

## **Protocol Guidelines for FAO Representatives**

As officials Representative and Head of Mission of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the conduct of FAO Representative, as well as their words and acts, will be closely watched by all with who come in contact.

All FAO staff in the country and especially the head of Mission should always be aware that they are guests in that country; therefore they should in every way respect the social, religious, political and general traditions of the country. It is suggested that all staff make a determined effort to acquaint themselves with local history and traditions; this not only would ensure a more meaningful experience during the assignment, but would make officials and social contacts with nationals of that country more cordial, further reducing the possibility of misunderstanding which could curtail their effectiveness in the assignment. By paying due regard to the local customs, all FAO staff will undoubtedly find their work made easier and the experience in every way more rewarding.

### **1. Responsibilities on Initial Arrival at Post**

- A call should be made as soon as possible on the UNDP Resident Representative, on the Dean of the Diplomatic Corp and on the Chief of Protocol at the Foreign Ministry. On the latter occasion the question of the presentation of credentials and of other person calls to be made on the Foreign Minister and other officials of the Government can be settled. A call should also be made on the Heads of the UN Agencies represented in the country.
- Personal calls, subject to the advise of the Chief of Protocol and of the Dean of the Diplomatic Corps, should be made:
  - On the Ministers of Government Departments responsible for subject-matters of interest to FAO and for all aspects of agriculture, i.e. forestry, land reform, fisheries, rural development, etc.;
  - On the head of whatever international or national institutions in the country which can be considered relevant to the work of the FAO Representative;
- A card on which the FAO Representative's name, title and agency association are indicated should be handed over in each case. The calls should be made as soon as they can be arranged, but in any case not later than 2-3 weeks after arrival;

The initials "P. R." (pour remercier/to thank) are used to convey a "thank you" message, as required, when sending a calling card. The initials "P.M." (pour mémoire/to remember) are used on invitations cards when the invitation has already been accepted.

### **2. Social Occasions**

Dinners are usually the most formal functions to which one is normally invited. At formal dinners and luncheons at the residence of the FAO Representative, members of the staff and their spouses should arrive five minutes before the appointed hour. At other places they should arrive punctually. In no circumstances should members of the mission leave the function prior to a guest of honour or their chief of Mission.

If a large dining table is used with name cards, it would help the guests if a table were shown at the entrance to the dining room. Precedence of local personalities for the seating arrangements could be obtained from the local Protocol Office.

Cocktail parties are considered informal functions and do not require such promptness as dinners, etc. An hour and a half is usually considered the maximum time to remain. Staff members need not wait for the departure of their Chief of Mission before departing themselves, except when he is the host.

When giving a reception, the FAO Representative should stand in the receiving line together with either the next senior FAO officer stationed in the country or the Programme Officer, who should replace the FAO Representative should he accompany a Minister or high-ranking Government officials. After half an hour to forty-five minutes the FAO Representative should mingle with the guests, coming back to the entrance half an hour before the reception is supposed to end.

On informal occasions a telephone call on the next day to say "thank you" is usually appropriate. On more formal occasions and where one has been to a home for the first time, "P.R." cards the next day are in order. A "thank you" note on some occasions, for example where a dinner is given in a person's honour, is recommended.

All this is very much subject to local custom and here again the Chief of Protocol and the Dean Corps can be of assistance.

### **3. Assistance to Chief of Mission**

It is the duty of all staff members of the mission to be of every possible assistance to the Chief of Mission at a social gathering, whether at the official residence or as guests elsewhere. Staff members should take an active interest in the success of social functions given their Chief of Mission, mingle with foreign guests rather than with each other, help guests to find places at table and otherwise aid host and hostess. This should be done unobtrusively so as not to suggest usurpation of the host's functions.

### **4. Responsibilities in Special Circumstances**

The FAO Representative should at all times ensure that his own personal conduct and that of his staff, for which he is responsible, should bring no discredit either to himself or to the organization. Should he personally or any member of his staff be declared by the Host Government persona non grata, he should immediately determine all facts pertaining to the reasons for this action and report them by telegramme to Headquarters. Other emergencies of a personal or less serious nature should also be reported fully to Headquarters.

Changes of Government or of Cabinet Ministers should be reported promptly to Headquarters. A congratulatory cable is usually sent by the Director-General on the following occasions:

- Birthday of Head of State;
- Appointments and confirmation in office of Head of State, Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of Agriculture.

The FAO Representative should arrange, through the Chief of Protocol, a courtesy call on the new Cabinet members.

## 5. Arrangements for Visits of the Director-General

In general the decision to visit a country and the dates will be handled directly by the Director-General either with the Permanent Representative or the country's Ambassador in Rome or by correspondence with the appropriate Minister, keeping the FAO Representative suitable informed.

Once firm dates are set, the FAO Representative will be advised. Set out below are some principles by which the FAO Representative should be guided:

- The programme is the responsibility of the Government. However, the FAO Representative should make himself available to discuss it fully with the Government, particularly to ensure balance and logistics.
- The FAO Representative should work with the Government on all practical arrangements including:
  - Hotel reservation;
  - Transportation;
  - Field trips;
  - Social engagements;
  - Arrival and departure
  - Flying flags.
- In addition to accompanying the Director-General, whenever requested, to officials meetings and on field travel, he should arrange internal meetings with all FAO and WFP staff at or within easy reach of the FAO office.
- The FAO Representative should maintain contact with DDF on the preparations of all aspects concerning the visit of the Director-General; with ODG for special instructions; with OCE on press conferences and publicity generally.

## 6. Visit by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and Head of UN Agencies

In some countries the FAO Representative may be at times the Senior United Nations officials present. In such a case he is responsible for all arrangements should the post be visited by the Secretary-General of the United Nations. See 5 for guidance

In the case of Heads of other United Nations agencies visiting his post, the FAO Representative should offer every assistance and support. He should be present as appropriate to pay his respects on behalf of FAO at ceremonial or official social functions.

## 7. Flag

FAO does not have a flag of its own but uses the UN flag. The FAO Representative should therefore have a United Nations flag in good conditions and this should be displayed following the directions prescribed in the UN Flag code. This code is supplied to all FAO Representatives and should be readily available for reference. **UN Flag Code (attached).**

The FAO Representative is entitled to fly a small UN flag on his car on official occasions, according to instructions contained in the Flag Code. It should also be used when the Director-General visits the country.

The small UN flag should be flown from a small flagpole on the mudguard on the opposite side of the driver. However, in Commonwealth countries the flag can be flown in the middle.

In some countries visited by the Director-General as an official guest, the flag is flown by the hotel throughout his stay.

## **8. Absence**

The FAO Representative should be punctilious in informing concerned Host Government officials with regard to any absence from his country of accreditation and to the name of the person left in charge during such absence.

## **9. Departure**

Upon final departure from his post of assignment, the FAO Representative should address a letter to the Chief of Protocol of the country/ies to which he was assigned and make official calls following in general the pattern suggested in "1" above, but supplemented by such other calls as he deems appropriate as a result of his assignment.