**Outg. No. 54-00-12**

**Sofia, 25 April 2018**

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Bulgaria presents its compliments to the Diplomatic Missions, Consular Posts and Representations of International Organizations accredited to the Republic of Bulgaria and has the honour to provide the following information on the issuance of cards to the staff members of Missions, Posts and Representations and the members of their families:

As from 1 May 2018, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, State Protocol Directorate, will accept verbal notes/requests and application forms for the issuance of service staff cards with *a payment document* attached to certify the fee paid for the issuance of the card. The fee amounts to *BGN 40 (forty leva*) and it is payable to the following bank account:

*IBAN BG 71* BNBG 96613000146201, Bulgarian National Bank (BNB).

Beneficiary: Ministry of Interior.

The payment of the fee applies only to service staff cards. The arrangements remain unchanged for the other types of cards issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, i.e. diplomatic cards, consular cards and administrative and technical staff cards, for the issuance of which no fees are charged.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, State Protocol Directorate, avails itself of this opportunity to draw the attention of the honourable Missions, Posts and Representations to some other aspects related to the issuance of all types of cards which are mentioned above as follows:

- The verbal note with the request for the issuance of a card should specify explicitly *the details of the accreditation term (the commencement date and the final date of the appointment*) of the relevant member of the Mission, Post or Representation. *Cards will be issued with a validity term covering the accreditation term but not more than five (5) years.* Where no details are provided on the accreditation term, the documents submitted for the purpose of issuing a card will be referred back to remedy the omission.

**TO**

**THE DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS, CONSULAR POSTS AND REPRESENTATIONS OF POSTS AND REPRESENTATIONS**

**SOFIA**

- The note requesting the issuance of a card should further contain details of *the diplomatic rank*, if specified by the sending State, and the name of the position to which the staff member is appointed. The note should specify also the date of arrival/appointment, the end date of the appointment, the staff member replaced by the newly appointed member, except for the case of a new position, as well as the names and kinship of the accompanying family members.

The accompanying family members are issued cards of the same type which has been or will be issued to the member of the staff of the Mission, Post or Representation.

Cards are issued within 15 working days as from the date of receipt of the request. After the expiration of their validity term, cards are renewed by issuing new ones in accordance with the procedure described above. The note requesting the new card has to specify the term and grounds on which the re-issuance of the relevant type of card is requested.

Cards are to be returned upon the expiration of their validity term with a verbal note and a duly filled in card return form.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, State Protocol Directorate, would like to draw the attention of the honourable Missions, Posts and Representations to the need for cards to be returned to the Directorate prior to the final departure of the members of their staff and the members of their families. The State Protocol Directorate retains the right to refrain from issuing cards to newly arrived members of the staff of Diplomatic Missions, Consular Posts and Representations of International Organizations accredited to the Republic of Bulgaria and to members of their families in case of failure to have the cards of their predecessors duly returned prior to their final departure.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs kindly reminds that detailed information on these matters is set out in Circular Note No. 04-01-11 of 3 January 2017 which was sent to the honourable Missions, Posts and Representations and that such information is available in the Protocol Guide published in the Bulgarian and the English languages on the official website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, State Protocol Directorate, would kindly ask the honourable Diplomatic Missions to notify the Consular Posts of their countries in the Republic of Bulgaria of the contents of this Note.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Bulgaria avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Diplomatic Missions, Consular Posts and Representations of International Organizations accredited to the Republic of Bulgaria the assurances of its highest consideration.