



# **GUIDELINES FOR STATE VISITS TO THE REPUBLIC OF SEYCHELLES**

*State Protocol  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Tourism  
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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Foreign Heads of State undertake a state visit to Seychelles following an official invitation from the President of the Republic Seychelles. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Tourism – Foreign Affairs Department (hereinafter referred to as MFAT), through State Protocol, is responsible for planning and coordinating such visits. Hospitality extended by the Government of Seychelles to the visiting official and delegation is for a maximum duration of three (3) days. Delegations are welcome to extend their stay, however the associated cost would be the responsibility of the visiting delegation.

## **2.0 PRE-TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS**

Prior to a state visit, there are important arrangements that need to be made to ensure that the visit is conducted smoothly and efficiently. In the preparatory stage, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or embassy of the state of the visiting official should provide the following information to MFAT promptly through a Note Verbale to [ps@mfa.gov.sc](mailto:ps@mfa.gov.sc) or through a Seychelles Diplomatic Mission of convenience.

### **2.1 Composition of the delegation**

The number, names and designations of the official delegates, immediate entourage, security personnel, media personnel (if any), and any others should be made known. This should be accompanied by the Curriculum Vitae and most recent official photo of senior officials in the delegation, as well as passport details of all delegates. There is no limit to the size of an accompanying delegation.

### **2.2 Health information**

Seychelles does its utmost to safeguard the health of the visiting Head of State and delegation during a state visit. To achieve this, it requires the following health information of the head of the delegation and other senior members of the delegation in a timely manner:

- Blood group
- Food allergies
- Other allergies

### **2.3 Travel itinerary of all delegates**

2.3.1 The confirmed travel itinerary for the head of the delegation and other accompanying delegates should be submitted no later than five (5) working days prior to the visit. The travel itinerary of the delegation should contain the port of embarkation, port(s) of transit and port of disembarkation. This requirement is in line with the health measures in place in Seychelles relating to the COVID-19 pandemic.

2.3.2 If the delegation is travelling by private aircraft, the ministry or embassy concerned should request flight clearance by filling in the flight-clearance application form annexed to this document for the arrival and departure of the flight. The document should be submitted to MFAT no later than five (5) working days before the scheduled arrival.

## **2.4 VIP lounge courtesy**

- 2.4.1 VIP lounge courtesy at the Seychelles International Airport is accorded to all members of the delegation.

## **2.5 Request for courtesy calls, bilateral meetings and other events**

Any specific requests for courtesy calls on, or bilateral meetings with, local officials by other members of the delegation should be communicated promptly to MFAT so that the necessary planning and coordination can be made. Information on the signing of bilateral agreements should be made in the same manner. On the basis of the interests of the visiting Head of State, the MFAT may also propose relevant courtesy calls, bilateral meetings and other events.

## **2.6 Lists of participants attending courtesy calls, bilateral meetings and other events**

In line with the health measures in place in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic, there is a limit to the number of delegates permitted to attend scheduled events. To ensure that this health requirement is met, once the event is confirmed, MFAT, through State Protocol will communicate to the Ministry or embassy of the visiting state, the number of delegates permitted to attend the event (s). Subsequently, it is recommended that the names and designations of the delegates attending the event be communicated to MFAT at least five (5) working days before the visit.

## **2.7 Flags**

The visiting country's national flag is flown around the country and at meeting venues alongside the national flag of the Republic of Seychelles. The car pennant is flown on the official car used by the official during the entire period of the visit.

## **2.8 Transportation**

- 2.8.1 Six (6) vehicles are put at the disposal of the visiting Head of State and delegation. Additionally, a protocol car, a spare car, a vehicle for luggage, and security vehicles are also provided to make up the presidential motorcade.
- 2.8.2 Transport will be provided for the use of the delegation for no more than three (3) days.
- 2.8.3 If the visiting delegation requires extra vehicles, State Protocol will provide a list of reputable private companies from which other vehicles can be procured.

## **2.9 Accommodation**

- 2.9.1 The Government of Seychelles will cover accommodation expenses for 1 suite for the visiting Head of State and spouse (if accompanying him/her) and 5 standard rooms, or will apply reciprocity.

- 2.9.2 State Protocol will coordinate the booking of hotel rooms and any extra rooms required for the official visit in consultation with the ministry or embassy of the visiting state.
- 2.9.3 The name, designation and contact number of the person in the delegation who is responsible for settling the bill for the extra rooms (if any) should be communicated to State Protocol for the attention of the hotel.
- 2.9.4 Below is a list of some hotels on Mahé (the main island of Seychelles) that are used to accommodate Heads of State/Government and other high ranking delegates during their visit to Seychelles.

<b>Hotels in Seychelles</b>
Constance Ephelia Resort
Kempinski Seychelles Resort
Hilton Seychelles Northolme Resort & Spa
STORY Seychelles
Eden Bleu Hotel
Savoy Seychelles Resort & Spa

## 2.10 Security

- 2.10.1 The Government of Seychelles takes its obligations with regard to the protection of visiting foreign dignitaries very seriously. Seychelles authorities take all necessary measures, commensurate with the assessed level of threat, to protect the dignity and ensure the physical security of visiting dignitaries. Such measures include a personal security officer (PSO), and appropriate transport, accommodation, and venue security arrangements.
- 2.10.2 The Seychelles police has operational responsibility for the provision of protective security arrangements for visiting dignitaries. As foreign security officers have no legal powers or immunity within Seychelles, they do not have an operational role and are subject to the direction of Seychelles authorities.

## 2.11 Firearms

In the event that the visiting delegation intends to carry firearms, the foreign governments concerned should formally seek an exemption to enable the importation and carriage of firearms and other prohibited items at an early stage during the visit preparation, so that necessary arrangements can be made with the concerned authorities. The following information should be submitted to MFAT in a timely manner:

- Name, passport number, date of birth and title of each firearm bearer
- Model type, registration number and caliber of all firearms
- Quantity of ammunition, mode of transportation, time of arrival and departure.

## 2.12 Communication devices

If the security personnel travelling with the delegation intends to use any communication devices, this should be made known to MFAT during the preparatory stages of the visit. The following details should be submitted:

- Location and purpose of operation
- Description, trade-mark and model of the equipment
- Quality
- Frequency range
- Operating frequency
- Transmission power
- Type of emission, mode of operation and modulation.

## 2.13 Aviation security screening

### 2.13.1 Private aircraft

There are no aviation security-screening requirements for delegations travelling on private aircraft. If the visiting delegation requires passengers or luggage to be screened on departure, this can be arranged and should be discussed at an early stage during visit planning.

### 2.13.2 Commercial aircraft

Heads of State and their immediate family are exempted from aviation security screening if this is with the concurrence of the commercial airline involved. All other visiting dignitaries and members of the accompanying delegation are required to undergo aviation security screening prior to boarding a commercial flight.

### 2.13.3 Restrictions on substances in carry-on luggage on commercial flights

Seychelles has restrictions limiting the amount of liquids, aerosols and gels permitted to be taken onboard commercial international flights to and from Seychelles in carry-on luggage. To comply with the Government of Seychelles' regulations, any liquids, aerosols or gels (such as drinks, creams, perfumes and toothpaste) that passengers wish to take on board in their carry-on luggage must be in containers of one hundred millilitres (100 *ml*) or less, and all containers should fit comfortably in a transparent, sealable plastic bag with a volume of one litre (1*l*) or less. All visiting dignitaries, including those eligible for a security screening exemption, are expected to comply with the carry-on restrictions for liquids, aerosols and gels.

## 2.14 Gifts

Gifts may be exchanged between the Heads of State, while ensuring that all the health requirements related to the COVID-19 pandemic are followed. The State Protocol should receive an indication of the type of gift to be presented no later than three (3) working days prior to the visit.

## **2.15 Media arrangements**

2.15.1 The Ministry of Foreign Affairs or embassy of the visiting state needs to provide necessary information pertaining to media to State Protocol. This is to avoid unnecessary inconveniences/misunderstandings upon the arrival at the airport or during the stay of the visiting official.

2.15.2 One vehicle out of the quota indicated above will be allocated to media delegates (if any)

## **2.16 Visa**

No visa is required to land in Seychelles. However, all delegates should travel with a valid passport.

## **2.17 Health requirements to travel to Seychelles**

When travelling to Seychelles the delegation should be aware of the public health measures in place in the country.

### **2.17.1 Yellow Fever Vaccination Certificate**

Visitors coming from countries where there is a risk of yellow fever will be requested to produce their Yellow Fever Vaccination Certificate to the Seychelles Health Authorities upon arrival in Seychelles.

### **2.17.2 COVID-19 test**

There are strict COVID-19 health measures in place in the country to mitigate the spread of the virus. Everyone travelling to Seychelles is required to take a PCR test no more than 72 hours prior to embarkation. In order to be granted permission to travel, the PCR test result should be negative.

### **2.17.3 Health Travel Authorisation (HTA)**

Everyone travelling to Seychelles is required to apply through the Health Travel Advisory (HTA) system *Travisory* to be granted permission by the Public Health Authority (PHA) to enter Seychelles. The PCR test certificate, as well as other information in relation to their travel, should be loaded into the system. The system will issue a certificate that should allow entry to the visitor. The system can be accessed on <https://seychelles.govtas.com>. The service, however, is not free of charge.

## **3.0 ARRIVAL**

3.1 To welcome the visiting Head of State, an official arrival ceremony is organised at the Seychelles International Airport.

3.1.1 At the onset of the ceremony the visiting official is received, upon disembarkation, by the following local dignitaries:

- President of the Republic of Seychelles
- Vice President of the Republic of Seychelles
- Speaker of the National Assembly
- Chief Justice of the Supreme Court
- President of the Court of Appeal
- Cabinet of Ministers
- Commissioner of Police
- Chief of the Seychelles Peoples Defence Forces.

3.1.2 In line with the COVID-19 measures in place, delegates are encouraged to use contactless means of greetings such as a nod or *Namaste*. Face masks should be worn by all delegates at all times and, as far as possible, social distancing should be observed.

3.1.3 Twenty-one (21) gun salutes will be heard. The National flag of both countries will be flown and the two National Anthems played. A guard of honour will be mounted for the occasion and inspected by the visiting Head of State after according the presidential salute.

### **3.2 Health procedure**

Upon arrival at Seychelles International Airport, the Chief of Protocol, accompanied by a member of staff from the Public Health Authority will board the aircraft. The delegates are required to submit their HTA certificates and will be subjected to temperature checks.

### **3.3 Airport formalities**

3.3.1 Airport formalities at Seychelles International Airport are attended to by a representative of State Protocol.

3.3.2 The following documents for the whole delegation (where applicable) should be submitted to the representative of State Protocol, upon disembarkation, for the necessary formalities:

- Passports
- Return-tickets
- Baggage tags
- Yellow Fever Vaccination Certificates
- HTA Certificates

3.3.3 The luggage should be clearly labelled in English or French for easy identification upon arrival in Seychelles.

3.3.4 A member of the delegation should be earmarked to assist the representative of the State Protocol with the formalities.



## **4.0 PROGRAMME**

4.1 The following events normally feature on the programme of visit of the Head of State.

### **4.1.1 Tête à Tête with the President**

After being received at State House by the Seychelles President, the two Heads of State meet for a tête à tête in the *Salon des Gouverneurs*. This meeting usually lasts for 20 minutes. Media is only invited to stay for the first 30 seconds of the meeting.

### **4.1.2 Bilateral talks**

Bilateral talks follow immediately after in the *Salon Maritime*. The Seychelles delegation is headed by the Seychelles Head of State and on the visitors' side by the Head of State of the visiting country. The talks are usually attended by the Vice President, relevant Cabinet Ministers, Cabinet Secretary and the Principal Secretary for Foreign Affairs of Seychelles. The visiting country is not expected to match the list. This meeting usually lasts 45 minutes (1 hour if translation is required).

### **4.1.3 Signing Ceremony**

The Signing Ceremony takes place in the *Salon d'Accueil* immediately after the bilateral talks. The Master of Ceremonies introduces the agreements to be signed and invites the signatories to the signing table for the signing of the agreements. The two Heads of State stand behind the two signatories to witness the signing. All those who participated in the bilateral talks are invited to the ceremony.

### **4.1.4 Extraordinary session of the National Assembly**

The visiting Head of State is invited to attend an extraordinary session of the National Assembly in his/her honour. He/she is also expected to address the National Assembly. The Leader of Government Business in the National Assembly and the Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly reply to the address of the visiting Head of State.

### **4.1.5 Cocktail Dîatoire**

The Seychelles Head of State traditionally hosts the visiting Head of State and spouse (if accompanying) to a *Cocktail Dîatoire* at State House. This event usually starts at 1830hrs and ends at 2000hrs. For the official part of the event the National Anthems of both countries are played and the two Heads of State are invited to make a five-minute speech and propose a toast. A cultural show will be scheduled for the rest of the evening.

### **4.1.6 Planting of tree at the Biodiversity Centre**

The visiting Head of State will visit the Biodiversity centre where he/she is invited to plant a tree in the arboretum.

#### **4.1.7 Visit to an outer island**

The visiting official is offered a visit to an outer island if his/her schedule permits. The cost of accommodation (for up to 6 rooms) on the island is borne by the Seychelles Government. While on the island the Vice President of the Republic of Seychelles hosts the visiting official to a lunch at his/her hotel. The lunch is informal (no speech required).

4.2 All COVID-19 requirements in place in the country should be respected at all events. The most notable measures are:

- Wearing of face masks at all times
- Temperature checks at the entrance of event venues
- Hand sanitizing
- Social distancing
- The number of people attending an event should not exceed the maximum number specified by the event venue.

4.3 The dress code is formal, preferably business attire for all events, except for the visit to an outer island, which should be smart casual.

#### **4.4 Other events**

Other events may be included in the programme by State Protocol taking into account the special interests of the visiting official. Any additional events scheduled should also follow the above-mentioned COVID-19 requirements. The dress code will vary depending on the nature of the scheduled event and will be communicated by State Protocol when the event is confirmed.

#### **4.5 Media**

The local media is invited to attend all scheduled events. The delegation will be provided with photos through its media team (if any) or through other means indicated. State Protocol may coordinate the process to obtain video footage of the visit at a cost paid by the delegation directly to the Seychelles Broadcasting Cooperation (SBC).

### **5.0 DEPARTURE**

5.1 To see off the visiting Head of State, an official departure ceremony is organised at Seychelles International Airport.

5.1.1 The visiting official is seen-off by the following local dignitaries:

- President of the Republic of Seychelles
- Vice President of the Republic of Seychelles
- Speaker of the National Assembly
- Chief Justice of the Supreme Court
- President of the Court of Appeal
- Cabinet of Ministers
- Commissioner of Police

- Chief of the Seychelles Peoples Defence Forces.

5.1.2 In line with the COVID-19 measures in place, delegates are encouraged to use contactless means of farewell such as a nod or *Namaste*. Face masks should be worn by all the delegates at all times, and as far as possible social distancing should be observed.

## 5.2 PCR test requirement

An exit PCR test depends on the requirement of the airline and/or the country of destination of the delegation. Such tests can be conducted at the Seychelles Hospital or at private clinics. The cost of the PCR test is borne by the Government of Seychelles.

## 5.3 Airport formalities

5.3.1 Airport formalities are attended to by a representative of State Protocol.

5.3.2 The following documents for the whole delegation (where applicable) should arrive at Seychelles International Airport at least three hours before the scheduled time of departure of a commercial flight, and at least two hours before the departure of a private flight:

- Passports
- Return-tickets (if applicable)
- Yellow Fever Vaccination Certificate (if applicable)
- PCR test certificate (if applicable).

5.3.3 Delegates' luggage should also arrive at the airport at the same time as the documents listed above. The luggage should be clearly labelled in English or French for easy identification.

5.3.4 A member of the delegation should be earmarked to assist the representative of State Protocol with the formalities.

## 6.0 SPOUSE PROGRAMME

In the event that the visiting Head of State is accompanied by his/her spouse a separate programme is organised for him/her. This programme is drafted in accordance with the interests of the spouse. The Seychelles Government will provide an extra car for the displacement of the spouse.

## 7.0 OFFICIAL VISIT PROGRAMME BOOKLET

State Protocol provides an official programme of the visit in a booklet, printed in English or French (depending on the language spoken by the visiting official), showing the engagements to be undertaken by the visiting official and spouse (if accompanying). The official visit programme booklet is regarded as the authoritative version. If the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or diplomatic mission of the state of the visiting official arranges a visit booklet in their own language, care should be taken to ensure that details are the same as in the official programme booklet produced by Seychelles' State Protocol.