

GLOBAL HORIZONS



A communications platform for MIA's Protocol and International Affairs Division

Country of the Month Profile



The Commonwealth of the Bahamas

Located just 50 miles south-east of Florida; The Bahamas consists of 700 islands, more than 2000 rocks and cays, covering over 100,000 square miles of ocean. The name Bahamas evolved from Columbus' description of the shallow sea, "baja mar," surrounding the islands.

The symbolism of the flag's colors and design: **Black**, indicates the strength of a united people; the **triangle** pointing to the body of the flag, shows the determination of the people to harness the resources created by the sun (**gold**) and sea (**aquamarine**). Some of the clearest water on the planet is found in the Bahamas, with visibility exceeding 200 feet in some areas.

The main islands of the Bahamas include:

New Providence: Home to Nassau, the Commonwealth's capital and largest city; almost 70% of the population (2000 Census) live on New Providence.

Andros: Largest of the islands and home to 10% of the population (2000 Census); the World's 3rd longest fringing barrier reef is found in the waters off Andros.

Great Ragged Island: Main island in the Jumento Cays; less than 100 people call this pristine island home.

Long Island: Dean's Blue Hole, the World's 2nd deepest blue hole with a depth of 202m/663ft is located close to Clarence Town.

Inagua: 80,000 flamingos and 140 species of birds create a colorful spectacle against the white sands, turquoise waters and blue sky.

San Salvador: The Old World met the New World when the Santa Maria anchored off San Salvador and Christopher Columbus came ashore on October 12, 1492.

Grand Bahama: Home of Freeport, is making steady progress and recovering from the effects of Hurricane Dorian. Many of the hotels and resorts on the island have re-opened, and the first official international flight since the storm landed at Grand Bahama International Airport on November 26, 2019.

Although we have all heard about the effects Hurricane Dorian had on Grand Bahama and the Abacos, most of the other islands were not affected. So, if you are dreaming of crystal-clear turquoise waters, white sands, blue skies, gentle breezes, vibrant culture, tasty cuisine and warm hospitality, now is the best time to visit the beautiful Islands of the Bahamas.

Consular Post in Miami, Florida: The Honorable Linda Mackey, Consul General, Consulate General of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas in Miami.

<https://www.bahamasconmiami.com/>

Sources: <https://www.bahamas.gov.bs/wps/portal/public> and <https://www.bahamas.com>

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Division Director's Message



U. Desmond Alufohai
Division Director
Protocol & Internal Affairs Division

We are pleased to offer **Global Horizons** as our platform to engage with the community. Every month we will feature a "country of interest," highlight issues on global affairs, inter-cultural etiquette, norms, culture, protocol, diplomacy and much more.

We invite readers to send us any feedback or ideas for future publications. Of course, if you have any personal experience to share involving culture, protocol or diplomacy or questions, please feel free to inquire from us.

We are certain that our readers will be pleased with the contents and short format. From all of us at MIA's Protocol and International Affairs Division, Happy Holidays and a prosperous New Year.

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BRIEFS & NOTES

Save-The-Dates

Feb. 2, 2020

Super Bowl LIV

Hard Rock Stadium, Miami Gardens, FL.

Feb. 3-7, 2020:

Export Sales Mission to Accra, Ghana.

Organized by EFI. Contact: Joseph Bell
jbelle@enterpriseoflora.com

Feb. 13-17, 2020

Miami International Boat Show

Miami Marine Stadium

Contact: 954-441-3220

Feb. 24-26, 2020:

Powering Africa Summit.

Organized by EnergyNet.

Contact: Natacha Girard

Natacha@EnergyNet.co.uk

MSABC Protocol Raffle

Thanks to the wonderful support we received, we were able to raise the sum of \$112 for **Making Strides Against Breast Cancer**. Ms. Ofelia Ferreiro, Aviation's VIP Coordinator, was the winner of this year's raffle.



L-R: U. Desmond, Ofelia and Cristine.

ABOUT US

The core mission of MIA'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.*

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Origins of MIA's Protocol & International Affairs Division

In 1972, Ms. Monique Denes, who had previously worked at the United Nations, started the International Gateway Receptionist Program at MIA. The program successfully projected a positive image of the community to both foreign and domestic travelers. Due to its success and worldwide recognition, the program received funding from the U.S. Department of Commerce - Travel and Tourism Administration. This allowed the agency to evolve and better address the needs of both the local and the burgeoning international diplomatic communities in Florida.

In 1988, the Office of Protocol and International Affairs was established, and Ms. Denes became the first Chief of Protocol and was joined by protocol officers Irving Fourcand and Valerie Mann Grosso. As the program developed, its mandate shifted from simply assisting international travelers through the federal inspection process to becoming MIA's primary liaison with foreign governments, international organizations and the Consular Corps of Miami.

By the time Ms. Denes retired in 1998, the Office of Protocol and International Affairs was offering a full array of services specifically tailored to the needs of traveling foreign diplomats, government officials, dignitaries, delegations, official guests and VIPs. In 2001, Irving Fourcand was named director of the Protocol and International Affairs Division; a post he held until his passing in July 2018.

Under Mr. Fourcand's tutelage, the Division continued to evolve, and one of his lasting innovations was the Consular Lounge, located on the 2nd level of Concourse F. Since the Lounge opened in December of 2011, it has provided visiting dignitaries with a peaceful oasis in which to relax and recharge between their flights, as well as providing a space for meetings, press conferences and special events.

In April 2019, U. Desmond Alufohai officially assumed the position of the Division Director. He quickly set a vision that will solidify MIA's pre-eminence in protocol for visiting dignitaries, while ensuring continued close cooperation with Miami's diplomatic community, as well as expanding the Division's strategic role in supporting the Airport's international programs and initiatives. The Protocol team is proud of this legacy and committed to continue developing the Division, under Mr. Alufohai's leadership.

The capital improvement program (CIP) adopted on June 4, 2019 provides the funds needed to modernize the airport and it will provide our guests and partners with improved facilities and services, thereby allowing us to meet the present and future needs of South Florida's diplomatic community.

Intercultural Etiquette, Norms, Traditions & Protocol

Handshaking styles around the world varies. Shake hands with the oldest person or the one of senior rank and on down the line. The ranking person extends his/her hand first. In the Middle East, a handshake is rather limp and lingering. Do not pull your hand away quickly. In Eastern Asia, you will encounter variations in handshakes from country to country. Some countries incorporate bows, others shake both hands at once, others have a longer pumping style.

Milestones

Finland: Dec. 6, 1917; Gained independence from Russia on Dec. 4, '17.
Romania: Dec. 1, 1918: Great Union Day, marks the unification of Transylvania, Bessarabia and Bukovina with the Romanian Kingdom.
St. Lucia: Dec 13: Feast Day of St. Lucy, patron saint of St. Lucia is celebrated as the National Day.
Thailand: Dec. 5: The birthdate of late King Bhumibol Adulyadej is celebrated as the National Day.
United Arab Emirates: Dec. 12, 1971: Union Day: On this day, six of the seven emirates formed a federation, founding the UAE. The 7th joined on Dec. 10, '72.