



Moraima Mercade-Meijaard
Aviation Protocol Officer

Protocol & International Affairs Division
Miami-Dade Aviation Department (MDAD)

Country Profile: The Republic of Ghana, West Africa



Head of State: President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo

Capital: Accra

Population: 34 million (2023 est.)

Independence Day/National Holiday: March 6, 1957

Currency: Ghanaian Cedi - Exchange Rate: \$1 = 12.34 GHS

Ghana, a relatively small country in West Africa with lush forests and miles of sandy beaches along its coastline, is the Black Star of Africa and the gateway to West Africa. It was the first country south of the Sahara to obtain independence from Great Britain in 1957, led by its charismatic Pan-African leader, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah. Ghana continues to be a shining star of Africa, with multi-party democracy as the pillar of its dynamic system of government.

In the 15th Century, European contact brought the Portuguese, English, Dutch, and Danes into direct contact and trade. The commodity trade was followed by the trade in enslaved persons and resulted in the construction of slave forts, castles, and dungeons along Ghana's coastline. The largest of these structures are still in existence and were collectively designated UNESCO World Heritage sites in 1979.

After independence in 1957, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah embarked on an accelerated educational program and an industrialization policy that resulted in the construction of the Akosombo dam, the development of various industries such as textile, leather works, aluminum works, glassware, an atomic energy project at Kwabenya, vehicle-assembly plants among several others. In 1966, the Convention People's Party of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah was overthrown in a military coup d'état, a phenomenon that became part of Ghana's political landscape in the 1970s and 1980s. From 1992, Ghana turned on a path of multi-party democracy.

Ghana has a wide range of minerals, including gold, diamonds, manganese, and bauxite which are exploited for the international market. Ghana first discovered oil offshore between Salt Pond and Cape Coast in 1970 and, in 1980, natural gas offshore to the south and west of Cape Three Points, the southernmost tip of the nation. More lucrative oil reserves (petroleum) were discovered off the coast near the border of Côte d'Ivoire.

Did you know?

United States Vice President Kamala Harris is visiting Ghana from March 26 - 29, 2023, and thereafter to Tanzania and Zambia.

The Gold Coast

Prior to independence on March 6, 1957, Ghana was called the Gold Coast. The earliest Europeans to set foot on the land were the Portuguese in the 15th century (1471). On their arrival, they found so much gold between the rivers Ankobra and the Volta that they named the area "da Mina", meaning "The Mine."

The Okomfo Anokye Sword is one of the wonders of the world! The sword was stuck in the ground in Kumasi, Ghana, in the 17th century by the famous Asante priest Okomfour Anokye and it is still firmly stuck in the ground today. Anokye was the indigenous priest who provided spiritual imprimatur for the founding of the Asante nation in the seventeenth century to Asantehene Osei Tutu I. One fascinating story about the sword is that, since it was planted in about 1695, countless attempts have been made to remove it from the ground to no avail. In 1964, when Muhammad Ali visited Ghana, he tried to pull it out, but he couldn't.

The Fabulous Figurine Caskets in Ghana are unique and has elevated death into an art form. They build fantasy coffins – *okadi adekai* in local Ga dialect to represent the deceased's profession, vices, or dreams. You can choose to be buried in a coffin shaped like a hammer (for a carpenter), a fish or fishing boat (a fisherman), a cocoa pod (a farmer), a Mercedes Benz (for a businessperson), any vehicle (for a driver), or a tomato or cucumber (for a market woman). We express our appreciation to Edmund Abaka, Ph.D., president, United Ghanaian Association of South Florida (UGASF) for his contribution to this article.

We celebrate Women's History Month during the month of March. It started in 1911 as part of the International Women's Day, which showcased women's rights as well as universal female suffrage movement. With the feminist movement of the 60's, there was a call for recognition of discrimination of women in the workplace.

However, it wasn't until February 1980 that President Jimmy Carter issued a presidential proclamation, declaring the week of March 8, 1980, as National Women's History Week.

Today we celebrate the history, achievements, hard work, and equality of women in the United States. It has been a long road, that has constantly been tweaked, adjusted, and challenged but we must never forget the women who paved the way for today.

We are certain that you will enjoy this edition, compiled and published entirely by the female staff members of the Protocol & International Affairs Division. It includes Country Profile: The Republic of Ghana, Status of Women Report, Diplomatic & Consular Relations, St. Patrick's Day, and we salute the nations celebrating their Independence and/or National Day in March!

As always, please be safe!

Inside this Edition

Country Profile: The Republic of Ghana	1
Diplomatic & Consular Relations	2
Women's History Month	3
Status of Women Report	4
Briefs & Notes	7
Independence & National Days	8

DIPLOMATIC & CONSULAR RELATIONS

Meet the New Consul General of the Consulate General of the Dominican Republic in Miami, Florida



Mrs. Geanilda Vasquez is the newly appointed Consul General of the Consulate General of Dominican Republic in Miami, Florida. She is a dynamic and multifaceted senior member of the government of the Dominican Republic. She is a lawyer, notary, business advisor, businesswoman, politician, and a person who has a true passion for people. With a versatile, tenacious and hard-working personality, her discipline and focus have led her to the top of her field in the judicial, insurance, finance, energy and agricultural sectors. Throughout her professional trajectory she has made the most of her opportunities, garnering over four decades of continuous success.

As one of the founding members of the Modern Revolutionary Party (PRM) of the Dominican Republic, she served as the party's first President of Functions and in 2014, she launched her candidacy for the Presidency of the Dominican Republic, becoming the first woman to assume such a position for the PRM, further positioning herself as one of the party's most important and charismatic leaders.

As the new Consul General of the Dominican Republic in the city of Miami, a nomination which serves as her first international assignment, Mrs. Vasquez hopes to bring all her collective experience in both the private and public sectors to further improve the lives of all Dominicans in South Florida and continue to strengthen ties with fellow diplomats and business partners for the progressive betterment of the Dominican Republic.

Meet the New Deputy Consul General/ Consul of the Consulate General of Jamaica, Miami, Florida



Mrs. Marva E. Campbell assumed duties at the Consulate-General of Jamaica as Deputy Consul General/Consul on October 10, 2022, following her reassignment from the Jamaican High Commission, Abuja, Nigeria, where she served as Counsellor/ Consul for 4 years.

In 2002, Mrs. Campbell first entered the Foreign Service, and received her first diplomatic assignment during the period 2007 to 2012, where she served as Attaché/Vice Consul/Office Manager at the Jamaican Embassy in Mexico City.

In 2014, Mrs. Campbell was awarded a scholarship from the Embassy of Spain/INDRA Systems to pursue her studies at the Escuela Diplomatic (Diplomatic School) in Madrid, Spain. There she completed her master's in diplomacy & International Relations. In 2012, she completed her bachelor's in business administration at the Endicott College in Mexico City, and a bachelor's degree in marketing in 2009, at the University College of the Caribbean.

Prior to entering the service, Mrs. Campbell worked at the Jamaica Tourist Board in Jamaica for six (6) years. Mrs. Campbell enjoys traveling, hiking, volunteering and importantly, spending quality time with family and good friends.

She is married to Damian, and together they have one child.

STATUS OF WOMEN REPORT

Miami-Dade County Status of Women 2022 Report
 Source: [Office of the Commission Auditor - Commission for Women](#)



2022 MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

Population Characteristics

This is the fifth annual report on the status of women in Miami-Dade County across four different socioeconomic topics.

Total Population: **2,662,777 Residents**

Population by Gender: **49% Men** **51% Women**

Population of One Race and Ethnicity:

68.7% Hispanic or Latino
14.8% Black or African American
13.4% White alone (not Hispanic)

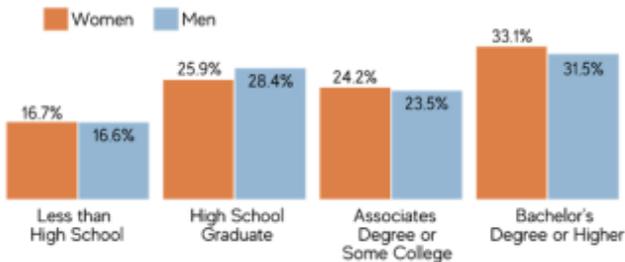
Households:

17.6% of all households were women-led with no spouse present.
29.3% of women-led households have children.
55.6% of women-led households rented in 2021.

Median Income:

\$35,538 Women-led Households (no spouse) with Children
\$49,508 Men-led Households (no spouse) with Children
\$87,183 Married Couples with Children

Education



Wage Gap by Educational Attainment:

Even though more women have obtained higher degrees, they are consistently paid less than their male counterparts. The earnings gap for those with bachelor's degrees was 18% with women making \$43,813 and 26.8% for graduate degrees with women making \$60,533.

Less than High School **25.6%**
 High School Graduate **26.5%**
 Associates Degree or Some College **21.6%**
 Bachelor's Degree **18%**
 Graduate or Professional Degree **26.8%**

Economic Opportunity

Median Earnings and Wage Gap:



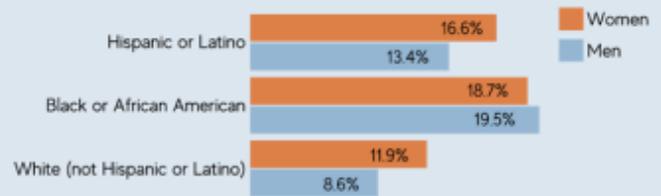
A 13% Wage Gap

Economic Opportunity Improvements:

The wage gap decreased by a 6 percentage points since 2019.
 The poverty rate decreased from 15.6% in 2019 to 14.9% in 2021.

Women in Poverty:

53.3% of the population living in poverty was women, or 217,341 residents. The graph shows the poverty rates by race, ethnicity, and gender.



34,073 Women-led Households (no spouse) live in poverty, which was **45.4% of all households in poverty.**
6,550 Men-led Households (no spouse) live in poverty, which was **8.7% of all households in poverty.**

Labor Force Participation (Ages 20-64):

Miami-Dade County had an overall **78.7%** labor force participation rate.

Women account for **46.9%** of the labor force.

The labor force decreased by **39,095** people since 2019.

More women (**28,129** women) than men (**10,966** men) left the labor force.



STATUS OF WOMEN REPORT, CONTD.

Miami-Dade County Status of Women 2022 Report, Contd.

Source: [Office of the Commission Auditor - Commission for Women](#)

STATUS OF WOMEN REPORT

Industries and Occupations

Highest Proportion of Women:

Healthcare Support Occupations

83.3% Women's Participation

12.1% Wage Gap

Educational Services, and Health Care and Social Assistance

70.1% Women's Participation

12.1% Wage Gap

Highest Wage Gap:

Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations

67.5% Women's Participation

33.4% Wage Gap

Retail Trade Industry

44.8% Women's Participation

28.7% Wage Gap

Other industries were estimated to have significantly higher wage gaps, but these estimates have high error margins due to the low women's participation rate.

Miami-Dade County Equity:

Even though women were 47 percent of the overall labor force, they only comprised 39.7 percent of all county employees.

Pay Gap for Full-time Employee

The pay gap for full-time county employees has minimally decreased from 16.6% in 2019 to 15.6% in 2021.

Women's Median Pay as a Portion of Men's



County Advisory Board Representation:

In 2021, 41.3% of board members were women, compared to 39.5% in 2022.



Change in Contracts:



58.6% increase in contracts for businesses
28.5% increase in contracts for women-owned businesses



The proportion of prime contracts to women decreased from **17.2%** in 2019 to **13.9%** in 2021.

Change in Contract Value:



The overall value of contracts increased by **15%** between 2020 and 2019.

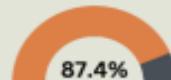


However, the contract value to women-owned firms decreased by **8.4%**.

Sources for County Data:
MDC Human Resources Department
Internal Services Department
Clerk of the Board

Health

Health Insurance Coverage:



87.4% of women are covered by health insurance, a 2 percent point increase since 2019.



84.6% of men are covered by health insurance, a 2.7 percent point increase since 2019.

Median Earnings and Wage Gap:

11.4%
of the population of women have a disability



\$22,608
Median earnings for women with a disability.

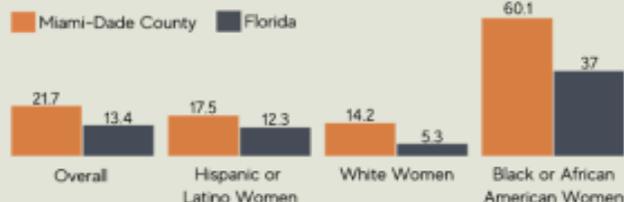
10.8%
of the population of men have a disability



\$31,589
Median Earnings for men with a disability.

Maternal Mortality Rates:

The graph shows the 2020 maternal mortality rate per 100,000 live births.



Maternal Status:

Of the 27,096 women who gave birth in 2021, 12,523 were unmarried women.



Safety

Crime Comparison 2021-2022:

Aggravated stalking reports decreased by **75.9%**

Rape cases increased by **10.6%**

Aggravated assault cases increased by **35.1%**

Forcible sex offense increased by **10.3%**

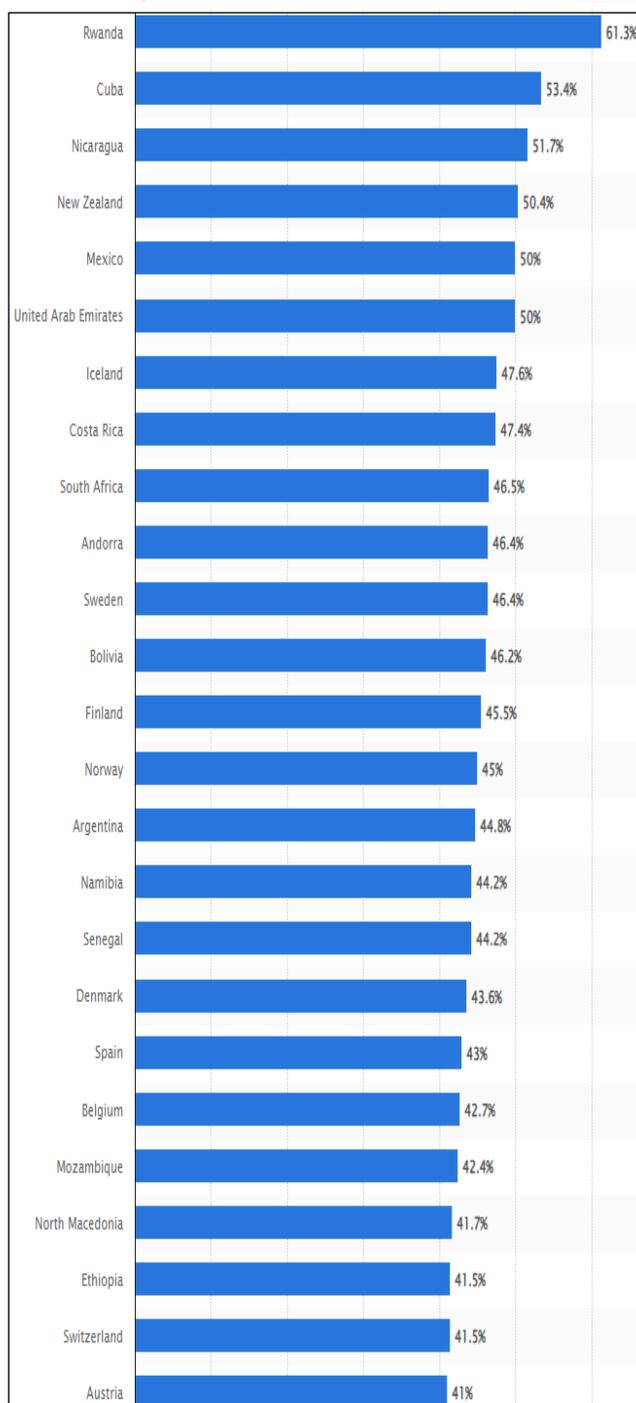
According to the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, domestic violence cases in MDC **declined** by 7.9% since 2019, with 267.2 cases per 100,000 reported in 2020.

Sources: Census Bureau ACS 1-Year Estimates
Florida Health Charts
Florida Department of Law Enforcement
Miami-Dade Police Department

FIU
FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY
Jorge M. Pérez Metropolitan Center
Steven J. Green School of International & Public Affairs

STATUS OF WOMEN REPORT, CONTD.

Graph: Share of women in selected national parliaments (lower or single house) as of December 2022 - Source: [Statista](#)



Women's Leadership and Political Participation

According to the [United Nations Women's Report](#), [women's equal participation and leadership in political and public life](#) are essential to achieving the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) by 2030. However, data show that women are underrepresented at all levels of decision-making worldwide and that achieving gender parity in political life is far off. Below some of the report's findings about the global status of women:

Women in executive government positions

- * As of January 1, 2023, there are 31 countries where 34 women serve as Heads of State and/or Government. At the current rate, gender equality in the highest positions of power will not be reached for another 130 years.
- * Just 17 countries have a woman Head of State, and 19 countries have a woman Head of Government
- * First-time compiled data by UN Women show that women represent 22.8 percent of Cabinet members heading Ministries, leading a policy area as of 1 January 2023. There are only 13 countries in which women hold 50 percent or more of the positions of Cabinet Ministers leading policy areas.
- * The five most held portfolios by women Cabinet Ministers are Women and gender equality, followed by Family and children affairs, social inclusion and development, social protection and social security, and Indigenous and minority affairs.

Women in national parliaments

- * Only 26.5 per cent of parliamentarians in single or lower houses are women, up from 11 per cent in 1995.
- * Only six countries have 50 per cent or more women in parliament in single or lower houses: Rwanda (61 per cent), Cuba (53 per cent), Nicaragua (52 per cent), Mexico (50 per cent), New Zealand (50 per cent), and the United Arab Emirates (50 per cent).
- * A further 23 countries have reached or surpassed 40 per cent, including 13 countries in Europe, six in Africa, three in Latin America and the Caribbean, and one in Asia.
- * Globally, there are 22 States in which women account for less than 10 per cent of parliamentarians in single or lower houses, including one lower chamber with no women at all.
- * At the current rate of progress, gender parity in national legislative bodies will not be achieved before 2063.
- * Women hold 36 per cent of parliamentary seats in Latin America and the Caribbean and make up 32 per cent of parliamentarians in Europe and Northern America. In Sub-Saharan Africa, there are 26 per cent of women legislators followed by Eastern and South-Eastern Asia with 22 per cent, Oceania with 20 per cent, Central and Southern Asia with 19 per cent and Northern Africa and Western Asia with 18 per cent of women Members of Parliament.

Women in local government

- * Data from 136 countries shows that women constitute nearly 3 million (34 per cent) of elected members in local deliberative bodies. Only two countries have reached 50 per cent, and an additional 20 countries have more than 40 per cent women in local government.
- * Regional variations are also noted for women's representation in local deliberative bodies, as of January 2022: Central and Southern Asia, 41 per cent; Europe and Northern America, 36 per cent; Oceania, 32 per cent; Eastern and South-Eastern Asia, 28 per cent; Latin America and the Caribbean, 25 per cent; Sub-Saharan Africa, 25 per cent; Western Asia and Northern Africa, 18 per cent.

[Click here to view](#) the "Women in politics: 2023" map, created by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and UN Women. The map presents new data for women in executive positions and national parliaments as of January 1, 2023. The data shows that women are underrepresented at all levels of decision-making worldwide and that achieving gender parity in political life is far off.

BRIEFS & NOTES

Saint Patrick's Day in Ireland and the United States (And the Origins of Corned Beef)



L-R: U. Desmond Alufohai, Minister Hildegard Naughton, Chief Whip of the Irish Government, and Ms. Sarah Kavanagh, Consul General of the Irish Consulate in Miami, Florida - At the St. Patrick's Day Reception hosted by the Irish Consulate General at the Biltmore Hotel, Coral Gables, Florida on Sunday, March 12, 2023.

[The Feast of Saint Patrick](#), popularly known as Saint Patrick's Day, is a cultural and religious celebration held on March 17th. It has become, de facto, Ireland's national day but its origins lie in the Christian faith - it was made an official Christian feast day in the early 17th century, observed by the Catholic Church, the Anglican Communion, the Eastern Orthodox Church, and the Lutheran Church. Traditionally the day was celebrated with social gatherings and the lifting of any Lenten restrictions for the day. The wearing of green clothing or accessories is a centuries custom, and legend has it that Saint Patrick used the shamrock to explain the Holy Trinity of three entities in one God. It was a day of friends, family, and benediction – but because of the one day lifting of Lenten restrictions it was also a time to have a drink and feast.

But how did this feast day become what we know it as today? The answer lies in America. In 1845, the great majority of the population of colonized Ireland lived in poverty and subsisted on tiny holdings on which they grew potatoes to feed their families. In the 1840s a severe outbreak of potato blight eradicated this vital food source. A famine known as [“An Gorta Mór”](#) (“The Great Hunger” resulted in the deaths of an estimated one (1) million people while an estimated further 2 million immigrated. Many of those immigrants would look west across the Atlantic, towards the United States of America.

[The large wave of Irish immigrants](#) precipitated by The Famine were not welcomed with open arms in America – poor and starving, many of them did not speak much English, they spoke only Irish. “No Irish need apply” was a commonly sign in the windows of shops in New York and Boston. As a result, Irish immigrants had to take jobs nobody else wanted, dangerous and backbreaking work digging canals, building roads, bridges and skyscrapers. Many entered public service including the police and fire fighters. To this day police and fire departments across the USA, and especially in New York, Boston, and Chicago, are heavily influenced by Irish traditions such as bagpipe bands. The Irish was also highly political due to the nature of the struggle for independence from Great Britain – and Irish people have played an outsized role in the politics of the United States, for example 23 out of 46 U.S. Presidents have Irish ancestry.

In the early days, Irish immigrants also had to live in the poorer areas of cities, which were predominantly Jewish. The Jewish community and Irish community had much in common, both had to leave their homelands because of oppression, famine, or conflict, and both faced discrimination. [It was in the kosher markets that Irish immigrants were exposed to corned beef.](#) For most people in colonial Ireland, beef was not a staple. Cows were very expensive and used for dairy and to pull plows. Beef was only eaten when cows were too old to produce, and even then, only by wealthy people. Common people consumed pork and lamb. Of course, you will not find pork in a kosher market. You will find corned beef. The Irish found this to be close enough to Irish Bacon that it became popular. It was inexpensive, plentiful, and tasty and it is now closely associated with Irish-America.

On the Feast of Saint Patrick, nostalgia for the old home would kick in and a sense of pride in identity and heritage. Irish immigrants would gather in very large groups to feast and celebrate. The more years that passed, the bigger the celebrations became. As the Irish established themselves in higher positions and became wealthier, the celebrations only grew. Discrimination would come to an end – though some of the old tropes persist - as the Irish community became large enough to drive economies of cities and wield significant political influence. Saint Patrick's Day in the United States became a bigger deal than it was in Ireland. And eventually the Irish American scale celebrations would return home, turning March 17th into what we know today. Today, members of the Irish Government fan out across the world to celebrate with the Irish Diaspora and friends of Ireland. The Irish Government's Chief Whip, Minister Hildegard Naughton, visited South Florida to celebrate with the new Irish Consulate in Miami, headed by Consul General Sarah Kavanagh, and the community.

His Excellency Leo Varadkar the Taoiseach (Prime Minister) of Ireland met with President Biden at the Oval Office of the White House on Friday, March 17, 2023, in Washington D.C. President Biden often make references to his Irish heritage and he is expected to visit Ireland soon to mark the 25th anniversary of the [Good Friday Agreement](#), which ended the Northern Ireland conflict. We extend our thanks and gratitude to Ms. Sarah Kavanagh, Consul General of the Irish Consulate in Miami for contributing to this article.

INDEPENDENCE AND NATIONAL DAY (MARCH)

March 1, 1992 - Bosnia and Herzegovina: On March 1, the referendum for independence was completed, and on March 3, Bosnia and Herzegovina declared independence from Yugoslavia.

March 2, 1956 – Morocco: After signing the French Moroccan Agreement on March 2, 1956, Morocco gained independence from France. The abolition of the Spanish protectorate, and recognition of Moroccan independence by Spain, were negotiated separately and made final in the Joint Declaration of April 1956.

March 3, 1878 – Bulgaria: On Liberation Day, March 3, 1878, Bulgaria became an autonomous principality within the Ottoman Empire and remained as such until it gained full independence in 1908.

March 6, 1957 - Ghana: Formed by the merger of the Gold Coast (British colony) and the Togoland trust territory, Ghana became the first Sub-Saharan country in colonial Africa to gain its independence on March 6, 1957.

March 11, 1990 – Lithuania: This day, known as Restoration of Independence Day, marks the day Lithuania declared independence from the Soviet Union in 1990.

March 12, 1968 - Mauritius: On March 12, 1968, Mauritius gained independence from the United Kingdom. Twenty-four years later, on March 12, 1992 it became a republic.

March 13, 2013 - Holy See (Vatican City): This day commemorates the election of Pope Francis in 2013.

March 15, 1848 – Hungary: On March 15, Revolution Day, Hungarians commemorate the Revolution and the War of Independence against the Austrian-Hapsburg rule in 1848 – 1849.

March 17, 1903 - Ireland: Saint Patrick's Day, marks the traditional death date of Saint Patrick, patron saint of Ireland. Although this day was celebrated as early as the ninth century, it did not become an official public holiday and Ireland's National Day until 1903. The Irish American Heritage Month is also celebrated in March to honor the many contributions Irish Americans have made to the United States.

March 17, 1861 - Italy: After the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies joined Piedmont-Sardinia, the new Kingdom of Italy was proclaimed on March 17, 1861.

March 20, 1956 – Tunisia: The country gained independence from France on March 20, 1956.

March 21, 1990 – Namibia: On this day, Namibia gained independence from the South African mandate.

March 25, 1821 - Greece: After being part of the Ottoman Empire since 1453, the War of Greek Independence began on March 25, 1821. Independence was achieved on February 3, 1830, but March 25 continues to be celebrated as Greek Independence Day. Greek American Heritage Month is also celebrated in March to honor the many contributions Greek Americans have made to the United States.

March 26, 1971 - Bangladesh: Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, leader of the Awami League and “Father of the Nation” declared an independent Bangladesh on March 26, 1971. The fight for independence lasted until December 16, 1971, when Pakistan was defeated, and the nation of Bangladesh was born.

Female Staff Members of the Protocol & International Affairs Division



Moraima Mercade Meijaard
Airport Protocol Officer



Vera Philoctete
Senior Administrative Officer



Cristine Keller
Airport Protocol Officer



Veronique Louis
Airport Protocol Officer



Hellen C. Thompson
Airport Administrative Secretary

ABOUT US

The core mission of MDAD's Protocol and International Affairs Division is -

To facilitate the movement of official guests, delegations, dignitaries and VIPs through MIA and support the airport's international programs and initiatives.

Contact:

Tel: + 1 (305) 876-7457

Email: Protocol@FlyMIA.com

URL: https://www.iFlyMIA.com/protocol_international_affairs.asp

For comments, suggestions, event announcements or to opt-out, please send us an email.

