

The Role of Honorary Consuls

Consular institution is very old.

It can be divided into 4 periods.

1. The period of antiquity: Consuls of the ancient Greek city-states would mediate between the legal and political issues.

2. Judge-Consul Period: After year in the 1200s the developments in the field of trading system, strengthen consular. Elected by the members of the colony "Merchant Judge and Judge Consuls" In the colonies was involved in connecting with the people settle disputes between merchants.

3. The period after 16. Century: The emergence of the modern state of the concept of "Consul", colonial states in which they are connected with the tie of nationality appointed by the state and he has earned the title of an official representative of the state.

4. Consulate in the contemporary sense: The career consular service was born in the end of the 18th century. It emerged from the significant developments in the field of industry, governments began to give importance to the institution of the consulate, and the current structures have emerged.

Honorary consuls are recognized under international law by the Vienna Convention. The convention provides the judicial basis and general framework for consular relations between states and the delivery of consular services. Article 1, paragraph 2 of the Convention states that consular officers are of two categories, namely career consular officers and honorary consular officers. The Convention then goes on to define the rules that govern consular posts headed by honorary consular officers in its Chapter III. Very little research or literature has concerned itself with this unique consular institution and its capabilities, particularly in the trade, tourism, and

investment promotion function.

The honorary consul performs in this arena by:

- Extending the representation network of state in a cost-efficient manner in order to develop a wider network of investment or trade opportunities.

- Linking the interest of a state directly into a region, hub, or locality of commercial value. Consular posts that concentrate on trade and investment promotion become more and more important as such consulates offer local communities and regions a direct and official tie to a foreign country and its resources.

- Developing business, tourism, and foreign direct investment (FDI) opportunities for the represented state in order for it to enhance its economy and in many cases move up the economic value chain.

Although honorary consuls are used for more traditional activities like citizen services, socializing, dinner parties, and cultural promotion, the focused utilization of this consular affairs function for economic benefit seems to be a growing trend. Although the numbers fluctuate, there may be around 20,000 honorary consuls in the world today, performing in roles ranging from the social and cultural to the economic.

References:

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