



**AGRÉMENT AND CREDENTIALS OF
FOREIGN AMBASSADORS/HIGH COMMISSIONERS TO
SRI LANKA**

**Protocol Division
Ministry of Foreign Relations
Colombo**

INTRODUCTION

This booklet has been prepared to assist Foreign Diplomatic Missions (Resident & Non-resident) with the Agrément, Accreditation and Credentials Presentation of designated Ambassadors/High Commissioners to Sri Lanka

Questions regarding these matters may be directed to the Protocol Division
cprot@mfa.gov.lk

AGRÉMENT

1. Requests for Agrément for a Head of Mission may be made:
 - (a) Through the Embassy in Colombo, by submitting a diplomatic note to the Ministry of Foreign Relations from the Head of Mission or Chargé d' Affaires of the Mission;
 - (b) By the Ministry of Foreign Relations of the sending state through the Sri Lanka Mission.
2. The Agrément request must be in English and include a curriculum vitae of the Ambassador/High Commissioner-designate.
3. When a decision on Agrément has been made by the Government of Sri Lanka, the requesting state will be informed in the manner in which the Agrément was originally requested.

ARRIVAL OF THE AMBASSADOR/HIGH COMMISSIONER-DESIGNATE

1. When the Ambassador/High Commissioner-designate's arrival date has been determined, the Embassy should **inform the Protocol Division at a minimum of five business days in advance of the arrival.** A request for courtesies at the Airport should be submitted.

In order to facilitate the Ambassador/High Commissioner-designate's arrival, the Protocol Division will need the date of arrival, time, flight number and airline information as well as the names and passport information of any persons accompanying the Ambassador/High Commissioner-designate so that customs, immigration and other courtesies may be arranged. Specific questions regarding Airport courtesies may be directed to cprot@mfa.gov.lk.

2. Ambassadors/High Commissioners-designate arriving in Colombo will be greeted by the Assistant Chief of Protocol. Two representatives from the Embassy may also greet the Ambassador/High Commissioner-designate upon arrival. The Ambassador/High Commissioner-designate and spouse (if applicable) will be escorted by Protocol to the VIP Lounge. The Embassy is responsible for providing transportation for the arriving party. At the time of arrival, the Ambassador/High Commissioner-designate should have the originals and copies of the Letter of Recall of the previous Ambassador (if applicable) and the Ambassador/High Commissioner-designate's Letter of Credence. When all of these documents are available, an appointment will be scheduled for the Ambassador/High Commissioner-designate to be received at the Ministry of Foreign Relations by Chief of Protocol.

3. In order for this Ministry's records to reflect accurate information, Embassies are reminded to promptly submit a Notification of Termination for Ambassadors/High Commissioners ending their tour of duty and to return all documents issued to the principal and dependent family members by the Ministry of Foreign Relations. Additionally, a Notification of Change should be submitted for a Charge d' Affaires, ad interim once an Ambassador/High Commissioner-designate has arrived in Colombo.

PRESENTATION OF COPIES OF CREDENTIALS AT THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN RELATIONS

1. The Ambassadors/High Commissioners-designate will be received at the Ministry of Foreign Relations by Chief of Protocol when he or she has submitted all appropriate paperwork to the Protocol Division.

Timing of the presentation of copies of credentials is typically within five business days of arrival. The date and time of the appointment to present copies of credentials will be confirmed by the Protocol Division directly to the Embassy.

2. On the day of the appointment:
 - (a) The Ambassador/High Commissioner-designate should bring copies of the Letter of Recall of his or her predecessor (if applicable), the Letter of Credence
 - (b) Dress for the meeting is business attire or national dress as would be appropriate in the sending country
 - (c) One member of the diplomatic staff, if desired, may accompany the Ambassador/High Commissioner-designate
 - (d) A Protocol Officer will meet the Ambassador/High Commissioner-designate at the Main Entrance of the Ministry of Foreign Relations
 - (e) The Ambassador/High Commissioner-designate will be escorted to the Office of the Chief of Protocol where the Ambassador/High Commissioner-designate will present copies of credentials and will be invited to view a video presentation on the credential ceremony during a brief meeting
3. The Ambassador/High Commissioner-designate may transact business on relations between Sri Lanka and the sending state, with the exception of meetings with the President, Prime Minister, Foreign Minister, other Ministers, Parliamentarians, Provincial and Local Government Council Members and other senior officials of the Government of Sri Lanka. Ambassadors/High Commissioners-designate should not attend President's House events or other events where the President, Prime Minister, Ministers, Parliamentarians, Provincial Council, Local Government Council Members or senior Government officials are present without first presenting his or her credentials during a President's House credentialing ceremony.

4. The Ambassador/High Commissioner-designate takes precedence on the Diplomatic List in the order of the date and time of his or her presentation of copies of credentials at the President's House. You may see, Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (1961) Articles 13 and 16.

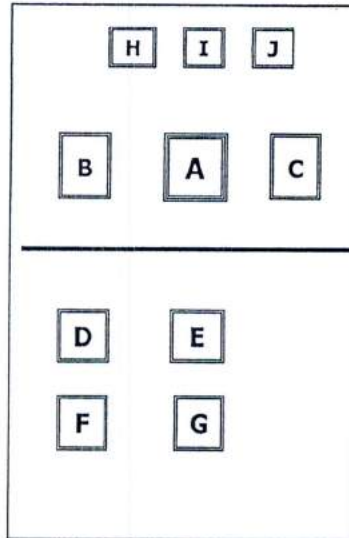
PRESENTATION OF CREDENTIALS TO THE PRESIDENT

1. The Protocol Division will contact the Ambassador/High Commissioner-designate to inform of the date and time of the presentation of credentials to the President. It is customary for the spouse of the Ambassador/High Commissioner-designate or one member of Diplomatic Staff to accompany and attend the ceremony.
2. On the day of the credential ceremony:
 - (a) The Ambassador/High Commissioner-designate and spouse will be invited to arrive to the Ministry of Foreign Relations by two vehicles provided by the Ministry of Foreign Relations prior to the credential ceremony at the President's House. The Ambassadors/High Commissioners-designate and spouses will then proceed in a ceremonial motorcade to the President's House in vehicles provided by the Ministry of Foreign Relations. Ministry will provide two cars, a Police pilot car and two motorcycle escorts. The flag of sending state will not be displayed on the vehicles
 - (b) Dress for the occasion is either business attire or national dress as would be appropriate in the sending state
 - (c) The Ambassador/High Commissioner-designate must bring the original documents of the Letter of Recall of his/her predecessor (if applicable) and the Letter of Credence
 - (d) These documents may be present to the President in a single envelope or presentation folder. It is a customary for making few words at the time of presenting the credentials to the President
 - (e) President's House Official Photographer will be present. Personal cameras are not permitted at this ceremony, and Ambassador/High Commissioner-designate is requested to keep all personal belongings (handbags, mobile phones etc.) in their designated vehicles and carrying only the presentation folders
 - (f) Photographs & videos of the credential ceremony will be sent on the same day to the Mission by the Protocol Division

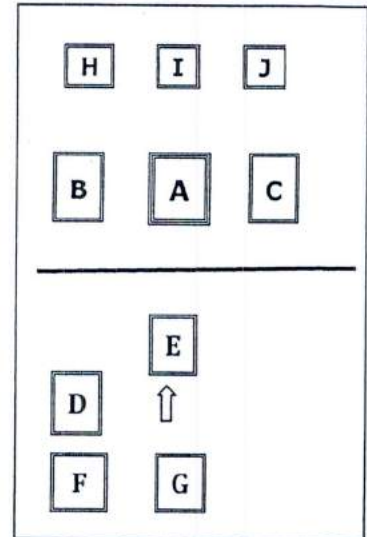
- (g) There is no expectation of gifts. If the Ambassador/High Commissioner-designate chooses to give gifts to the President or First Lady, they should be delivered to the Protocol Division at least one business day prior to the credential ceremony
3. The vehicle of the Ambassador/High Commissioner-designate will be positioned in precedence order prior to entering the President's House with ceremonial motorcade. The vehicle will proceed to Portico. The Ambassador/High Commissioner-designate and spouse will be greeted by the Chief of Protocol and introduced to the Senior Additional Secretary to the President.
 4. When the President is ready to receive credentials, each Ambassador/High Commissioner-designate and spouse will be escorted, one at a time and in precedence order, into the ceremonial credential presenting place and introduced by the Chief of Protocol to the President. The Ambassador/High Commissioner-designate will present his or her Letter of Credence and the Letter of Recall of his/her predecessor in a sealed envelope or folder to the President and photographs will be taken.
 5. After presenting credentials to the President, the Ambassadors/High Commissioners and their spouses will be escorted to the Meeting Room by respective Protocol Officers for a group meeting with the President. Ambassadors/High Commissioners will be seated at front seats and spouses/staff officers will be seated at rear seats.
 6. Sri Lankan Government will be represented by Secretary to the President, Secretary/Foreign Relations, Addl. Secretary to the President, Chief of Protocol and few senior officials.
 7. Ambassadors/High Commissioners will have opportunity to express their views in brief at the meeting.
 8. After the group meeting, the Ambassadors/High Commissioners will be escorted by Protocol Officers to sign the "Visitor's Book". The Messages of the Ambassadors/High Commissioners are written on the "Visitor's Book" in advance and the Ambassadors/High Commissioners may place their signatures.
 9. After the signing of the "Visitor's Book", the Ambassadors/High Commissioners will be escorted to their vehicles to leave for their residences with ceremonial motorbikes and the same vehicles provided by the Ministry of Foreign Relations.
 10. It is the customary to use the country flags by the Ambassadors/High Commissioners on their vehicles when leaving from the President's House after the Credential Presenting Ceremony.

Layout of the Ceremonial Lounge where the presenting of credentials are taken place

Position 1: Chief of Protocol introduces respective Ambassador/ High Commissioner-designate to the President

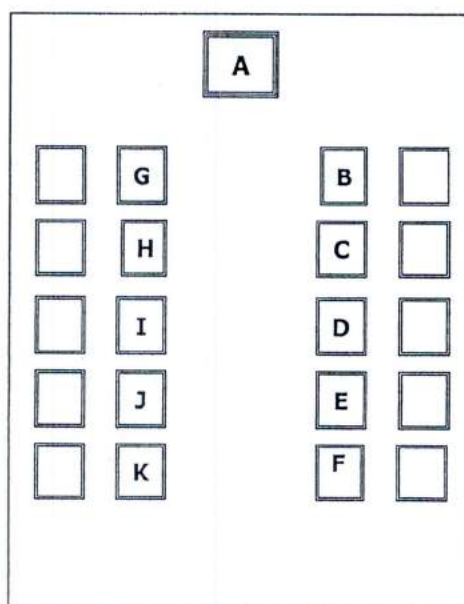


Position 2: Ambassador/High Commissioner-designate presents credentials to the President



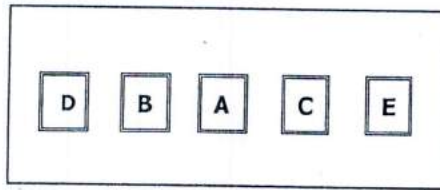
- A** : H.E. the President
- B** : Foreign Minister
- C** : Secretary to the President
- D** : Chief of Protocol
- E** : Ambassador/High Commissioner-designate
- F** : Protocol Officer
- G** : Spouse/Second Officer
- H,I,J**: Three Forces Commanders (Representative of Army, Navy, Air Force)

Layout of the Seating Arrangements for the group meeting with the President



- A**: H.E. the President
- B**: Foreign Minister
- C**: Secretary to the President
- D**: Secretary/Foreign Affairs
- E**: Addl. Secretary to the President
- F**: Chief of Protocol
- G,H,I,J,K**: Ambassadors/High Commissioners

Layout of the Group Photograph



- A:** H.E. the President
- B:** Ambassador/High Commissioner
- C:** Spouse/Second Officer
- D:** Foreign Minister
- E:** Secretary to the President

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