Invitation to Join The Society of Foreign Consuls in New York, Inc.

Dear Prospective Member,

On behalf of The Society of Foreign Consuls in New York, Inc. (SOFC), we are pleased to extend this formal invitation for you to join our esteemed organization. As the world's largest consular corps, comprising Consulates, Consulates General, and Honorary Consulates based in New York City, the SOFC has been a cornerstone of international diplomacy since its founding in 1925. In April 2015, after 90 years as an unincorporated association, we proudly incorporated as a 501(c)(7) not-for-profit organization under the laws of the State of New York.

This proposal outlines the benefits, structure, and opportunities associated with membership in the SOFC. We aim to provide a comprehensive overview to assist you in considering how joining our society can enhance your consular representation, foster international relations, and contribute to the vibrant diplomatic community in New York City. Membership is open to all foreign consular representatives in New York accredited by their governments to the United States of America, and we welcome applications from qualified individuals and offices.

About the SOFC: Our History and Mission

The SOFC represents a diverse and dynamic network of consular professionals dedicated to advancing mutual interests in one of the world's most influential cities. Founded in 1925, our society has grown to embody the spirit of international cooperation, safeguarding the rights and privileges of consular officers while promoting cultural, economic, and diplomatic ties.
Our mission is twofold:

1.To safeguard the interests and rights of the members of the NYC-based Consular Corps, as defined by international law and established practices.

2.To promote cultural and economic relations between our respective countries, the City of New York, and our host nation, the United States of America.

In pursuit of these goals, the SOFC collaborates closely with key stakeholders, including the U.S. Department of State's Office of Foreign Missions and the New York City Mayor's Office for International Affairs. Together, we organize forums, seminars, and events on critical topics such as consular access, diplomatic security, immigration policies, document fraud prevention, and airport protocols. These initiatives not only address practical challenges faced by consular officers but also strengthen bilateral and multilateral relationships.

As an incorporated entity, the SOFC operates under a clear governance structure outlined in our Bylaws. The society is steered by an Executive Committee, comprising elected representatives from seven global regions: Africa; Caribbean and Central America; East Asia and Western Pacific; Europe Group 1 (countries A-L); Europe Group 2 (countries M-Z); North and South America; and West and South Asia. This regional representation ensures balanced decision-making and inclusivity, with two members per region (one principal and one alternate).

The Executive Committee oversees the society's affairs, including the election of officers such as the President, Deputy President, Treasurer, and Secretary. Leadership rotates annually, with the Presidency cycling through regions in alphabetical order to promote equity and diversity. All members of the Executive Committee serve without compensation, reflecting our commitment to selfless service in the diplomatic community.

Benefits of Membership

Joining the SOFC offers unparalleled opportunities for professional development, networking, and advocacy. As a member, you will gain access to a supportive community that amplifies your voice and resources in New York City. Key benefits include:

Advocacy and Protection: The SOFC actively safeguards the interests, rights, and privileges of its members under international law. We provide a unified platform to address issues like consular access and diplomatic security, ensuring your office's concerns are heard by relevant U.S. authorities.

Networking and Collaboration : Participate in exclusive events, including the Annual Assembly in June, periodic Executive Committee meetings, and extraordinary sessions for urgent matters. These gatherings foster relationships within the consular corps and with city and state officials, facilitating cultural exchanges and economic partnerships.

Educational and Professional Resources: Attend seminars and forums on timely topics such as immigration, fraud detection, and protocol. Our partnerships with the U.S. Department of State and NYC's International Affairs Office deliver high-value insights and training.

Regional Representation: As a member, your country contributes to one of the seven regions, allowing nomination to the Executive Committee. This provides a pathway to leadership roles, where you can influence the society's direction.

Partnership Opportunities: For individuals or organizations interested in supporting the SOFC without full voting rights, we offer Partner Membership. Partners contribute to our mission through collaboration and enjoy access to select events.

Membership Dues

To sustain our operations and initiatives, the SOFC requires annual membership dues, as determined by the Executive Committee. These fees cover the fiscal year and are prorated for new members. Effective since October 1, 2024, the current dues structure is as follows:

Category	**Annual Fee**
Consul General / Head of Post or Mission	**$150**
Consular Staff	**$100**
Partner Members / Observers	**$200**

Dues are used to fund events, administrative needs, and collaborative programs. The Treasurer provides a detailed financial report at each Annual Assembly, including assets, liabilities, revenues, and expenses, ensuring full transparency.

Governance and Meetings

The SOFC's governance emphasizes democracy and efficiency:

- **Annual Assembly**: Held in June for elections, financial reviews, and other business. Notice is provided at least two weeks in advance.

- **Extraordinary Meetings:** Called for urgent matters requiring Annual Assembly protocol, with at least three days' notice.

- **Periodic Meetings:** Convened by the Executive Committee as needed. Non-Executive members may request attendance via written demand.

The President presides over meetings, with the Deputy President stepping in as needed. The Secretary maintains minutes, and all proceedings adhere to quorum requirements (7 members for Executive Committee meetings).

Vacancies in leadership are filled promptly by regional elections, maintaining continuity. Officers serve one-year terms, with restrictions on consecutive re-elections for the President and Treasurer to encourage fresh perspectives.

How to Join

We invite you to take the next step toward membership by submitting an application. The process is simple:

1. Submit Your Application: Provide accreditation details from your government, along with contact information for your Consul General or representative.

2. Approval and Dues Payment: The Executive Committee reviews applications promptly. Upon approval, pay the prorated dues for the current fiscal year.

3. Welcome and Orientation: New members receive an orientation to our Bylaws, upcoming events, and resources.

THE SOCIETY OF FOREIGN CONSULS
IN NEW YORK, INC.

MEMBERSHIP FORM

ANNUAL FEES: Consul General/Head of Post or Mission - $ 150.00 / Consular Staff - $ 100.00
(Please enroll the following as member/s of SOFC – Important: Membership is not transferable)

Country:		**Date of Application:**			
Address:					
Website:		**General Office Tel:**		**Extension:**	
Facebook Handle:		**Instagram Handle:**		**X Handle:**	

APPLICANT 1:

Name:					
Title:		**Mobile:**			
CG Direct Email:		**CG Office Tel:**		**Extension:**	
Assistant to CG		**Assistant Email:**		**Assistant phone & mobile no:**	

APPLICANT 2:

Name:					
Title:		**Mobile:**			
Email:		**Office Tel:**		**Extension:**	

APPLICANT 3:

Name:					
Title:		**Mobile:**			
Email:		**Office Tel:**		**Extension:**	

Please make check/s payable to: The Society of Foreign Consuls in New York Inc. and send this completed application with your check/s to:

Checkattached: ☐

The Treasurer SOFC Inc.
c/o Consulate General of the Republic of Serbia in New York
62 W 45th St, Floor 7, New York, NY 10036

OR

Deposit at Polish & Slavic Federal Credit Union https://en.psfcu.com/
The Society of Foreign Consuls in New York Inc.
Account # 3050013763017 ABA# 226082022
Please send scanned form and copy of deposit to sofcny@gmail.com

Depositmade: ☐

The Society of Foreign Consuls in New York, Inc., stands as a beacon of international unity in the heart of New York City.

By joining us, you become part of a legacy that has championed consular rights and fostered global connections for nearly 100 years. In an increasingly interconnected world, the SOFC provides the tools, network, and platform to advance your diplomatic objectives while contributing to shared prosperity.

We encourage you to review our Bylaws (enclosed excerpts for reference) and reach out with any questions. Together, we can continue to build bridges between nations and strengthen the consular community.

Sincerely,

Božović

Ambassador Vladimir Božović, PhD
Consul General of the Republic of Serbia in New York
President of the The Society of Foreign Consuls in New York (SoFC)