with Hon. Amarkai Amarteiffo, Dean of the Consular Corps of Ghana and Vice President of the World Federation of Consuls also in the picture is Hon. Costas Lefkaritis, Director of FICAC and Dean of the Consular Corps of Cyprus.

Honorary Consuls and Consuls-General. I salute you for showing this laudable spirit of humanity and solidarity with the ordinary people. However, this spirit seems to be waning in recent years in the face of the fight against international terrorists and “undesirable” migrants who are regarded as being responsible for all the ills and crimes in host countries. It is therefore ironic to see that in a world of interdependence and eroding frontiers, borders are being reinforced against free movement of persons by harsh consular regulations. Conditions for obtaining visas are being made more and more stringent. Countries are being turned into impenetrable fortresses to keep out immigrants. Out of frustration, many young people are resorting to irregular migration. The perilous journeys across shark-infested and turbulent oceans, in dilapidated boats and unsafe canoes have claimed hundreds of lives daily. Yet people still struggle to reach Europe and beyond through desert and sea crossings that often become “journeys of no return”. We must uphold the sanctity of immigration laws and the wishes of receiving states. However, the Honorary Consular Corps, will need to reflect on the extent to which

it has deliberately or unwittingly played an accessory role in driving many young people to embark on these hazardous “journeys of no return’ by the arbitrary or unreasonable visa decisions that are made on potential travelers. In an age of communication technology, applicants are sometime required to produce the stamped envelopes in which their letters of invitation arrived from abroad. Some people are also required to show travel experience, as if no one ever travelled for the first time in a real life experience.

I wish to take this opportunity to appeal to the Honorary Consular Corps to devise innovative humane ways of dealing with the travelling public so as to facilitate movement of people in this ‘global village’ of ours.

#### **TRADITION AFRICAN HOSPITALITY**

I make this appeal and call for improvement in the relations between the Honorary Consular Corps and the travelling public because it is not in consonance with the traditional African environment which respects travelers and visitors and amply portrays the proverbial African hospitality.

Africans are ready to receive and honour visitors. For the African, every visitor comes to confirm recognition of our common humanity. The

visitor raises our image and profile within the community. The whole community joins in welcoming every guest. When we receive visitors, we bring out our best values, our best gifts, attitudes and comportment.

The visitor is really made to feel at home in every respect. Indeed, in Ghana, among the Ga people of Accra, they will tell each visitor that “you came extending one hand to us in salutation and friendship, but we are embracing you with two hands”. The lesson here is that as hosts, we are taking responsibility for your warmth, security and well-being (as a guest). So a purely private visit becomes a community responsibility and the entire village bears a duty of care for the guest.

Among the Akan, another proverb that adequately captures the full extent of African hospitality says “The guest does not breach any laws:.

Though this is not to be taken literally, the teaching here is that because of unfamiliarity with local custom and law, the guest is exculpated from all responsibility in the even of a perceived error, during his or her stay.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Migration ought to have been seen in this positive light. It is an enterprise



*FICAC President Hon. Arnold Foote makes a presentation of appreciation to Ambassador J. Aggrey from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ghana. The Ambassador delivered the keynote address at the official opening of the historic first FICAC African Regional Consular Conference.*

that brings people of different cultures together for interaction and cross cultural dialogue, in a way that brings the nations of this world closer and in a spirit of mutual understanding that engenders deeper appreciation of cultural diversity and profound awareness of our shared humanity. It must be a “win-win situation” for all and not a “zero-sum” game. Such an enterprise need not impoverish any community, whether it is to be found in the countries of origin or hosting countries.

Migration is truth, has benefits for countries of origin, transit and receiving states alike.

#### **ROLE OF CONSULAR CORPS**

I have spent a lot time on this theme because the Honorary Consular Corps in a “global village” should see itself as having a very unique role to play in removing the borders, not reinforcing or erecting them. The world must become a true community of all peoples. An Honorary Consular Corps has a duty to promote our common humanity, shared vision and common future in a mutually inter-dependent global village.

You have a historic role to play in making every corner of our globe, a welcoming home for every guest or visitor. This is how you can make an immense contribution to the removal of racism and xenophobia which are

fast transforming some communities into hostile and pugnacious environments that repel foreigners.

The Honorary Consular Corps is made up of men and women of goodwill. The age-old history of the Consular profession as one that defends and promotes life, unity, freedom, of movement of people, goods and services and indeed general commerce still has resonance. We cannot be seen to be undermining these values and accolades which have been associated with the Honorary Consular Corps for centuries and which have earned it the respect, dignity and admiration of ordinary people. I therefore urge all of you to promote the common good and to be instruments of service to the human family. You are the actors in harmonizing migration and immigration rules among nations, and you can continue to help all of us to become a true family of nations as we often refer to ourselves in international relations.

The role you play in our “global village”, that is protecting the interest and fostering the commercial affairs of the subjects of the countries you represent, as well as the development of cultural and scientific relations between those countries and your countries of resident are so vital, that the difficulties of visa acquisition

should not be allowed to becloud your contribution to the well-being of our global village. We in Ghana are desirous of reaching out to the world and to the Ghanaian Diaspora in our efforts to develop our economy, enhance commerce, improve interactions and to promote and defend our cultural values, but we have seen that we cannot afford opening Diplomatic Missions everywhere. That is why in recent years we have seen an increase in the number of resident Honorary Consular posts abroad, both in Africa and elsewhere. Ghana’s own Honorary Consular Corps, numbering about sixty, has served the country well to the mutual satisfaction of Ghana and our partner countries. This buttresses the importance of your work and the trust we place in you. Our hearts and minds should yearn for a vision of life where love endures, where freedom finds meaning in truth and friendship and where unity is founded on togetherness, mutual respect and fellow feeling. This is how to give hope to our world which increasingly is truly becoming a global village.

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I thank you for your attention and I wish you fruitful discussions at this meeting.

# FICAC 25<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY AWARDS BANQUET IN ACCRA, GHANA

Hon. Amarkai Amarteifio receives FICAC Award of Excellence



Hon. Amarkai Amarteifio (right), the Swedish Consul-General in Ghana and the Vice President of the World Federation of Consuls, showing the FICAC Award of Excellence given to him for his contribution to the development of the World Federation of Consuls. Those with him are Hon. Mary Chinery-Hesse, the Chief Advisor to the President of Ghana, and Hon. Arnold Foote, President of the World Federation of Consuls. Hon. Mary Chinery-Hesse was the keynote speaker at the FICAC 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Awards Banquet held in Accra Ghana.



Mrs. Kartar Bhalla Pinning the FICAC Medal of Honour to Dr. the Hon. Vilas Lokhandwala, Honorary Consul for Ghana in Mumbai.



Hon. Peter Morenth, Consul of the Kingdom of Lesotho receiving the FICAC Medal of Honour from Hon. Gonul Eken.



Hon. Saied Fakhry, Honorary Consul General of the Union of the Comoros being decorated with the FICAC Medal of Honour by FICAC Director Hon. Virachai Techavijit.



Hon. Dr. Virachai Techavijit, Nii La Dr. Kpobi Tettey-Tsuru III (King of Accra), Hon. Shewak Ram Mirpuri at the Gala banquet.



# FICAC NEWS IN PICTURES

## FICAC 25<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY AWARDS BANQUET IN ACCRA, GHANA



Hon. Alex Quarmyme of the HCCGH receiving FICAC Medal of Honour from Director of FICAC Hon. K.L. Ganju.



Hon. Mary Chinery-Hesse, the Chief Advisor to the President of Ghana delivering the Keynote Address at the FICAC 25th Anniversary Awards Banquet.



Hon. Antonio Jose de Matos Fernandes, Honorary Consul of Portugal receiving his FICAC Medal of Honour from Hon. Costas Lefkaritis Director of FICAC.



Hon. Desh B. Sahae, Honorary Consul of Kingdom of Tonga in India after receiving the FICAC medal of Honour from Mrs. Amarkai Amarteifio.



Hon. Dimitri Avraam being decorated with the FICAC Medal of Honour by Hon. Kartar Bhalla, Secretary General, Honorary Consular Corps Diplomatique- India.



Mrs. Patricia Foote receiving a presentation from Hon. Dr. Mirza Ikhtiar Baig, Dean of the Consular Corps of Karachi.

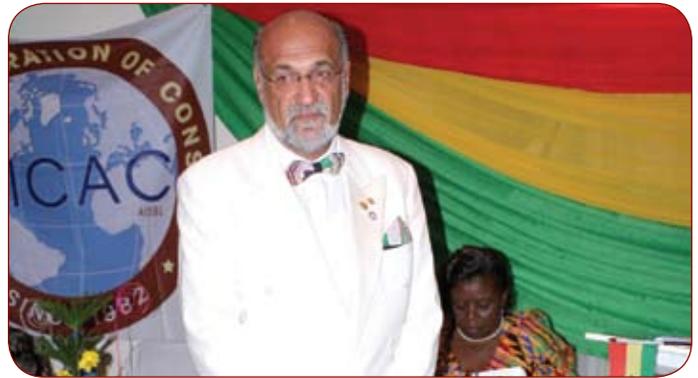


# FICAC NEWS IN PICTURES

## FICAC 25<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY AWARDS BANQUET IN ACCRA, GHANA



Hon. Mirza Ikhtiar Baig making a presentation to Mrs. Amarkai Amarteifio.



Hon. Dimitri Avraam the Chairman of the FICAC African Regional Committee, was congratulated along with the Organising Committee for the excellent job he did in making the FICAC African Regional Conference a huge success.



Hon. Hans Rudolf Roth, Founder of the HCCGH being decorated with FICAC Medal of Honour by Director Aykut Eken.



Hon. Tanoh Acka Christophe, Consul Honoraire de Roumanie en Côte d' Ivoire addressing the Delegates at the Conference.



Hon. Sanjay K. Dewan, Honorary Consul General of the Republic of the Gambia in India being decorated with the FICAC Medal of Honour by Mr. Patrick Debus General Manager of the FICAC Secretariat in Brussels.



Hon. Shewak Ram Mirpuri receiving his FICAC Medal of Honour from Mr. Patrick Debus at the Gala Dinner.

# LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear and Honourable colleagues,

- 1. Hon. Mr Arnold Foote, President, FICAC**
- 2. Hon. Mr Amarkai Amarteifio, Dean of Ghana Consular Corps**
- 3. Hon. Mr Dimitrios Avraam, Chairman, Organising Committee of First Africa Consular Conference**

I returned from Accra in early hours today after participating in the First FICAC Africa Consular Conference. It was a very successful, well-organised Conference which made history in many fields.

On landing at Accra airport on 9 October 2008, when I found Hon. Mr Dimitrios Avraam, Chairman of the Organisation, himself receiving us there, I was deeply touched by his graciousness and by Ghana CC's thoughtfulness.

The Conference opened with a moving address by President of FICAC, Hon. Mr Arnold Foote. His address succinctly and briefly related the history of FICAC, its achievements in the last two years (of which I and most other delegates felt proud) and the plan of action for the future. It aptly reflected the grand personality of President Arnold Foote and brought out his imagination, his vision and his global outlook. He won everybody's heart by his impressive articulation.

The honour shown to me by including me and my wife in the delegation of Directors calling on His Excellency the President of Ghana for presentation of FICAC Gold Medal of Honour, even though I was not a Director, would remain etched in my memory for life.

The Conference and Board of Directors took momentous decisions which are historic and would leave footprints to be followed by future leaderships. After my keynote speech on "Need for review of Vienna Convention on Consular Relations 1963 for more effective functioning of honorary consuls" – which to my surprise was received more enthusiastically than I could imagine – Hon. President Arnold Foote's observations welcoming my analysis and announcing a line of action to pursue the matter through Foreign Ministers of participating countries and urging the Deans/Presidents of member-associations to be pro-active in this field, thrilled me and overwhelmed me beyond description.

FICAC Who's Who – the proposal which the Board of Directors has approved, will, I am sure, make big news when it comes out. The FICAC Consular Privileges Protection Committee, which the Board has decided to set up, should be hailed by a large number of member-associations and honorary consuls who are not able to enjoy the recognized privileges in full measure at present. The reports on progress made by FICAC in spreading and consolidating its branches in various regionals should convince everybody, even its critics, that FICAC is on the march all over.

The get-together on 10 October and the Gala dinner on 11 October were organized marvelously. These grand functions gave us an insight into the culture and social fabric of Ghana which, to say the least, are splendid. The addresses by Honourable Minister for Tourism and the Honourable Chief Advisor to H E the President of Ghana were scintillating and educative. The beautiful women of Ghana cat-walking at Gala Dinner presented an unforgettable sight.

These developments should make Accra Conference memorable and path-breaking.

Speaking for myself: When a number of honorary consuls in Ghana and conference staff told me that they knew about me, I wondered how my 'notoriety' had spread in Ghana ahead of my visit. I was moved by the personal touch of warmth which my wife and I received in Accra at the hands of all.

My heartiest congratulations to Hon. President Arnold Foote, Hon. Amarkai Amarteifio, Hon. Dimitrios Avraam, Ghana CC and the conference staff.

With warmest regards,

Yours sincerely,

K S Bhalla

Honorary Consul of Nauru in India

Secretary General, Honorary Consular Corps Diplomatique-India

Chairman, World Federation of Consuls South Asia Regional Committee



# FICAC NEWS IN PICTURES

## FIRST FICAC AFRICAN REGIONAL CONFERENCE



Hon. Kartar Bhalla receiving a presentation from Hon. Dr. Mirza Baig, Dean of the Consular Corps of Karachi



From Left: Hon Gonul Eken, Mrs. Diana Avraam, Hon. Aykut Eken at the Gala banquet.



Seen above are: Hon. Christoph Tanoh Acka, Consul of Romania in Cote d' Ivoire, Hon. Sessou Djokoto Franck, Consul of Turkey in Togo and Hon. Claude Karaam Consul of Spain in Benin after receiving their Medal of Honour at the Conference.



Hon. Amarkai Amarteifio and Mrs. Amarteifio in conversation with Hon. Paulina Biggs Sparkuhl, Honorary Consul of Chile and Mr. Jonathan Warren at the FICAC 25th Anniversary Awards Banquet.



Hon. Alex Quarmyme and Mrs. Quarmyme seen smiling after Hon Alex received his FICAC Medal of Honour at the Gala banquet.



Hon. Dimiri Avraam, Chairman of the FICAC African Regional Committee in discussion with Hon. Antonio Jose de Fernandes, Honorary Consul of Portugal in Ghana.



# FICAC NEWS IN PICTURES

## FIRST FICAC AFRICAN REGIONAL CONFERENCE



Some of the Delegates waiting to be registered at the first FICAC African Regional Conference in Accra Ghana.



Nii La Dr. Kpobi Tettey-Tsuru III (King of Accra) receiving his Award of Appreciation from Hon. Arnold Foote, President of FICAC, looking on is Hon. Amarkai Amarteifio.



Hon. Luiz F. Picollo and Hon. Lamartine Hollanda Jr., a Director of FICAC in discussion after the conference.



Seen from left to right: Mrs. K.L. Ganju, Mrs. Kartar Bhalla, Mrs. Patricia Foote, Mrs. Amarkai Amarteifio and Mrs. Gonul Eken in Accra Ghana.



Hon. Compaore Bernard, Honorary Consul of Comoros in Burkina Faso and Mrs. Bernard at the FICAC 25th Anniversary Award Banquet.



Hon. Andras Batizi, President of Honorary Consular Corps of Hungary and the Hungarian delegation at the FICAC 25th Anniversary Awards Banquet.



# FICAC NEWS IN PICTURES



FICAC Award of Appreciation being presented to Hon. Mary Chinery-Hesse, Chief Advisor to the President of Ghana, by President of the World Federation of Consuls Hon. Arnold Foote. Also in picture from left Hon. Kartar Bhalla, Vice President of FICAC Hon. Amarkai Amarteifio, Director of FICAC Hon. K.L. Ganju, Treasurer/ Director of FICAC Hon. Aykut Eken and Director of FICAC Hon. Virachai Techavijit.

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