



The Hague, 5 June 2013.

HOL-CAG-102

Dear readers,

The Netherlands may be considered to have been the first globalized state in the world. This early openness came in the wake of its great commercial and maritime achievements and its well established tradition of welcome and fair treatment of political and religious exiles. Today The Netherlands is still one of the great commercial powers and is still a society generally open to the world. It contributes substantially to the international organizations, including the United Nations, and still dedicates important sums to development aid.

Dealing with these issues would normally be considered a full time job for any diplomat. But they constitute only part of the tasks involved in serving in The Hague. The other dimension, of great interest to any diplomat, is the fact that the Netherlands, basically The Hague, houses more than 130 international organizations, including one of the principal organs of the United Nations, the International Court of Justice. The international community involved in these activities is substantial. It employs nearly 20,000 persons.

Why does this relatively small city house so many important institutions?

Looking back on the diplomatic history of the Netherlands we encounter a most significant world event that took place in The Hague between 18 May and 29 July 1899. The First Hague Peace Conference was convened by Tsar Nicholas II of Russia and the venue he selected was that of the land of Queen Wilhelmina, Grand Daughter of Queen Ana Paulowna.

This Conference was the first world conference in the sense of the world as understood at that time by the leading powers. In any case, it was not solely a meeting of European States like the Congress of Vienna in 1815 or that which adopted the First Geneva Convention in 1864. There were 27 States present in The Hague representing not only the major European powers but also the independent Asian states of China, Iran, Japan, Thailand and Turkey as well as two states from the New World the United States of America and the United States of Mexico.

The Conference not only ended with Declarations attempting to “humanize” war, but also with the establishment of mechanisms for the peaceful settlement of international disputes.

This unique experience of The Hague at the close of the 19th Century has evolved during the 20th Century and has made it what is today referred to as the International City of Peace and Justice.



The initiative of publishing this Diplomatic Magazine is well considered and will undoubtedly be received with enthusiasm by the large international community in The Hague. This community needs and deserves a medium of communication not only for its own internal uses but more importantly as a means of communication with the larger local community of which they form an occasionally not well understood part.

I wholeheartedly welcome Diplomatic Magazine and congratulate all those who have made it possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carlos Argüello Gómez', written in a cursive style.

Carlos Argüello Gómez

Ambassador of Nicaragua

Dean of the Diplomatic Corps in The Hague