

**The Permanent Mission of Panama
to the United Nations**

Consideration of effective measures to enhance the protection, security and safety of diplomatic and consular missions and representatives

International Laws and Conventions

- The protection, security and safety of diplomatic and consular missions and offices, and of diplomatic and consular staff and their family members, is governed by Cabinet Decree No. 280 of 13 August 1970, which establishes a national regime for the granting of privileges and immunities to foreign diplomatic missions and consular offices and their members, as well as representatives of their member organizations; and to representatives of international organizations and their special missions or those of foreign governments and their members.
- Convention regarding Consular Officials, ratified by Act No. 40 of 16 November 1928, signed in Havana on 20 February 1928.
- Convention regarding Diplomatic Officers, ratified by Act No. 72 of 19 December 1928, signed in Havana on 20 February 1928.
- Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations, approved by Act No. 30 of 24 February 1951.
- Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, approved by Act No. 65 of 4 February 1963.
- Vienna Convention on Consular Relations and its Optional Protocols, approved by Act No. 36 of 2 February 1967.
 - Optional Protocol concerning Acquisition of Nationality.
 - Optional Protocol concerning the Compulsory Settlement of Disputes.
- Vienna Convention on the Representation of States in Their Relations with International Organizations of a Universal Character, approved by Act No. 6 of 26 October 1977.
- Protocol on the Privileges and Immunities of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS), approved by Act No. 11 of 10 January 2001.
- Agreement on the Privileges and Immunities of the International Criminal Court, approved by Act No. 20 of 7 July 2004.

Protection

In the event of armed conflict in any neighbouring country, the security of diplomatic premises (embassies, consulates and residences) will be strengthened within 24 hours and until such time as hostilities have ceased, or upon the request of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

- The National Police which is responsible for the security of both nationals and foreigners, collects information of all kinds, including on threats that could endanger the lives of third parties, particularly diplomatic officials entering our country.

- The protection of diplomats is the responsibility of the Diplomatic Premises Department of the National Police and its group of bodyguards, who actively coordinate with the different levels of security in order to improve the technical assessments of risk and threat levels, which enables them to take protective measures during an incident or event.
- Police intelligence activities are carried out in order to detect and prevent attacks on dignitaries and facilities protected by the National Police, which is responsible for the security of facilities and transfers from one place to another.

Important things to consider in the implementation of security

- Remaining in the same posts or activities makes you an easy target. You should frequently change any routine that puts you at risk;
- Avoid disclosing certain types of personal information;
- Keep changing the times at which you leave or arrive at places you frequent regularly;
- You should always be alert when you are on the move. Observe what is happening all around you. Be suspicious of any vehicle that is following you, particularly if you have previously noticed it near your home, place of work or during other journeys;
- Get into the habit of continually monitoring the surroundings of your home or places of work to detect the presence of suspicious-looking persons or vehicles. Do the same before getting into a car;
- Avoid going through places that are dark, uninhabited or inhospitable. “It is better to arrive late than never”;
- Do not give details of your itinerary. Handle it with caution and as far as possible avoid including any information on times and routes to be taken;
- Avoid frequenting establishments at night but if you must, maximize your security;
- Keep a register of persons and visitors entering your premises;
- Make all staff working with you aware of all the security measures;
- Install a direct line of communication with the authorities;
- Do not accept packages, flowers, gifts or parcels that are not properly identified. If you have any doubt, the rule is: do not open them, put them outside the residence in an open and remote area and immediately call the police.

Recommendations

- Diplomats should be made aware that their position alone makes them a target, so they must always follow their security team’s instructions to the letter in order to avoid being threatened. If an attack should occur, it will have less of an impact as a result of the existence of security assessments by police intelligence.

- We must stress that the situation will vary for each diplomat, depending on their mission and the circumstances in which they are carrying it out. Do not forget that security plans, while they may be similar, are never identical.

New York, 29 April 2011