

**10<sup>TH</sup> FICAC WORLD CONGRESS  
MONACO  
STATEMENT BY THE HON. ARNOLD FOOTE  
PRESIDENT OF FICAC**

- Your Serene Highness, Prince Albert II of Monaco
- Ministers and other officials of the Government of Monaco
- Your Excellencies, members of the Diplomatic Corps
- Directors and Members of the World Federation of Consuls
- President and members of the Association of Honorary Consuls of Monaco
- Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

We have the distinct honour of closing our first day's meeting of the 10th FICAC World Congress of Consuls 2012 in the illustrious presence of His Serene Highness, Prince Albert II of Monaco.

Your Serene Highness, on behalf of the World Federation of Consuls, I am privileged to welcome you to this the 10<sup>th</sup> FICAC World Congress, convened under your distinguished patronage. We are not only honoured, but also greatly encouraged by your demonstrated support of the aims and objectives of FICAC. We are deeply grateful for your gracious bestowal on each FICAC delegate the commemorative medal of the ascension to the Throne by Your Serene Highness. We thank you most sincerely for having endorsed the issue by the Office des Emissions de Timbre-Poste of the Principality of Monaco of the very impressive FICAC WCC 2012 Commemorative Stamp. Most of all, however, we deeply appreciate your presence with us and look forward to the statement which Your Serene Highness will address to this assembly.

Since our arrival in this beautiful seaside paradise, our experience has been nothing but positive. The warm hospitality and excellent arrangements for this conference are not surprising, since Monaco's reputation is well known. Yet, we do not underestimate the hard, effective work which our hosts, the Association of

Honorary Consuls of Monaco, have undertaken to secure the success of this conference. We commend the ACHM and thank its President, Monsieur Moustapha el-Solh, the Chairman of the Organizing Committee, Hon. Takis Touliatos, and members of the Committee for their excellent preparations. We salute their unquestionable commitment to FICAC and wish for the ACHM continuing success in pursuit of their objectives.

Your Serene Highness,  
Your Excellencies,  
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

At this Conference, we are also celebrating the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of FICAC, which from humble beginnings, is now represented in every continent. As our membership has increased, so has our awareness of the potential of FICAC to contribute to global peace and development. Our declared Mission which reflects the consensus derived from that awareness is “Collaboration for Economic and Social Prosperity”. We recognize that our membership is a network of highly experienced, well-connected individuals, whose determined focus, combined expertise and resources can be used to impact the world for good.

In that vein, this Conference considered current concerns and aspirations such as the ongoing financial and economic crisis, the environment and biodiversity and the conflicts which threaten international peace and stability. The brilliant presentations by our cadre of distinguished speakers, the intensity and quality of the ensuing debates and the knowledge shared in the process, have made this a memorable conference. What is evident is that we must harvest the synergies within this membership for greater collaboration on projects to advance development and increase trade between our countries of residence and the countries which we are privileged to represent.

Today, that collaboration is made easier by the information revolution. Today, that collaboration is essential in our global village where solutions must be jointly sought and agreed, if they are to be durable. Today, more than ever before, situations affecting the financial or political stability of states in one corner of the world, impact on the wellbeing and security of others geographically removed from the source of the problem or crisis. This is particularly so where interests of the superpower and major powers are involved. Cases in point are the global attention paid to the recent presidential elections in the USA and the financial challenges within Eurozone states.

The impact of externally generated problems is greater for small, vulnerable states with open economies. There is a well-known saying that when the USA sneezes, some of us in the Caribbean catch pneumonia and the economic woes suffered by several Caribbean states would appear to validate that. What is even more evident is the importance of diversifying financial and economic relations, building strategic partnerships across cultures and regions.

This is a position which we know that the Principality shares as evidenced by the recent statement of YSH that as a small territory Monaco acknowledged “the prominence of the need to maintain strong and long lasting relations with many other states”. One of the results of this policy is our Federation’s Partnership Agreement with the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation for cooperation in energy and the environment. The World Federation has welcomed this Agreement and is committed to the design and implementation of projects which will respond to real needs in developing countries. We also applaud the decision by Monaco to increase its development assistance to developing countries by 2015.

Your Serene Highness, I believe we shall come away from this the 10<sup>th</sup> FICAC World Congress with a clearer understanding of the need for increased collaboration at all levels, including within FICAC, in search for solutions to the

problems which bedevil the international community. Realistically, we accept that FICAC's impact will not be extensive, but know that we cannot afford the luxury of merely observing from the sidelines. Our collaborative action must be targeted and focused for maximum effect, contributing thus to the economic and social prosperity which we envision. I believe that the Board of Directors of FICAC and I dare say, all delegates to this Conference accept this challenge. I believe also that the creative energy fueled by this conference will launch us on the right course to achieve our objectives.

Thank you!