

[REPUBLIC ACT NO. 708, June 05, 1952]

AN ACT TO REORGANIZE AND STRENGTHEN THE FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE PHILIPPINES.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

TITLE 1.—General Provisions

SECTION 1. *Title of Act.*—This Act shall be known as the "Foreign Service Act of the Philippines."

SEC. 2. *Objectives.*—The Congress hereby declares that the objectives of this Act are to reorganize and strengthen the Foreign Service of the Philippines so as:

- a. To enable the Foreign Service effectively to serve abroad the interests of the Republic of the Philippines;
- b. To insure that the officers and employees of the Foreign Service are broadly representative of the Filipino people and are aware of and fully informed in respect of current trends in Philippine life;
- c. To provide improvements in the selection and training of personnel to insure that only competent persons of good moral character are recruited into the service;
- d. To provide that promotions in the service shall be on the basis of merit;
- e. To provide guarantees that career personnel of the service shall be permanent and secure in their positions during good behavior and satisfactory performance of duty;
- f. To provide salaries, allowances, and benefits that will permit the service to draw its personnel from all walks of Philippine life and to appoint persons to the highest positions in the service solely on the basis of their demonstrated ability;
- g. To provide a flexible and comprehensive framework for the direction of the Foreign Service in accordance with modern practices in public administration; and
- h. To codify into one Act all provisions of law relating to the administration of the Foreign Service.

SEC. 3. *Definitions.*—When used in this Act, the term—

- a. "Government" means the Government of the Philippines.
- b. "President" means the President of the Philippines.
- c. "Department" means the Department of Foreign Affairs of the Philippines.

- d. "Secretary" means the Secretary of Foreign Affairs of the Philippines.
- e. "Service" means the Foreign Service of the Philippines.
- f. "Government agency" means any executive department, bureau, board, commission, or other agency in the executive branch of the Philippine Government, or any corporation owned or controlled by the Government of the Philippines.
- g. "Abroad" means all areas outside the territory of the Philippines.
- h. "Principal officer" means the officer in charge of an embassy, legation, or other diplomatic mission, or of a consulate general, consulate, or vice consulate of the Philippines.
- i. "Chief of mission" means a principal officer appointed by the President of the Philippines, with the consent of the Commission on Appointments, to be in charge of an embassy or legation or other diplomatic mission of the Philippines, or any other person assigned under the terms of this Act to be minister resident, charge d' affaires, commissioner, or diplomatic agent.

TITLE II.—*The Foreign Service*

PART A.—FUNCTIONS AND DUTIES

SECTION 1. *Duties.*—Officers and employees of the Foreign Service shall, under the direction of the Secretary, represent abroad the interests of the Philippines and shall perform the duties and comply with the obligations resulting from the nature of their appointments or assignments or those imposed on them by law or by any order or regulation issued pursuant to law or by any international agreement to which the Republic of the Philippines is a party.

SEC. 2. *Services for Government agencies.*—The officers and employees of the Foreign Service shall, under such regulations as the President may prescribe, perform duties and functions in behalf of any Government agency or any other establishment of the Government requiring their services, including those in the legislative and judicial branches, but the absence of such regulations shall not preclude officers and employees of the service from acting for and on behalf of any such Government agency or establishment whenever it shall, through the Department, request their services.

PART B.—CATEGORIES OF PERSONNEL

SECTION 1. *Classification.*—The personnel of the service shall consist of the following categories of officers and employees:

- a. Chiefs of mission who shall be appointed or assigned in accordance with the provisions of this Act;
- b. Foreign Affairs Officers who shall be appointed in accordance with the provisions of this Act;
- c. Foreign Service staff officers and employees who shall include all personnel who are citizens of the Philippines, not comprehended under paragraphs (a),

- (b) and (e) of this section, and who shall occupy positions with technical, administrative, fiscal, clerical, or custodial responsibilities ;
- d. Alien clerks and employees who shall be appointed in accordance with the provisions of this Act and the regulations that may be issued thereunder; and
- e. Consular agents and honorary consuls.

PART C.—SALARIES

SECTION 1. *Chiefs of Mission.*—The President shall, for salary purposes, classify into three classes the positions which are to be occupied by chiefs of mission. The basic salaries of chiefs of mission *per annum* shall be as follows:

Class I	P12,000.00
Class II	11,000.00
Class III	10,000.00

SEC. 2. *Foreign Affairs Officers.*—There shall be four classes of Foreign Affairs Officers, excluding the class of career minister. The basic salary of a career minister per annum shall be eight thousand four hundred pesos. The basic salaries of Foreign Affairs Officers *per annum* within each of the other classes shall be as follows:

Class I	P7,500.00
Class II	6,600.00 P6,900.00 P7,200.00
Class III	5,400.00 5,700.00 6,000.00
Class IV	4,500.00 4,800.00 5,100.00

SEC. 3. *Salaries at which Foreign Affairs Officers may be appointed.*—

- a. A person appointed as a Foreign Affairs Officer of Class IV shall receive a salary at that one of the rates provided for that class by the preceding section which the Secretary shall, taking into consideration his age, qualifications, and experience, determine to be appropriate.
- b. A person appointed as a Foreign Affairs Officer of Class II and III, inclusive, shall receive salary at the minimum rate provided for the class to which he has been appointed.

SEC. 4. *Staff officers and employees.*—There shall be six classes of Foreign Service staff officers and employees, referred to hereafter as staff officers and employees. The basic salaries of staff officers and employees *per annum* shall be as follows:

Class I	P4,500.00 P4,800.00 P5,100.00
Class II	3,720.00 3,960.00 4,200.00
Class III	3,120.00 3,300.00 3,480.00
Class IV	2,580.00 2,760.00 2,940.00
Class V	1,800.00 1,920.00 2,040.00
Class VI	1,440.00 1,560.00 1,680.00

SEC. 5. *Salaries at which Foreign Service staff officers and employees may be appointed.*—A person appointed as a staff officer or employee in Classes I through V, inclusive, shall receive salary at the minimum rate provided for the class to which he is appointed, except as otherwise provided in this Act.

SEC. 6. *Salaries of alien clerks and employees.*—The salary or compensation of an alien clerk or employee shall be fixed by the Secretary in accordance with such regulations as he shall prescribe pursuant to the provisions of this Act, within the limits of the appropriation act, giving due weight to the rank and duties of the clerk or employee and the prevailing rates of salary at the post.

SEC. 7. *Administrative establishment of salary differentials.*—Whenever the Secretary shall find and declare that the rates of salary provided for Foreign Service staff officers and employees in this Act are inadequate for any positions allocated to any particular class, he may, under such regulations as he may prescribe with the approval of the President, establish necessary schedules of differentials in the rates of salary prescribed for such class, but the differential in salary of a person holding any such position shall not exceed twenty-five *per centum* of the salary he would otherwise receive. Such differentials shall be granted only with respect to positions at posts at which extraordinarily difficult living conditions or excessive physical hardship prevail or at which notably unhealthful conditions exist. The Secretary shall prepare and maintain a list of such posts.

PART D.—COMPENSATION OF OFFICERS TEMPORARY IN CHARGE

SECTION 1. *As Charge d' Affaires ad interim.*—During the period that any Foreign Affairs Officer acts as charge d' affaires *ad interim* at the post to which he is assigned, he shall receive, subject to such rules and regulations as the Secretary may prescribe, the equivalent of the representation and other allowances of the chief of mission but need not be given any increase in basic salary.

SEC. 2. *As Officer in charge of consulate general or consulate.*—During the time that any Foreign Affairs Officer is temporarily in charge of a consulate general or consulate because of the absence or incapacity of the principal officer, he shall receive, subject to such rules and regulations as the Secretary may prescribe, the equivalent of the representation and other allowances to which the principal officer would be entitled were he at his post.

PART E.—CLASSIFICATION

SECTION 1. *Classification of positions in the Foreign Service.*—Under such regulations as he may prescribe, the Secretary shall classify all positions in the service, including those positions at foreign posts which may be held by career ministers, and shall allocate all positions occupied or to be occupied by staff officers and employees to classes and grades established by this Act, and by alien employees to such classes and grades as may be established by regulation:

Provided, That in case the present incumbent receives a salary more than the amount fixed in this Act, there shall be no diminution in the compensation of such incumbent by providing excess of salary for him while he remains in the same position.

TITLE III.—*Appointments and Assignments.*

PART A.—PRINCIPAL DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATIVES

SECTION 1. *Appointments.*—

- a. The President shall, with the consent of the Commission on Appointments, appoint ambassadors, other public ministers, and consuls.
- b. The President may, in his discretion, assign any Foreign Affairs Officer to serve as minister resident, charge d' affaires, commissioner, or diplomatic agent for such period as the public interest may require.

SEC. 2. *List of Foreign Affairs Officers qualified to be career minister or chief of mission to be furnished to the President.*—

- a. The Secretary shall, on the basis of recommendations made by the Board of the Foreign Service, from time to time furnish the President with the names of Foreign Affairs Officers qualified for appointment to the class of career minister, together with pertinent information about such officers, but no person shall be appointed to the class of career minister who has not been appointed to serve as a chief of mission or assigned to serve in a position which, in the opinion of the Secretary, is of comparable importance.
- b. The Secretary shall also, on the basis of recommendations made by the Board of the Foreign Service, from time to time furnish the President with the names of Foreign Affairs Officers qualified for appointment or assignment as chief of mission, together with pertinent information about such officers, in order to assist the President in selecting qualified candidates for appointment or assignment in such capacity.

SEC. 3. *Officer does not lose career status.*—Notwithstanding the provisions of the foregoing section, any Foreign Affairs Officer appointed to the position of career Minister or chief of mission shall not lose his career status and may not be separated from the service except under and for any of the causes provided in this Act.

PART B.—FOREIGN AFFAIRES OFFICERS

SECTION 1. *Career Service Corps.*—