

ARTICLES OF VIENNA CONVENTION ON
DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS HAVING THE FORCE OF LAW IN
KENYA

ARTICLE 1

For the purpose of the present Convention, the following expressions shall have the meanings hereunder assigned to them –

- (a) “head of the mission’ is the person charged by the sending state with the duty of acting in that capacity;
- (b) “members of the mission” are the head of the mission and the members of staff of the mission;
- (c) “members of staff of the mission’ are the members of the diplomatic staff, of the Administrative and technical staff and of the service staff of the mission;
- (d) “members of the diplomatic staff” are the members of staff of the mission having diplomatic rank;
- (e) “diplomatic agent’ is the head of the mission or a member of the diplomatic staff of the mission;
- (f) “members of the administrative and technical staff” are the members of staff of the mission employed in the administrative and technical service of the mission;
- (g) “member of the service staff” are the members of the mission in the domestic service of the mission;
- (h) “private servant” is a person who is in the domestic service of a member of the mission and who is not an employee of the sending state; and
- (i) “premises of the mission” are the buildings or parts of building and the land ancillary thereto, irrespective of ownership, used for the purposes of the mission including the residence of the head of the mission.

ARTICLE 22

1. The premises of the mission shall be inviolable. The agents of the receiving State may not enter them, except with the consent of the head of the mission.

2. The receiving State is under a special duty to take all appropriate steps to protect the premises of the mission against any intrusion or damage and to prevent any disturbance of the peace of the mission or impairment of its dignity.

949

3. The premises of the mission, their furnishings and other property thereon and the means of transport of the mission shall be immune from search, requisition, attachment or execution.

ARTICLE 23

1. The sending State and the head of the mission shall be exempt from all national, regional or municipal dues and taxes in respect of the premises of the mission, whether owned or leased, other than such as represent payment for specific services rendered,

2. The exemption from taxation referred to in this Article shall not apply to such dues and taxes payable under the laws of the receiving state by persons contracting with the sending state or the head of the mission.

ARTICLE 24

The archives and documents of the mission shall be inviolable at any time and wherever they may be.

ARTICLE 27

1. The receiving State shall permit and protect free communication on the part of the mission for all official purposes. In communicating with the Government and other missions and consulates of the sending State, wherever situated, the mission may

employ all appropriate means, including diplomatic couriers and messages in code or cipher. However, the mission may install and use a wireless transmitter only with the consent of the receiving State.

2. The official correspondence of the mission shall be inviolable.

Official correspondence means correspondence relating to the mission and its functions.

3. The diplomatic bag shall not be opened or detained.

4. The packages constituting the diplomatic bag shall bear visible external marks of their character and may contain only diplomatic documents or articles intended for official use.

5. The diplomatic courier, who shall be provided with an official document indicating his/her status and the number of packages constituting the diplomatic bag, shall be protected by the receiving State in the performance of his/her functions. He or she shall enjoy personal inviolability and shall not be liable to any form of arrest or detention.

950

6. The sending State or the mission may designate diplomatic couriers ad hoc. In such cases the provisions of paragraph 5 of this Article shall also apply, except that the immunities therein mentioned shall cease to apply when such a courier has delivered to the consignee the diplomatic bag in his or her charge.

7. A diplomatic bag may be entrusted to the captain of a commercial aircraft scheduled to land at an authorized port of entry. He or she shall be provided with an official document indicating the number of packages constituting the bag but he or she shall not be considered to be a diplomatic courier. The mission may send one of its members to take possession of the diplomatic bag directly

and freely from the captain of the aircraft.

ARTICLE 28

The fees and charges levied by the mission in the course of its official duties shall be exempt from all dues and taxes.

ARTICLE 29

The person of a diplomatic agent shall be inviolable. He or she shall not be liable to any form of arrest or detention, The receiving State shall treat him/her with due respect and take all appropriate steps to prevent any attack on his or her person, freedom or dignity.

ARTICLE 30

1. The private residence of a diplomatic agent shall enjoy the same Inviolability and protection as the premises of the mission.
2. His or her papers, correspondence and, except as provided in paragraph 3 of Article 31, his or her property, shall likewise enjoy inviolability.

ARTICLE 31

1. A diplomatic agent shall enjoy immunity from the criminal jurisdiction of the receiving State. He shall also enjoy immunity from its civil and administrative jurisdiction except in the case of:
 - (a) A real action relating to private immovable property situated in the territory of the receiving State, unless he or she holds it on behalf of the sending State for the purpose of the missions;
 - (b) An action relating to succession in which the diplomatic agent is involved as executor, administrator, heir or legatee as a private person and not on behalf of the sending State;
- 951
- (c) An action relating to any professional or commercial activity exercised by the diplomatic agent in the receiving State outside his or she official functions.

2. A diplomatic agent is not obliged to give evidence as a witness.
3. No measures of execution may be taken in respect of a diplomatic agent except in the cases coming under subparagraphs (a), (b) and (c) of paragraph 1 of this Article, and provided that the measures concerned can be taken without infringing the inviolability of his or her person or residence.
4. The immunity of a diplomatic agent from the jurisdiction of the receiving State does not exempt him or her from the jurisdiction of the sending State.

ARTICLE 32

1. The immunity from jurisdiction of diplomatic agents and of persons enjoying immunity under Article 37 may be waived by the sending State.
2. The Waiver shall always be express.
3. The initiation of proceedings by a diplomatic agent or by a person enjoying immunity from jurisdiction under Article 37 shall preclude him or her from invoking immunity from jurisdiction in respect of any counter-claim directly connected with the principal claim.
4. Waiver of immunity from jurisdiction in respect of civil or administrative proceedings shall not be held to imply waiver of immunity in respect of the execution of the judgment, for which a separate waiver shall be necessary.

ARTICLES 33

1. Subject to the provisions of paragraph 3 of this Article, a diplomatic agent with respect to services rendered for the sending state shall be exempted from social security provisions which may be in force in the receiving State.
2. The exemption provided for in paragraph 2 of this Article shall also

apply to private servants who are in the sole employment of a diplomatic agent on condition—

(a) That they are not nationals of or permanently resident in the receiving state; and

(b) That they are covered by the social security provisions which may be in service in the sending state or third state.

3. A diplomatic agent who employs persons to whom the exemption provided for in paragraph 2 of this Article does not apply shall

952

observe the obligations which the social security provisions of the receiving state imposed upon employers.

4. The exemption provided for in paragraphs 1 and 2 of this Article shall not preclude voluntary participation in the social security system of the receiving State provided that such participation is permitted by that State.

5. The provisions of this Article shall not affect bilateral or multilateral agreements concerning social security concluded previously and shall not prevent the conclusion of such agreements in the future.

ARTICLE 34

A diplomatic agent shall be exempted from all dues and taxes, personal or real, national, regional or municipal, except –

(a) Indirect taxes of a kind which are normally incorporated in the price of goods or services;

(b) Dues and taxes on private immovable property situated in the territory of the receiving State, unless he or she holds in on behalf of the sending State for the purposes of the mission;

(c) Estate, succession or inheritance duties levied by the receiving State, subject to the provisions of paragraph 4 of Article 39;

- (d) Dues and taxes on private income having its source in the receiving State and capital taxes on investments made in commercial undertakings in the receiving State;
- (e) Charges levied for specific services rendered;
- (f) Registration, court or record fees, mortgage dues and stamp duty, with respect to immovable property subject to the provisions of Article 23.

ARTICLE 35

The receiving State shall exempt diplomatic agents from all personal services, from all public service of any kind whatsoever, and from military obligations such as those connected with requisitioning, military contributions and billeting.

ARTICLE 36

1. The receiving State shall, in accordance with such laws and regulations as it may adopt, permit entry of and grant exemption from all customs duties, taxes, and related charges other than charges for storage, cartage and similar services on –

- (a) articles for the official use of the mission;

953

- (b) Articles for the personal use of a diplomatic agent or members of his or her family forming part of his or her household, including articles intended for his or her establishment.

2. The personal baggage of a diplomatic agent shall be exempt from inspection, unless there are serious grounds for presuming that it contains articles not covered by the exemptions mentioned in paragraph 1 of this Article, or articles the import or export of which is prohibited by the law or controlled by the quarantine regulations of the receiving State. Such inspection shall be conducted only in the presence of the diplomatic agent or of his or

her authorized representative.

ARTICLE 37

1. The members of the family of a diplomatic agent forming part of his or her household shall, if they are not nationals of the receiving State, enjoy the privileges and immunities specified in Articles 29 to 36

2. Members of the administrative and technical staff of the mission, together with members of their families forming part of their respective households, shall, if they are not nationals of or permanently resident in the receiving State, enjoy the privileges and immunities specified in Articles 29 to 35 provided that the immunity from civil and administrative jurisdiction of the receiving State specified in paragraph 1 of Article 31 shall not extend to acts performed outside the course of their duties. They shall also enjoy the privileges specified in Article 36, paragraph 1, in respect of articles imported at the time of first installation.

3. Members of the mission who are not nationals of or permanently resident in the receiving State shall enjoy immunity in respect of acts performed in the course of their duties, exemption from duties and taxes on the emoluments they receive by reason of their employment and the exception in Article 33.

4. Private servants of members of the mission shall, if they are not nationals of or permanently resident in the receiving State, be exempt from dues and taxes on the emoluments they receive by reason of their employment. In other respects, they may enjoy privileges and immunities only to the extent admitted by the receiving State. However, the receiving State shall exercise its jurisdiction over those persons in such a manner as not to interfere unduly with the performance of the function of the mission.

ARTICLE 38

1. Except in so far as additional privileges and immunities may be granted by the receiving State, a diplomatic agent who is a national of or permanently resident in that State, shall enjoy only immunity from jurisdiction and inviolability in respect of official acts performed in the exercise of his or her functions.

2. Other members of the staff of the mission and private servants who are nationals of or permanently resident in the receiving State shall enjoy privileges and immunities only to the extent admitted by the receiving State. However, the receiving State shall exercise its jurisdiction over those persons in such a manner as not to interfere unduly with the performance of the functions of the mission.

ARTICLE 39

1. Every person entitled to privileges and immunities shall enjoy them from the moment he or she enters the territory of the receiving State on proceeding to take up his or her post or, if already in its territory, from the moment when his/her appointment is notified to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation or such other ministry as may be agreed.

2. When the functions of a person enjoying privileges and immunities have come to an end, such privileges and immunities shall normally cease at the moment when he or she leaves the country, or on expiry of a reasonable period in which to do so, but shall subsist until that time, even in case of armed conflict. However, with respect to acts performed by such a person in the exercise of his other functions as a member of the mission, immunity shall continue to subsist.

3. In case of the death of a member of the mission, the members of his or her family shall continue to enjoy the privileges and immunities

to which they are entitled until the expiry of a reasonable period in which to leave the country.

4. In the event of the death of a member of the mission not being a national of or permanently resident in the receiving State or a member of his or her family forming part of his other household, the receiving State shall permit the withdrawal of the movable property of the deceased, with the exception of any property acquired in the country the export of which was prohibited at the time of his or her death. Estate, succession and inheritance duties shall not be levied on movable property the presence of which in the receiving State was due solely to the presence there of the deceased as a member of the mission or as a member of the family of a member of the mission.

955

ARTICLE 40

1. If a diplomatic agent passes through or is in the territory of a third State, which has granted him or her a passport visa if such visa was necessary, while proceeding to take up or to return to his or her post, or when returning to his or her own country, the third State shall accord him other inviolability and such other immunities as may be required to ensure his or her transit or return. The same shall apply in the case of any members of his or her family enjoying privileges or immunities who are accompanying the diplomatic agent or travelling separately to join him/her to or to return to their country.

2. In circumstances similar to those specified in paragraph 1 of this Article, third States shall not hinder the passage of members of the administrative and technical or service staff of a mission, and of members of their families, through their territories.

3. Third States shall accord to official correspondence and other official communications in transit, including messages in code or cipher, the same freedom and protection as is accorded by the receiving State. They shall accord to diplomatic couriers, who have been granted a passport visa if such visa was necessary and diplomatic bags in transit the same inviolability and protection as the receiving State is bound to accord.

4. The obligations of third States under paragraph 1, 2 and 3 of this Article shall also apply to the persons mentioned respectively in those paragraphs, and to official communications and diplomatic bags, whose presence in the territory of the third State is due to Service majeure