



Note No A086/20

Protocol Directorate of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office presents its compliments to all diplomatic missions and international organisations and, with reference to the Directorate's Note Verbale A083/20 of 18 March, has the honour to provide an update on the service provided by Diplomatic Missions and International Organisations Unit (DMIOU) during the Coronavirus pandemic.

Following the Prime Minister's announcement of increased restrictive measures on 23 March, all members of DMIOU staff are now working from home for the foreseeable future. Furthermore, the Home Office has advised the Directorate of the temporary closure of the unit which processes Diplomatic Exempt Vignettes. We are therefore unable to process applications for new or extended Diplomatic Exempt Vignettes until further notice. Diplomatic missions and international organisations should note that any passports which have been submitted to the Directorate and which have not yet been returned will be stored securely until such time as we are able to resume a standard service. The Directorate also wishes to advise diplomatic missions and international organisations that, for the same reasons, it is not possible to produce identity cards. Requests for new and extended vignettes and applications for identity cards will, of course, be processed as soon as possible once the restrictive measures have eased and staff, both in London and Croydon, are able to return to their offices.

In the intervening period, the Directorate would be pleased to provide letters verifying the status of any individuals who need to travel or who wish to obtain and carry with them confirmation of their circumstances in lieu of an expired vignette or identity card. Requests for such letters should be emailed to the Directorate via the relevant DMIOU Team mailbox.

The Directorate is compiling guidance in response to frequently asked questions which will be published shortly on the Directorate's website (<https://protocol.fco.gov.uk/>, password: Diplomatic2012). In the meantime, information about the UK Government's response to the Coronavirus pandemic is available at <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

The Directorate is grateful for the patience and understanding of diplomatic missions and international organisations at this unprecedented and challenging time.

Protocol Directorate of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office avails itself of this opportunity to renew to all diplomatic missions and international organisations the assurances of its highest consideration.

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