

GUIDE TO DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS IN TURKEY



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INTRODUCTION

The Guide to Diplomatic Missions in Turkey aims to inform the members of diplomatic and consular missions and international organizations throughout their tenure in Turkey on certain basic procedures to be followed as well as privileges and immunities.

Turkey is hosting 122 Embassies, 93 Consulates General, 375 Honorary Consulates and offices of 44 International Organizations. There are around 7.000 people in Turkey entitled to different levels of privileges and immunities. The Protocol Department of the Ministry has been actively supporting the members of the Missions in improving their living and working environment.

In accordance with the international practice, the privileges and immunities enjoyed by the Diplomatic Missions, Consular Posts and International Organizations and their members in Turkey are based on the principle of reciprocity, and governed by the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (VCDR) of 1961, the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations (VCCR) of 1963, related UN Conventions and host country agreements with the International Organizations as well as the relevant Turkish Law.

This Guide is compiled from legal documents, rules and regulations and practices of Turkey. However, it should be considered as a reference and a set of general guidelines for Diplomatic Missions, Consular Posts and International Organizations in Turkey, rather than a legally binding document. Further reference should be made to the Circular Notes sent by the Ministry, application forms and other information available at Diplomatic Portal.

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2 GENERAL INFORMATION

2.1 DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS

Regarding the diplomatic immunities and privileges, in conformity with the provisions of 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (VCDR), the members of the Diplomatic Missions are considered in three categories.

- Diplomatic staff members
- (Those listed in the List of Diplomatic Corps/holders of 1st category ID cards),
- Administrative-technical staff members,
- Service staff members.

The type of passport and/or title and duty of a member of a foreign mission are among the factors indicating the category of the person concerned in accordance with the VCDR and Turkish legislation as well as on the basis of reciprocity. Nevertheless, it is at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' (hereinafter referred to as the Ministry) discretion to determine or change the category and to clarify the status of a member.

2.2 CONSULAR POSTS

In conformity with the provisions of 1963 Vienna Convention on Consular Relations (VCCR), the staff members of the Consular Posts are considered in three categories.

- Consular Officers
- Consular employee (administrative-technical)
- Members of the service staff

2.3 INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

The members of the international organizations are considered in three categories.

- International staff
- Administrative-technical staff members,
- Service staff members.

The immunities and privileges of the members of Representations of International Organizations accredited to Turkey shall be limited to those envisaged in the host country agreements and the international conventions to which Turkey is a party.

2.4 FAMILY MEMBERS

The provisions of the VCDR (Article 37) do not explicitly define the term “family member” and therefore each State has its own interpretation. For further details on the issue, please look at the ID cards section.

3 PROTOCOL PROCEDURES FOR THE ARRIVAL OF MEMBERS OF STAFF AT DIPLOMATIC/CONSULAR MISSIONS AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

3.1 NOTIFICATION OF ARRIVAL

The missions should notify the Ministry of the arrival of new mission members by a Verbal Note within seven days.

All applications should be made online through diplomatic.mfa.gov.tr. Subsequently, five copies of the arrival notification form (Online ID Application Form) fully completed, duly signed and sealed, together with passports, one copy of each passport and 2 photographs of each person concerned should be attached to the Verbal Note.

The Verbal Note and arrival notification form should explicitly state the name of the predecessor, the category (i.e. diplomatic, administrative-technical or service) and the title of the members as well as the functions she/he will assume (e.g. in charge of political, cultural, economic, administrative affairs or chief of chancellery).

3.2 IDENTITY (ID) CARDS

The rules and procedures about the ID cards are stipulated in the “Regulation on Identity Cards for the Resident Foreign Missions” (Official Gazette on 23 July 2013, edition: 28717).

ID Cards (Yabancı Misyon Personeli Kimlik Kartı) issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is a polycarbonate, multilayered card (80x50 mm) in three main color bands. (Samples are shown on the next page, at 2.2.1.)

ID cards can only be issued for the accredited members and dependents of the diplomatic, consular and international organization missions and honorary consuls.

ID cards also serve as the residence permit. Holders are advised to carry their cards at all times in Turkey to be submitted the competent authorities upon request or as needed.

3.2.4 LOST/THEFT

The Ministry should be informed immediately in case of loss or theft of ID cards.

Requests for a new ID card following the loss, damage or any change in the previous card should also be made by a Verbal Note. In case of loss, a copy of the police report should be attached to the Note.

3.3 PRIVATE SERVANTS

The Red and Green ID holders of the diplomatic Missions, consular posts and international organizations can apply to employ private servants on certain conditions.

Private servants employed by staff members of a Diplomatic Mission, Consular Post or Representation of International Organization are subject to the requirements of the current visa and residence regulations. Legal entry and stay in the country of the person to be employed as a private servant are essential. When recruiting a person living in Turkey as a private servant, members of diplomatic Missions must ensure that this person has the right to stay and take employment in Turkey.

The Mission, which the private servant will be employed by its member, should send to the Ministry "a Letter of Undertaking" in duplicate for approval. In any case, the "Letter of Undertaking" should be sent to the Ministry not later than 15 days from the date of entry in Turkey.

Documents certifying that the private servant is covered by the current social security provisions of the "sending state" or a "third state" (in this case, the country of origin of the private servant) with copies of relevant pages of the passport bearing visa if applied, the passport itself, four information forms for arriving private servants and five photographs should be attached to the Verbal Note requesting the issuance of an ID card or a residence permit. If the private servant's social security does not cover the health insurance in Turkey, a separate local health insurance (private insurance companies are accepted) is necessary. Relevant documents should be attached to the application.

Upon certification of the status of the private servant with respect to insurance coverage, the ID card issued by the Ministry of the Interior for a year will be delivered by the Ministry to the mission in Ankara. The Ministry does not issue ID cards for private servants employed by members of mission in Istanbul. They must apply for a residence permit to be issued by the local police with the same provisions.

For renewals of ID cards and residence permits regular payments of insurance premiums should be certified by a Note with the relevant documents attached.

3.4 LOCALLY EMPLOYED STAFF

In case of a local staff employment (Turkish nationals or third country nationals with a valid residence permit), Diplomatic Missions, Consular Posts and International Organizations should notify the Ministry with the labor contract and the papers documenting that she/he is enjoying social security coverage. Missions are also requested to present an updated list of locally employed staff working at the Diplomatic/Consular Missions and International Organizations. The list must be updated regularly.

3.5 TEMPORARY ASSIGNMENTS

Temporary assignments should be notified by a Verbal Note to PDGY within one week after the arrival of the personnel in Turkey.

The Verbal Note should contain:

- The duration of the assignment,
- The title, duty or occupation of the personnel,
- The reason of the temporary assignment,
- Family members accompanying the temporarily assigned personnel.

The passport of the personnel should be attached to the Verbal Note. A visa indicating their temporary assignment status will be affixed to the passport.

Duration of temporary assignment should not exceed 6 months.

3.6 ACCREDITATION PROCEDURES FOR MILITARY ATTACHES

Diplomatic Missions should notify the PDGY of the proposed appointment of military attachés (naval, air etc.) through a Verbal Note. Detailed CV of the Attaché should be attached to this notification.

Missions are kindly requested to contact PDGY regarding details required in the CV.

3.7 APPOINTMENT OF CONSULS GENERALS

In accordance with the VCCR the appointment of Consul Generals should be notified by the Diplomatic Missions to the Directorate General of Consular Affairs (KOGM). An exequatur will be issued following the consent of the Ministry as stipulated in the VCCR.

3.8 HONORARY CONSULATES

Establishment of Honorary Consulates in Turkey depends on the consent of the Ministry (KOGM-Directorate General of Consular Affairs). An Exequatur will be prepared by the Ministry upon the receipt of the "Consular Commission" or similar instrument of notification of the sending state.

4 VISAS

A staff member assigned to a Diplomatic Mission, Consular Mission or to the Representation of an International Organization should obtain the initial diplomatic or service entry visa (if required) before entering Turkey from the Turkish Diplomatic Mission in her/his place of residence.

With the assumption of office in Turkey, the Ministry will issue a multiple entry visa along with the ID card upon application of the mission.

5 DEFINITE DEPARTURE PROCEDURE

The Ministry should be informed of the definite departures of all staff members of Diplomatic/Consular Missions and International Organizations online, and subsequently through a Verbal Note containing a duly signed and sealed hard copy of the Definite Departure Notification Form within one week after the date of departure.

ID cards as well as the firearms licenses, and airport entrance cards have to be returned to the Ministry within one month after departure.

6 IMPORT, REGISTRATION, SALE, TRANSFER, RE-EXPORT OF MOTOR VEHICLES; THEFT-ACCIDENT, TECHNICAL INSPECTION AND DRIVING LICENCES

6.1 GENERAL PROVISIONS

The imported vehicles can be sold only to the persons who do not benefit from exemption, and they can be transferred only to the persons who benefit from exemption.

Following the procedures of import, sale, transfer, export or abandonment to the customs of the vehicles belonging to foreign missions and their staff, the relevant customs administration shall inform thereof the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The exit customs administration shall send the documents related to the export of the said vehicles to the customs administration where import procedure is conducted and to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

6.2 MOTOR VEHICLES BELONGING TO FOREIGN MISSIONS, DIPLOMATIC MISSION MEMBERS AND ADMINISTRATIVE AND TECHNICAL STAFF

6.2.1 IMPORT

6.2.1.1 PRIVATE VEHICLES

Diplomatic mission members as well as administrative and technical staff may import private vehicles exempt from customs duties on the basis of the diplomatic exemption letter approved by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Annex- 1/Form B) or they may also purchase domestically produced vehicles benefiting from exemptions provided that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs deems it appropriate.

Diplomatic mission members as well as administrative and technical staff may be allowed to own a second vehicle for his/her spouse on the condition that the vehicle is registered in her/his own name. The opinion of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs shall be taken as the basis for the use of the right to import new vehicle instead of disposed vehicles on the basis of reciprocity. Reciprocity and the provisions of bilateral agreements shall be evaluated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Private vehicles imported by diplomatic mission members as well as administrative and technical staff shall be sold, transferred, abandoned to customs or exported when the term of office of the related person expires.

6.2.1.2 SERVICE VEHICLES

Foreign missions may import a reasonable number of service vehicles exempt from customs duties on the basis of the diplomatic exemption letter approved by Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Missions may purchase domestically produced vehicles on the same conditions benefiting from exemptions.

Reciprocity shall be the basis for the number of service vehicles of the missions. The necessary arrangements on the quotas shall be made by Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

6.2.1.3 IMPORT PROCEDURES

Import procedure shall be carried out on the basis of the diplomatic exemption letter arranged by the foreign mission (Annex-1/Form B). In the diplomatic exemption letter, to which certificate of title, original purchase invoice, traffic license or their copies, all the specifications of the vehicle including its accessories and information regarding its date of entry into Turkey and its location should be indicated. Import procedure for the domestically produced vehicles to be purchased in accordance with the circular of the Ministry of Economy regarding purchases considered as export as well as for the vehicles through diplomatic exemption letter will start after the vehicle is placed in the temporary depot under the control of the customs administration which will conduct the import Procedure of the vehicle.

It is required that the dispatch document used in the delivery of the vehicle to the relevant customs administration shall be submitted to the customs administration within 7 days as of the date of issue. Concerning the request for the extension of the date of delivery of the vehicle to the customs administration, the related side should apply within 15 days following the date of issue of the dispatch document to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The result shall be conveyed directly to the customs administration upon the approval of the Ministry.

Any amendment or correction to be made afterwards in the engine or chassis numbers of the imported vehicle shall be requested by a verbal note. If the demand for amendment, which should be based on reasonable and valid causes, is deemed appropriate by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the necessary amendment shall be made on the original by the relevant customs administration.

If the imported car is older than three years when purchased by foreign mission or diplomatic mission members or administrative and technical staff, an annotation shall be attached to the diplomatic exemption letter, prescribing that "It cannot be sold to those who do not benefit from tax exemption. "These vehicles should be registered in Vehicle Tracking Program No. 1 by selecting "Diplomatic Exemption Letter" option.

6.2.1.4 PRIVATE CARS OF 3RD AND 4TH CATEGORY FOREIGN MISSION CARD HOLDERS

3rd and 4th category foreign mission card holders are allowed to import one car through Turkish Touring Club. They are entitled to "MA-MZ" plates (black prints on white). Following documents should be submitted to the Club for application:

- ID card issued by the Ministry,
- Passport,

- Driving license,
- Invoice and registration book of the car,
- A deposit calculated according to the engine power (HP) and model year of the car is required as guarantee.

The Touring Club issues a document called “Yabancı Taşıtlar Geçici Giriş Karnesi” valid for maximum 2 years that can be extended according to the to the expiry date of the ID card.

Private cars of 3rd and 4th category foreign mission card holders can only be transferred to persons enjoying the same status, but not sold to persons who have no tax-exempt status. If the car is transferred or exported, the deposit will be paid back.

6.2.1.5 HIRING PRIVATE DRIVERS FOR PRIVATE CARS

Private cars of the staff members of the diplomatic/consular missions can only be used by the owner, her/his spouse and children. And therefore hiring a private driver for these cars is not possible.

6.3 SALE

6.3.1 PRIVATE VEHICLES

It is required to have the prior permission of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for sale of private vehicles. Only one vehicle may be sold to those who do not benefit from customs exemption during their term of office. If a private vehicle enjoying the exemption is older than three years when purchased by its owner, it cannot be sold to those who do not benefit from customs exemption on the basis of the principle of reciprocity; however, these vehicles may be exported, transferred or abandoned to the customs.

Permission for sale shall be granted at the end of two-year-period following the import date of the vehicle. Heads of foreign missions shall be granted permission for sale for a second vehicle when they leave Turkey for good.

If the owner of the vehicle leaves Turkey for good, this period may be reduced to one year. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs may curtail this period further in case of force majeure. In such circumstances, foreign missions shall be required to complete all necessary procedures within two months following the granting of the permission for sale.

Sale of vehicles of administrative and technical staff shall be subject to the provisions of this Article.

6.3.2 SERVICE VEHICLES

Service vehicles up to three years old during the import date may be sold, on a reciprocal basis, to Turkish citizens five years after its import following the permission of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Taking into account the reciprocity, it is possible to curtail the five-year period.

6.3.3 SALE RESTRICTIONS

Buses, minibuses, trucks, trailers and other vehicles cannot be sold to persons who do not benefit from customs exemption. However, these vehicles may be transferred provided that the conditions are fulfilled. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs may decide otherwise due to force majeure.

6.3.4 SALE PROCEDURES

Permission for sale shall be requested through a verbal note including a copy of diplomatic exemption letter of import processed at customs administration and recent insurance policy and traffic license copy. The vehicle to be sold must have all the conditions set out by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Authorization of sale having a two-month validity may be extended for once if requested with a verbal note before the expiry date. Permission for sale shall not be given again for the same vehicle.

In case of leave for good, permission for sale may be granted two months before the date of leave. The date of leave for good should be indicated in the verbal note. The duration of this permission cannot be extended.

Upon granting authorization of sale, the vehicle shall be delivered to the customs administration. The vehicle shall be delivered to the purchaser after paying all taxes and duties prescribed in the related legislation along with a final sales document issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and containing the name and address information of the purchaser.

6.4 EXPORT

It is required to notify the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in advance for the export of vehicles imported to Turkey with diplomatic exemption letter. Export request shall be submitted with a verbal note, containing the specifications of the vehicle, name and title of owner, license plate number, export date and customs authority where export will be carried out. License copy and recent insurance policy and approved diplomatic exemption letter of import of the vehicle or a copy approved by the customs authorities shall be also attached to the verbal note.

6.5 TRANSFER

Service vehicles, private vehicles of diplomatic mission members and administrative and technical staff may be transferred to persons enjoying customs exemption. There is no time limitation for the transfer procedures.

Foreign missions shall apply to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with a verbal note containing the specifications of the vehicle, names and titles of seller and owner and license plate number to have the transfer permit. A copy of diplomatic exemption letter of import approved by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and recent insurance policy and license copy shall be also attached to the verbal note.

The transfer shall be made on the basis of the transfer permit issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Date of registration in the name of the new owner is considered as the new import date for that vehicle.

Transfer procedure shall be reported to the customs authorities which carried out the import procedures and to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs by the customs authorities carrying out the procedure.

6.6 OTHER VEHICLES

The rules applied to private vehicles shall also apply to the vessels in the yacht class and marine boats and to motorbikes. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs shall determine how many vehicles each mission member may own exempt from custom duties, taking into account also the reciprocity. After owners of

vessels in the yacht class and marine boats leave Turkey, these yachts registered in their names are allowed to stand in Turkish ports. This duration cannot exceed five years.

Provisions for vehicles do not apply to non-motorized caravans. Approval of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is sufficient for sale, transfer or export of such vehicles.

6.7 THEFT AND ACCIDENT

Theft or accident shall be documented by court decisions, official letters issued by prosecutors, highest civil authority or police units. In case of accident, wreck of irreparable cars shall be abandoned to the customs after obtaining the prior permission of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Permission for replacement of such stolen or fully damaged vehicles shall be at the discretion of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

6.8 CHARGES FOR LICENCE PLATES AND REGISTRATION

Certain fees will be charged by the traffic authorities.

6.9 MOTOR VEHICLE INSURANCE

Third party liability insurance is mandatory for all motor vehicles licensed in Turkey. The insurance policy should be submitted to the Ministry when applying for importation, transfer, sale and re-exportation permits.

The insurance companies can also extend the coverage to passengers and the driver through the personal accident insurance.

Third party liability insurance policies issued by companies which are not subject to Turkish jurisdiction are not acceptable.

6.10 TECHNICAL INSPECTION

Periodic technical inspection of motor vehicles is compulsory in Turkey.

As technical inspection is a service rendered by a private company, diplomatic exemption from applicable fees cannot be granted.

The Ministry issues sales, transfer, re-export and other permissions only for vehicles that have been cleared in this inspection.

6.11 DRIVING LICENSES

National driving licenses of the members of diplomatic and consular missions and international organizations are accepted in Turkey along with a notarized Turkish translation to be presented to the relevant authorities.

Those who have a national driving license can apply for a Turkish driving license to the local traffic authorities with an officially certified translation.

Those who do not have a national driving license can obtain a Turkish driving license under the same rules and procedures as for Turkish nationals.

7 PERSONAL AND HOUSEHOLD ITEMS, GOODS

7.1 IMPORTATION BY 1ST CATEGORY ID HOLDERS AND OFFICIAL IMPORTS/PURCHASES

Importation of personal and official goods and household items are effected through a franchise document (Form A).

Missions are allowed to import electronic devices (TV, video, mp3 player, computer etc.) in reasonable quantity. For example, 4 TV sets for a three person's family or 10 refrigerators for the official use of a mission with 15 employees would exceed reasonable limits. The Ministry has the right to evaluate and accept or refuse applications and therefore the Ministry should be consulted before placing an order for such items.

240 liters of spirits (hard liquor) and 200 cartons of cigarettes can be imported annually for personal consumption. Quotas for official purposes may exceed the above mentioned figures. Reciprocity is also applied in determining the quotas for each mission. Importation of other goods including alcoholic beverages (wine, beer, etc.) and tobacco should be kept at a reasonable level.

Import "takrirs" (Form A) should be prepared in 4 copies. All relevant fields of the "takrir" should be duly filled in (including the date and place of arrival, number and date of the customs' notice or "ordino", bill of lading and airway bill.). Copies of the customs' notice or the "ordino" and the bill of lading should also be attached to the "takrir."

"Takrirs" for consumer goods should be accompanied by an invoice, containing adequate description and itemized list.

"Takrirs" for durable goods should contain a full description (make, model, type, size, weight and price) of each article.

The Ministry also kindly requests that "takrirs" including only one item should not be sent in order to avoid paperwork. They should contain at least three items.

"Takrirs" should be signed by the Head of Mission, Deputy Head of Mission or Acting Head of Mission.

Two copies of the approved "takrir" should be submitted to the customs authority, one copy will kept at the Ministry and one by the missions.

7.2 IMPORTATION BY THE ADMINISTRATIVE-TECHNICAL STAFF

Administrative-technical staff of diplomatic missions and consular posts can import their household and personal goods with a "letter of guarantee" issued by the diplomatic mission. This document should be directly presented to the local customs authority within the first six months after they enter Turkey.

These personnel can also purchase durable household and personal goods from the duty-free stores in Turkey within the first six months after their arrival.

The application for such purchases should be made with a "takrir" prepared by the diplomatic missions. The "takrir" should bear the ID card numbers and the date of arrival.

Administrative-technical staff may import only one of each kind of electrical and electronic devices such as washing machines, TVs, videos etc.

Durable goods temporarily imported by the members of administrative- technical staff of diplomatic missions and consular posts cannot be sold or transferred. They should be re- exported at the end of the term of duty or abandoned to the customs.

7.3 IMPORTATION OF MACHINERY AND EQUIPMENT

Importation of machinery, construction materials and heavy equipment by diplomatic missions is subject to the prior permission of the Ministry. Relevant "takrirs" should contain detailed information with regard to kind, make, model, type, serial number, quantity, value, the purpose and place of use. For construction materials, exact location and the nature of the construction have to be indicated.

7.4 IMPORTATION OF MATERIAL FOR EXHIBITIONS

Importation of exhibition materials and films to be presented exclusively within the premises of a diplomatic mission should be effected through a "takrir" containing detailed information and a full list. This material has to be re-exported at the end of the exhibition. The "takrirs" should be sent to the Protocol Department (PDGY) by a verbal Note stating precisely the date of exhibition.

Importation of such materials to be presented outside the premises of a diplomatic mission must be carried out according to the general provisions of the Turkish customs law. Since the organization of cultural events of foreign origin is subject to prior permission, diplomatic missions should apply to the Deputy Directorate-General of Bilateral Cultural Affairs. After the permission is granted, a letter of guarantee for the temporary importation of the relevant materials should be submitted to the customs authority.

Importation requests of exhibition material for International Fairs have to be addressed directly to the Ministry of Economy. General Directorate of Bilateral Economic Affairs can also render its assistance in obtaining the necessary permits.

7.5 IMPORTATION OF PUBLICATIONS

Reasonable amounts of books to be used solely by the diplomatic missions for cultural and promotional purposes can be imported by a "takrir".

For the importation of books to be used outside of the diplomatic mission (by schools, libraries, cultural centers etc.) applications should be submitted to the Ministry of Economy.

7.6 DISPOSAL OF IMPORTED ARTICLES

All articles imported by missions and their diplomatic members with a "takrir" should be duly disposed of through re-exportation, transfer or sale. Diplomatic missions are responsible for all articles not being duly disposed of.

7.6.1 RE-EXPORTATION

All imported durable goods should in principle be re-exported. Re-exportation requests should be made to the Ministry by a Verbal Note in which the venue (the name of the customs authority) and approximate date of re-exportation have to be indicated. A copy of the original "takrir" of importation bearing the approval of the Ministry should be attached to the Note as well as the list (translated into Turkish) of goods to be exported.

After re-exportation of durable goods, relevant official documents should be forwarded to the Ministry for verification.

The application for exportation of durable goods purchased in Turkey should be submitted directly to the local customs authorities along with the invoices.

7.6.2 TRANSFER

Transfer of imported durable goods to diplomatic staff is permitted by the customs on the basis of a new "takrir". The Ministry should be notified of this transaction by a Verbal Note.

7.6.3 SALES

The Ministry may grant permission for the sale of durable goods imported by diplomatic staff, to persons not entitled to tax exemption, only when the owner leaves Turkey for good.

Upon prior permission of the Ministry, durable goods imported by the diplomatic and consular missions may be sold to persons not entitled to tax exemption at the end of a five year period from the date of their importation. The buyer should in this case pay the related tax. Tax free sales permission of such items may be granted by Directorate General of Customs at the end of a ten year period. This permission should be applied for by a Verbal Note to the Ministry with a copy of the original takrir of importation.

Sales permission for durable goods is granted only if the original "takrir" contains full description of the item (make, model, type, weight, price etc.).

All relevant taxes and duties should be paid before the sale and delivery of goods to the buyer. Following the sale, the diplomatic missions should inform the Ministry by a Verbal Note.

Indicating the date and place of sale, price, name and address of the buyer.

Receipts or documents pertaining to the payment of taxes and duties should be attached to the Verbal Note.

Durable goods temporarily imported by the members of administrative- technical staff cannot be sold or transferred. They should be re-exported at the end of the term of duty or relinquished to the customs.

8 DONATIONS

Requests for donation of vehicles or other durable goods to local institutions should be made by a Verbal Note in order to obtain prior permission of the Ministry. A document certifying the consent of the recipient for this donation has to be attached to the Verbal Note. Turkish institutions are allowed to accept only ambulances and rescue vehicles as donations by foreign missions.

Collecting donations for charity purposes (e.g. disabled persons or orphans) by the foreign missions in Turkey is subject to the Ministry's permission (Law on Collecting Donations for Charity No:2860, dated 23.06.1983 Article 27) .

9 GASOLINE AND FUEL-OIL PURCHASES

9.1 FOR MOTOR VEHICLES

Tax-free purchase of gasoline and fuel oil by the diplomatic/consular missions and their diplomatic/consular staff are permitted through a franchise document (takrir). The Ministry issues a "takrir" covering the annual quota of the mission determined on the basis of reciprocity. Missions should sign a contract with a distribution company (Petrol Ofisi, OPET, BP etc.) which will equip the vehicle with an electronic chip called "vehicle identification system". Upper limit of annual gasoline quota is 6000 lt. for official cars and 3600 lt. for personal cars.

The exemption includes VAT and Special Consumption Tax (SCT).

Same procedure is applied for the official cars of the international organizations.

9.2 HEATING AND GENERATOR FUEL

Tax exemption for fuel oil, diesel or natural gas to be used for heating and generators of the chanceries and private houses of mission members is effected with a "takrir" (Form A-4 and A-3) issued on the basis of the reciprocity. The type of the natural gas counter (electronic card system or mechanical) should be indicated on the "takrir" with all other necessary information.

10 EXEMPTION FROM THE VALUE ADDED TAX

The Law on the Value Added Tax (VAT) no :3065 (Published in the Official Gazette dated 2 November 1984, no: 18563, Articles 15 and 19), grants, on the basis of reciprocity, exemption from this tax on officially purchased goods and services by diplomatic and consular missions. On the basis of reciprocity, diplomatic and administrative-technical staff of the missions can also benefit from VAT exemption.

10.1 VAT EXEMPTION CARD FOR OFFICIAL PURPOSES

The Ministry issues "Official VAT Exemption Cards" for missions with which the VAT amount on goods and services indicated on the card will be deducted immediately during the purchase. The scope of VAT

exemption will be determined for each mission according to reciprocity from the categories of goods and services listed here below:

GOODS

- Security equipment
- Electricity and water
- Office equipment
- Electronic and electrical devices
- Food and non-alcoholic beverages
- Cleaning supplies
- Household and gardening equipment
- Medical equipment (excluding medication)
- Construction materials
- Printed matter
- Spare parts for official cars
- Clothing

SERVICES

- Security
- Maintenance, repair and cleaning work
- Shipment, packaging, storage, customs clearance
- Transportation
- Telecommunication
- Construction
- Printing and publishing
- Insurance
- Consultancy, translation, exhibition, advertisement
- Renting and leasing (Real estate and motor vehicles)
- Accommodation
- Catering, hospitality and entertainment (hotel, restaurant, patisserie)

Official VAT Exemption Cards are valid for one year, non-transferable and for official use only. In case of loss the Ministry should be informed immediately.

Representations of International Organizations may also benefit from VAT exemption if it is prescribed in the relevant agreement.

Each mission can apply for two official VAT exemption cards to be issued individually to two mission members. They should be returned upon the termination of the bearer's employment in the mission.

10.2 PERSONAL PURCHASES

The VAT exemption for the mission members is effected through an electronic tax refund system details of which are explained in the relevant manual. Usernames and passwords for login will be provided by the Ministry simultaneously with the ID card. The invoices of personal purchases should be kept.

Following the online application to be made quarterly, the printed forms and original invoices should be sent to the relevant tax office.

The lower limit for personal purchases that can be exempted from VAT is 50 TL. There is no lower limit for electricity, water and telecommunication services. The upper annual limit for the total of purchases is 50.000 Euros. However, the lower limit can be increased and the upper limit can be reduced according to reciprocity.

The ID number of the buyer should to be noted on all invoices excluding those for electricity, water and telecommunications. Otherwise, tax refund will not be possible.

This refund system cannot be applied to personal purchases of natural gas, petroleum product, Cigarettes and alcohol for which the above explained "takrir procedure has to be implemented.

10.3 INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

10.3.1 OFFICIAL

Delivery of goods and service provisions to be conducted for the official use of international organizations in Turkey as well as the delivery of goods and service provisions that they perform free of charge for the purposes of social and economic assistance shall be exempt from VAT. Similarly, first acquisition, import or delivery shall be exempt from ÖTV (Special Consumption Tax-SCT).

10.3.2 PRIVATE

Delivery of goods and service provisions to be conducted during the term of office of the members of the international organizations , who serve in management positions and are not Turkish citizens, shall be exempt from VAT. Similarly, first acquisition, import or delivery for their own needs shall be exempt from SCT.

On the condition that it is clearly stated in the international establishment agreements that VAT and SCT exemption is granted for the staff other than managerial staff, non-managerial staff may also enjoy the same rights.

11 FIREARMS, HUNTING WEAPONS AND AMMUNITION

11.1 FIREARMS

Diplomatic/consular members and administrative- technical staff missions must obtain the permission of the Ministry in advance to import or locally purchase firearms, hunting weapons and ammunition. Diplomatic and consular missions may import or locally purchase firearms for official use with the permission of the Ministry. If the Mission members use the registered mission weapons, they cannot acquire extra personal firearms. Similarly if the mission members import personal firearms they cannot acquire licenses for carrying firearms registered in the inventory of the mission. Reciprocity is essential for all permits related to firearms.

Firearms imported by the members of diplomatic/consular missions must be exported upon the termination of their term of duty.

The Regulation on Firearms, Knives and Other Instruments published in the Official Gazette No: 20888 of June 01, 1991 stipulate the conditions for acquisition and importation of firearms, knives and other instruments as well as granting licenses and other related subjects.

It is clearly stated by the said Regulation that a Certificate for Temporary Entry and Origin of Firearms and Ammunition (Geçici Silah ve Mermi için Giriş ve Menşei Belgesi) should be obtained prior to the importation to Turkey.

To this end, the Diplomatic Mission should apply to the PDGY by a Verbal Note containing the necessary information (name, rank and title of the staff member, passport number and date, name of the mission, the brand, model, caliber and serial number of the firearm as well as the quantity of ammunition).

The above-mentioned certificate is prepared by the Ministry of the Interior upon application through the Ministry with a copy to be sent directly to the relevant Police Department that will issue the license

(silah ruhsatı). In case of a shotgun for hunting, the “shotgun license” (Yivsiz Tüfek Ruhsatnamesi) will be issued. Missions should submit a copy of the certificate to the relevant customs authority for customs clearance purposes.

In case a firearm is brought to Turkey before obtaining the importation certificate, a declaration should be made to the customs authorities and the firearm should be surrendered to their custody until formalities are completed.

Firearm licenses are issued by the Police Department with 5 years validity.

Expired firearms licenses, as well as licenses issued for personnel departing from Turkey, should be returned to the PDGY.

11.2 HUNTING GUNS

Staff members of the diplomatic missions are allowed to import and purchase shotguns only for hunting purposes on the basis of reciprocity and after the approval of the Ministry.

Diplomatic missions should request by a Verbal Note the assistance of the Ministry in obtaining relevant licenses, which will be issued according to ID card categories, to enable their staff members to purchase shotguns for hunting in Turkey.

After the approval of the Ministry of Interior, one copy of the approval letter is sent to the relevant Police Department that will issue the hunting shotgun license (Yivsiz Tüfek Ruhsatnamesi). Missions should submit a copy of the certificate to the relevant customs authority for customs clearance purposes.

Permission to diplomatic agents and staff members of consular posts (holders of 1st category ID cards) for purchasing shotguns can only be issued on the basis of a "Certificate of Ownership for Shotguns"(Yivsiz Tüfek Sahipliği Belgesi) or "Foreign Hunting Certificate"(Yabancı Avcılık Belgesi).

Presentation of these documents to the authorized vendors is essential for purchasing shotguns.

The above-mentioned certificate and license are prepared by the Ministry of Environment and

Forestry upon application by the missions through the Ministry. Importation procedures of shotguns are the same as firearms.

12 AIRPORT ENTRANCE CARDS

The State Airports Administration issues special airport entrance cards for the authorized staff members of the diplomatic missions to enable them to meet and see off their official guests, delegations and diplomatic couriers at Esenboğa, Atatürk and other airports. Reciprocity is applied in granting the airport entrance cards as well as in determining the number of cards for each mission. In principle, each mission can obtain three airport entrance cards for Esenboğa Airport free of charge. A reasonable number of additional cards can also be obtained for charge. However, it is not possible to obtain more than three cards for Atatürk Airport.

These cards are valid for one year. Expired airport entrance cards as well as the cards issued for personnel departing from Turkey should be returned to the Ministry.

Airport entrance cards grant access only to certain designated zones of the airport indicated on the card. Airport entrance cards are strictly personal and non-transferable to other mission members.

Requests for airport entrance cards should be made by a Verbal Note to the Ministry which contains the name and the position of the staff member as well as two photographs and a copy of ID card.

13 DIPLOMATIC BAGS

13.1 ACCOMPANIED DIPLOMATIC BAGS

The diplomatic courier has to present a courier letter in English or French indicating her/his status and the number of packages containing the diplomatic bag. The courier letter should be signed and sealed by the sending authority (Ministry of Foreign Affairs or the Embassy or Consulate General). No other document is required for the passage of diplomatic bags through Turkish customs.

The diplomatic bags containing documents and other articles for the official use of diplomatic missions should be duly sealed.

The diplomatic bags (pouches, bags and boxes) should be of reasonable size and weight (total weight should not exceed 30 kg. per container).

The diplomatic bags meeting these requirements cannot be detained, opened or scanned through x-ray, except the principle of reciprocity has to be applied.

13.2 UNACCOMPANIED DIPLOMATIC BAGS (INBOUND OR OUTBOUND)

A courier letter and a separate bill of lading for each incoming or outgoing unaccompanied diplomatic pouch, bag and box of reasonable size not exceeding 30 kg. Per piece should be presented to the customs authorities by an official of the Mission holding an Airport Entrance Card. Diplomatic bags over 30 kg. Per package can be inspected by the customs authorities, upon the consent and under the supervision of an official of the diplomatic mission, if there are serious grounds for presuming that it contains items other than documents and articles for the official use of diplomatic missions.

Unaccompanied diplomatic bags cannot be detained, opened or scanned through x-ray, except the principle of reciprocity has to be applied.

Unaccompanied diplomatic bags (and accompanied diplomatic bags) exceeding 30 kg. in weight per container coming from abroad can be claimed from the customs only upon the presentation of "takrir" indicating the contents and bearing the approval of the Ministry.

For the exportation of unaccompanied diplomatic bags exceeding 30 kg. per package, a "takrir" indicating its contents and approved by this Ministry, should be sent attached to a Note Verbal requesting permission. If the diplomatic pouches include articles bought in Turkey, the original copies of the invoices should be presented to the customs authorities.

13.3 DIPLOMATIC BAGS CONSIGNED TO THE CAPTAIN OF A COMMERCIAL AIRCRAFT OR NAVAL VESSEL

Diplomatic bags may be entrusted to the captain of a commercial aircraft or naval vessel by the sending authority. The bag should be dispatched at the cabin of the captain. Such diplomatic bags of reasonable size and weight will be granted free passage through the customs if the captain holds an official letter indicating the number of packages, signed and sealed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the sending state.

The diplomatic bag should be delivered to the official of the Embassy or Consulate General holding an airport entrance card by the captain or staff of the aircraft or naval vessel at the customs-free area.

The above-mentioned rules also apply to the diplomatic bags of the representations of international organizations.

14 OBJECTS OF CULTURAL HERITAGE

Importation and re-exportation of articles of natural and cultural heritage of foreign origin are subject to strict rules and procedures, as stipulated in the Law for Protection of Cultural and Natural Heritage (Published in the Official Gazette No: 28963, dated 23 July 1983).

All objects of cultural heritage (including collections) which may be imported by the diplomatic members with "takrirs" cannot be sold or transferred to any person. They should either be re-exported or donated to State Museums.

The rules for acquisition, sale, transfer, importation and exportation of the cultural heritage of ethnographical nature are defined in the "Regulation on the Cultural Heritage of Ethnographical Nature" (published in the Official Gazette No: 19803, dated 3 May 1988).

Exportation of any item as defined in the article 3 of the said regulation, acquired in Turkey may be permitted by the customs on the basis of an expertise report, issued by the State Museums.

Article 3: Acquisition, sale and transfer of articles of cultural heritage of ethnographical nature that are not complementary to the museum collections and that have no documentary value and coins from the Sultans of Ottoman period such as Abdülmecit, Abdülaziz, Murat V, Abdülhamit II, Mehmet Reşit V and Vahdettin, are not subject to prior permission and registration.

Members of the Diplomatic Missions and Consular Posts are advised to apply directly to the local state ethnographical museums to obtain expertise reports before exporting any item acquired in Turkey which fall within the scope of article 3 of the aforementioned Regulation and the Law for Protection of Cultural and Natural Heritage No: 2863.

Exportation of items of cultural heritage listed in the Article 4 of the Regulation is strictly forbidden

Article 4: All types of articles of cultural and natural heritage that belong to geological, pre- historical and historical period and which have documentary value with regards to geology, anthropology, prehistory, archaeology and history of art reflecting the social, cultural, technical and scientific characteristics of their specific period: all articles of cultural heritage of ethnographical nature symbolizing the religious beliefs, customs and traditions of the Turkish Nation up to the end of the Ottoman Empire Period which are rare pieces and complementary to the museum collections with documentary value; other movable cultural assets that belong to the period of National Liberation, Turkish Republic and Atatürk period may not be taken out of country.

15 COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT

Diplomatic and consular missions do not need prior permission for the installation of satellite antennas (receiver only), fax, and telex or telephone lines in their premises for the official use of the missions on the basis of reciprocity.

However, installation of wireless systems (transmitters and receivers) regardless of the capacity of the system is subject to prior permission of the relevant Turkish authorities.

The requests for permission for wireless systems should be addressed to the Ministry by a Verbal Note in which the technical specifications of the system, frequencies proposed for use, exact latitudes and longitudes, type, make, model of the equipment, number of the hand units and auto receivers etc. must be indicated. Two copies of duly filled, sealed and signed TGM-1 forms should be attached to the Verbal Notes as well. Reciprocity should be guaranteed for the installation of similar systems by the Turkish Missions in the country in the Verbal Note. Only after the permission is granted, necessary equipment can be imported by a "takrir".

For satellite antenna systems which comprise VSAT system with a receiver and transmitter, a VSAT agreement should be signed with the competent authority before the import permit can be issued.

The request of the mission will be evaluated by the competent authority, after all the required procedures are fulfilled and a copy of the said agreement together with the completed forms of TGM 25-A, sent in annex of the Note.

16 GARBAGE COLLECTION FEE

Diplomatic and consular missions and international organizations are not exempted from garbage collection fee (waste collection and sewerage services) for it is a specific fee for a service rendered by the municipalities and not a tax.

17 LEASE, PURCHASE, SALE AND OTHER ACQUISITION OR DISPOSITION OF REAL ESTATE BY DIPLOMATIC/CONSULAR MISSIONS AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

17.1 APPROVAL OF THE MINISTRY

All Missions shall notify and request the consent the Ministry prior to a proposed lease, purchase, sale or other forms of acquisition or disposition of a real property.

This requirement applies to properties acquired for chancery or residential use by the foreign government for its diplomatic and consular missions in Turkey.

Missions shall also notify and request the consent the Ministry in advance to alterations, renovations, additions on existing real estate or changes in their use.

Missions are advised to get into contact with the Ministry before engaging into legally and financially binding commitments and seek Ministry's approval, which can only be granted after coordinating with other central and local authorities, as early as possible.

17.2 PROCEDURE

The approval process is initiated upon the delivery of a diplomatic note to the Ministry. The note shall include the following information:

- Exact address,
- Intended use of property, i.e., chancery, chancery annex, residence,
- Method of acquisition, i.e., purchase, lease (including lease term), alteration, expansion,
- A copy of the title deed (tapu senedi).

Properties acquired by foreign missions for diplomatic or consular purposes are to be used as originally intended. Property approved for diplomatic or consular purposes should not be used by other government offices, or commercially leased in part or as a whole without the explicit consent of the Ministry.

The Ministry can give its approval only if local building codes and regulations as well as security requirements are met.

Some relevant useful information:

Requirement for an Occupancy Permit: All buildings and offices to be used should have occupancy permit issued by the municipality.

Zoning Approval Process: Depending on the location of the property, the occupancy permit may be issued only after the office or residential use is in line with the zoning plan of the municipality.

Expansion or alteration of existing properties: Missions are required to obtain all relevant construction permits and to comply with local building codes and regulations.

Permits will not be issued by the municipality without the official approval Ministry. Private contractors should be informed that applications for building and construction permits, together with copies of all technical documents must be submitted to the Ministry for review and transmission to the relevant local authorities before any actual work can be performed.

The information provided above is not exhaustive, and missions are cautioned to fully explore the zoning and land-use implications of a particular property acquisition or renovation project before concluding any contract.

17.3 PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION

17.3.1 DIPLOMATIC PROPERTIES

Based on VCDR, customary international law, and bilateral agreements, foreign governments are entitled to exemption from real estate taxes on properties owned by the government and used by its diplomatic mission. Such properties include chanceries and chancery annexes, and the residences of the chiefs of mission. Residences occupied by members of the diplomatic mission accredited to Turkey may also be granted exemption based on reciprocity.

Any portion of property which is not used for diplomatic purposes of that sending State will not benefit from tax exemption or inviolability.

The procedure for obtaining exemption for properties in Ankara is as follows:

Recordation Taxes: Based on the purchase price of a property, the tax is normally paid by the buyer at the time the new ownership is registered.

The Mission must submit a written request to the Ministry requesting exemption from the recordation tax. The Ministry sends an official letter to the relevant authority for the tax free purchase as appropriate.

Transfer Tax: Based on the sales, price of a property, the tax is normally paid by the seller at the time a property is sold. If a Foreign Mission is the seller, the same procedure applicable to recordation taxes should be followed.

Property Taxes: Based on the value of a property, the tax is paid annually by the owner of the property.

Following the conclusion of the purchase, a diplomatic note should be sent to the Ministry requesting exemption from property taxes. The note should include the address of the property, the date the title deed was recorded, and reference to any earlier Ministry notes regarding the purchase.

If exemption is applicable, the Ministry will inform directly the relevant authority.

17.3.2 CONSULAR PROPERTIES

Based on the VCCR, foreign governments are entitled to exemption from real estate taxes on properties which are owned by the government and used as chancery or residence of the carrier consular chief of mission.

18 ALLOCATION OF RESERVED PARKING SPACE

Request for reserved on-street parking space in front of a chancery, chancery annex or residences should be made by in writing to the Ministry. Reciprocity and propriety are the main criteria for meeting such requests.

If approved, reserved parking signs will be installed accordingly.

19 PETS

Pets may be brought to Turkey provided that they have been vaccinated (for dogs: rabies, distemper, parvo, hepatitis, leptospirosis; for cats: rabies and other epidemic diseases). International Veterinary Health Certificate; Identity Card; Vaccination Card; and CITES certificate (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) for the pets in the framework of CITES are required. Vaccination against rabies should be done minimum one month before travel and the immunity period should not be expired.

Important note: In order to avoid customs duties, mission members should bring their pets accompanied. Unaccompanied Pets are subject to various customs duties and charges.

20 TRAFFIC OFFENCES

Members of diplomatic and consular missions are expected to observe local laws and regulations as in any other country and in line with the Vienna Conventions.

When mission members are cited for traffic offences, the Ministry notifies the alleged offender's mission of the incident. The Ministry neither intervenes with the police to contest cited violations on behalf of persons enjoying immunity, nor does it have the authority to dismiss fines.

Mission members should call the traffic police in case of car accidents, even no person is injured and the damage is of purely material nature.

There are two types of traffic violations:

20.1 PREPAYABLE VIOLATIONS

Prepayable violations are relatively minor traffic infractions that do not require a court appearance, and can be resolved by paying the fine. Should a mission or family member be cited for such an offense, the Ministry expects the violation to be resolved with one of the following methods?

20.1.1 PAY THE SCHEDULED FINE ASSOCIATED WITH THE VIOLATION

20.1.2 CONTEST THE VIOLATION IN COURT

If a mission or family member believes the citation was issued unjustly, they are expected to obtain the necessary waivers from the sending State and contest the violation on its merits in court. If a mission member intends to contest a violation, the mission must inform the Ministry in writing, before the scheduled hearing date so that the court can be notified timely. In such cases, the Ministry will abide by the disposition of the court. The Ministry expects an alleged offender to pay the fines and to comply with any probationary condition imposed by the court in its disposition.

20.1.3 CLAIM OF IMMUNITY FROM JURISDICTION

The Ministry has no authority to adjudicate, modify, or cancel such fines and probationary conditions associated with traffic violations. Missions, staff and family members who believe they have been cited unjustly may contest citations. If a mission or family member cannot appear in court, the Ministry expects the fine to be paid or a claim of immunity be presented in the form of a Verbal Note to resolve the matter.

20.2 MUST APPEAR VIOLATIONS

A traffic violation that requires a court appearance is commonly referred to as a “must appear offense”.

The citation issued for this type of violation, does not automatically impose a fine that a mission member can pay in lieu of a court appearance. Rather, due to the seriousness of the offense, adjudication is required and the individual is cited and summoned to appear in court.

Some common examples of must appear traffic offences include: reckless driving; driving under the influence (DUI) of alcohol or drugs; driving while intoxicated (DWI); driving without a valid license or driving while under a driving license suspension.

Should a mission or family member be cited for a violation that requires a court appearance, once the Ministry is notified, it formally will request a waiver of immunity in each case to allow local adjudication of the matter. The Ministry expects the violation to be resolved by one or the other way as explained:

20.2.1 THE SENDING STATE GRANTS A WAIVER OF IMMUNITY

As with the prepayable violation, upon receiving a written waiver of an alleged offender's immunity prior to the scheduled court date, the Ministry will notify the court. The Ministry will abide by the disposition of the court. Again, the Ministry expects an alleged offender to pay any fine and to comply with any probationary condition imposed by the court in its disposition.

20.2.2 THE SENDING STATE DECLINES A WAIVER OF IMMUNITY

Upon receiving a written denial from the sending State prior to the scheduled hearing date, the Ministry will certify to the court that the mission or family member is immune from its jurisdiction and cannot appear for the hearing. The Ministry may require that individual's departure from Turkey if his or her record indicates a serious offense endangering public safety.

20.3 ALCOHOL RELATED DRIVING OFFENCES

Alcohol-related driving offences present a particularly serious threat to public safety. Accordingly, in the case of a first-time DUI or DWI offense, which does not involve death or personal injury, it is the Ministry's policy to request a mission or family member's immunity to be waived to permit adjudication in accordance with national law.

Should the sending State waive immunity to allow adjudication, the Ministry will abide by the court's disposition of the DUI or DWI charge. Should the individual be found guilty of the charge, the Ministry expects the mission member to pay any fine and to comply with any probationary condition imposed by the court in its disposition.

The Ministry takes very seriously allegations of alcohol-related driving offences presented in official police reports. Consistent with the Ministry's deep concern regarding the potentially tragic consequences presented by alcohol-related driving incidents, it is the Ministry policy to request definite departure from Turkey of a mission or family member who is involved for the second time in a DWI or DUI offense.

20.4 SERIOUS TRAFFIC OFFENCES

Serious motor vehicle offences include the crimes of DWI or DUI, and reckless driving, where those crimes result in death or personal injury to another person. In the case of a serious offense, if the Ministry's request for a waiver of immunity is declined by a sending State, it is the Ministry's policy to request the alleged offender to leave Turkey. In an exceptional case, the Ministry may request a mission or family member to leave Turkey, even if a waiver is granted and the offense is adjudicated in Turkey.

Should a mission or family member be cited repeatedly for minor driving offences, the accumulation of which evidences a serious disregard of Turkish law and public safety, the Ministry may request the individual's departure from Turkey.

When cited for traffic infractions, it is important that mission and family members take one of the available steps to resolve the offense. Should a violation remain outstanding, administrative and judicial consequences may automatically follow without prior notification to the Ministry by local authorities. Such consequences may include the loss of driving privileges; an adjudication in the alleged offender's absence resulting in costly fines; or, particularly in a must appear case, the issuance of an arrest warrant for failure to appear in court. In order to help prevent such unfortunate consequences, the Ministry should be notified of such citations.

20.5 USING FLASHING BODY LIGHTS OR EMERGENCY LIGHTS

Only vehicles (police cars, ambulances, fire department vehicles, etc.) Having a priority passage in the traffic can carry and use flashing body lights or emergency lights. It is strictly forbidden to use such lights by missions and their members.

21 PRIVATE LEGAL DISPUTES

It is the responsibility of all the Missions and their members to pay rents and public utility charges (electricity, water, gas, bank credits, telephone etc.) On their chanceries and residences by the due date. If the Missions and their members sign a contract with non- privileged persons and organizations in accordance with the Turkish Law, they are required to comply with legal obligations arising from the contract. In any case, if one of the parties is a Turkish citizen or organization, they have the right to apply to judicial bodies even if the contract appoints another country's court for legal conflicts.

Article 49 of the Law (number: 5718 dated 27.11.2007 published in the Official Gazette dated

12.12.2007 edition: 26728) on International Private Law clearly states that "in cases of legal conflicts stemming from private law relations, foreign countries do not enjoy judicial immunity and in such kind of legal conflicts notification (tebligat) can be made to the diplomatic representative of the foreign country". Although the notification (tebligat) should be made to the Missions through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry has no legal right to interfere in the court proceedings. In such cases the Ministry strongly recommends all Foreign Missions to make their objections timely and to follow the legal procedures directly or through a legal representative (attorney).

22 LABOUR LAW DISPUTES

As the labor law disputes involving foreign missions have been gradually increasing, the Ministry reiterates the contents of its circular Note no: 429252 dated 12 October 2006. Labor relations between the Foreign Missions and their locally employed (contracted) personnel - Turkish nationals or third country nationals with a residence permit in the country- are ruled by the Labor Law No: 4857 dated 22.05.2003 (issued in the Official Gazette edition: 25134 dated 10.06.2003) and other relevant legal instruments.

Missions are expected to observe the rules and procedures of the relevant Turkish Labor Law. In case of a legal disagreement or dispute on a labor issue concerning Turkish nationals or third country nationals residing in Turkey, Missions have no judicial immunity (International Private Law No:5718 Articles 44

and 49). Consequently, missions should follow the court proceedings and interfere timely to defend themselves directly or through a legal representative. Rulings of the labor courts regarding compensations should be observed.

23 LEGAL NOTIFICATION (TEBLIGAT)

Legal notification (Tebligat) to foreign missions is made in accordance with the Article 45 of the Turkish Regulation on Service (Tebligat Tüzüğü, date of Council of Ministers : 20.8.1959, No: 4/12059, published in the Official Gazette dated 11.9.1959, No: 10303) based on the Law for Service of Documents (Tebligat Kanunu) dated 11.2.1959, No: 7201.

In case of legal complaints or invitation to courts, legal notification to foreign missions must be made through the Ministry. In cases when documents are served directly to the address of the foreign missions, such notification (tebligat) should be either directly declined or forwarded to the Ministry in case of receipt.

When foreign missions decline to acknowledge receipt of legal notifications properly served by a Verbal Note of the Ministry, the date of the Ministry's Verbal Note shall be considered as the date of service effected to the mission.

24 ENGAGEMENT OF THE SPOUSES AND DEPENDENT CHILDREN OF DIPLOMATS IN GAINFUL OCCUPATION

24.1 GENERAL

The spouses of the staff members of the Diplomatic Missions and Consular Posts in Turkey are subject to the following requirements regarding employment in gainful occupation.

- The acknowledgement of the reciprocity by the relevant Embassy.
- The Embassy should send a Verbal Note to the Ministry informing that in accordance with the VCDR and VCCR that it waives the diplomatic or consular status of the concerned spouse.
- It is within the discretion of the Ministry to grant or deny a work permit to the applicant in view of its established policy and on the basis of reciprocity.
- If the Ministry finds the request favorable then the application is forwarded to the Ministry of the Interior or other relevant institutions for further evaluation. Different regulations are applied for diverse sectors of employment. In case of employment by a Turkish firm, the firm should ask an authorization from the relevant Turkish authorities in line with regulations governing the employment of foreign nationals.
- The Ministry informs the mission and the concerned Turkish institution when the work permit is granted. The spouse concerned may begin to work after obtaining the work permit.

- The necessary work and residence permits (maximum two years) should be applied for through the Ministry.

24.2 BILATERAL EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENTS

Bilateral Employment Agreements can be concluded regarding gainful employment of spouses and unmarried dependent children of diplomatic agents, administrative-technical staff, under a certain age, at specified jobs without waiving diplomatic immunities and

Privileges, on the basis of reciprocity and in accordance with laws and regulations that permit employment of foreigners. In such cases, family members are subject to civil and administrative law, tax and social security requirements of the receiving state with regard to gainful employment.

25 VIP LOUNGES

The Deputy Directorate of Protocol Department (PRTY) is in charge of making necessary arrangements for the use of VIP Lounges by Head of Foreign Missions and visiting delegations. In principle, requests for utilization of VIP Lounges are evaluated on the basis of strict reciprocity by the Deputy Directorate of Protocol Department.

The members of accompanying delegations can use the VIP Lounge only when they are travelling with the head of delegation considered to be eligible to use VIP Lounge.

Requests forms for the utilization of the VIP Lounges should be filled and sent to the Deputy Directorate of Protocol Department online through Diplomatic Portal.

For further issues regarding the VIP Lounges, please refer to the Ministry's Circular Note: PRTY/2013/39664552/52830 dated 27.03.2013.

26 SECURITY MEASURES

The Turkish government is committed to fulfilling its obligations under international law to ensure safety and security of diplomatic and consular missions, their personnel and family members. The Missions' questions and requests on security should be addressed to the Ministry.

The missions should keep the Ministry updated regarding the contact information of their members responsible for security issues so that they can be reached without any delay in urgent situations.

27 PRIVATE SECURITY SERVICES

On the basis of the reciprocity, the foreign missions can hire security services from private companies in Turkey.

If such security services will be rendered outside of the mission premises, prior permission must be obtained through the Ministry.

If these services will be rendered exclusively within premises of the mission, no permission is required. However, the Ministry should be informed in advance.

Information on private security services can be found in the Ministry's Circular Note No: 355251, dated August 20, 2007.

28 MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS SPOUSES' ASSOCIATION (DMEDD)

DMEDD was established in 1981 by the wives of the members of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It has achieved the status of "Association for Public Interest and Aid" in 1984.

The primary aim of the Association is to support students and women in need of financial assistance and to provide financial and material aid to educational and social institutions by raising funds through a wide range of social activities with the participation of the diplomatic community.

Another aim of the association is to assist new members of foreign missions in Ankara by familiarizing them to social and cultural life in Turkey through various events. It is a pioneering association in Ankara in creating mutual understanding and cooperation between our foreign guests and the Turkish community in a friendly and casual atmosphere.

Activities, some of which are organized in cooperation with the foreign missions, are as follows:

- Conferences about Turkish art and archaeology, etc.
- Courses and lessons on various subjects and hobbies,
- Various activities like tree planting, conferences and multi-vision shows on ecological matters,
- Trips to different regions in Turkey and abroad,
- Gastronomy luncheons, bridge parties, fashion shows, concerts, talent shows, bazaars, tea parties, etc.
- Exhibitions,
- Printing and selling of postcards and calendars,
- Social gatherings among ladies to discuss various subjects on solidarity, improvement of
- Career conditions, etc.
- Aid campaigns

DMEDD provides scholarships to many students all over Turkey. It supports the day-care center of the Ministry, sends educational material, clothing and gifts to schools and orphanages in various regions. DMEDD has built a girls' student house in Erzurum in 1985-86 and has equipped two children's clinics.

DMEDD accepts donations in various ways and informs the donors on how and where their contributions have been used.

DMEDD received a "Badge of Gratitude" from H.E. Mr. Süleyman Demirel, the President of Turkey, in 1996.

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29 TURKISH LANGUAGE COURSES

TÖMER (Türkçe Öğretim Merkezi) of Ankara University provides Turkish language courses in Ankara, Istanbul, Izmir and other cities.

TÖMER offers basic, intermediate and advanced Turkish courses.

Detailed information about TÖMER may be obtained from the following web page and addresses. www.tomer.ankara.edu.tr/english