

No. 1659

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**UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN  
AND NORTHERN IRELAND  
and  
NETHERLANDS**

**Exchange of notes constituting a reciprocal agreement for the exchange through postal channels without prepayment of postage of diplomatic bags containing non-confidential correspondence. The Hague, 30 November 1951**

*Official text: English.*

*Registered by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on 6 March 1952.*

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**ROYAUME-UNI DE GRANDE-BRETAGNE  
ET D'IRLANDE DU NORD  
et  
PAYS-BAS**

**Échange de notes constituant un accord de réciprocité relatif à l'échange par les voies postales, sans paiement de la taxe au départ, de valises diplomatiques contenant de la correspondance non confidentielle. La Haye, 30 novembre 1951**

*Texte officiel anglais.*

*Enregistré par le Royaume-Uni de Grande-Bretagne et d'Irlande du Nord le 6 mars 1952.*

No. 1659. EXCHANGE OF NOTES CONSTITUTING A RECIPROCAL AGREEMENT<sup>1</sup> BETWEEN THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND AND THE NETHERLANDS FOR THE EXCHANGE THROUGH POSTAL CHANNELS WITHOUT PREPAYMENT OF POSTAGE OF DIPLOMATIC BAGS CONTAINING NON-CONFIDENTIAL CORRESPONDENCE. THE HAGUE, 30 NOVEMBER 1951

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I

BRITISH EMBASSY  
THE HAGUE

30th November, 1951

No. 229

Sir,

I have the honour to inform Your Excellency with reference to Note No. 87176 from the Netherlands Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the 20th September 1950 that His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom are desirous of concluding with the Royal Netherlands Government a reciprocal agreement for the exchange through postal channels without prepayment of postage of diplomatic bags containing non-confidential correspondence between the two Governments and their Embassies in The Hague and London respectively.

2. In similar understandings between His Majesty's Government and other foreign Governments the following conditions usually obtain :

- (1) The individual bags covered by the arrangement shall not in any case weigh more than 30 kgs. this being the limit of weight for bags of closed mails under the International Postal Regulations.
- (2) The dimensions of the individual bags shall be less than 49 inches by 26 inches (124 cm. by 66 cm.), which is the size of the bags ordinarily employed by the Post Office in the United Kingdom for Overseas mails.

3. His Majesty's Government agree to accept diplomatic bags from the Netherlands Embassy in London and to convey them through British postal

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<sup>1</sup> Came into force on 30 November 1951, by the exchange of the said notes.

channels for further transmission through Netherlands postal channels to the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the understanding that the Royal Netherlands Government agree to accept diplomatic bags from His Majesty's Embassy in The Hague and to convey them through Netherlands postal channels for further transmission through British postal channels to the Foreign Office in London.

4. His Majesty's Government also agree to accept from the Netherlands postal authorities diplomatic bags addressed by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Netherlands Embassy in London and to convey them through British postal channels to their destination on the understanding that the Netherlands Government agree to accept from the British postal authorities diplomatic bags addressed by His Majesty's Government to His Majesty's Embassy in The Hague and to convey them through Netherlands postal channels to their destination.

5. The bags shall be addressed to the Netherlands Minister for Foreign Affairs or to His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs or the respective Ambassadors or *Chargés d'Affaires* as the case may be. They shall bear the appropriate seals and may be locked if desired, the keys resting in the custody of the respective Foreign Offices and Embassies.

6. There shall be no charge for the acceptance or conveyance of these diplomatic bags which shall enjoy all the immunities customarily granted by the British and Netherlands authorities respectively to official mails and shall be inviolable.

7. All first-class mail, i.e. letters, letter packets and postcards, from the United Kingdom to the Netherlands, is forwarded by air as the normal means of transmission and it is understood that a similar arrangement is in force from the Netherlands to the United Kingdom. In the circumstances His Majesty's Government are willing to regard the terms of the arrangements as extending to the transmission by air of bags containing urgent mail for which such transmission is justified subject to the provision of reciprocal facilities by the Netherlands Government. To this end it is suggested that mail exchanged between the Netherlands Embassy in London and the Netherlands Ministry for Foreign Affairs in The Hague, and between His Majesty's Embassy in The Hague and the Foreign Office in London should be separated into two categories of bags, namely,

- (1) to contain urgent letters, letter packets and postcards, and other items, for which air transmission is justifiable, and
- (2) to contain non-urgent items of first class and second class mail, and parcels, for transmission by surface route,

the bag labels being clearly marked « By Air » and « By Surface Route » respectively. It is understood that lightweight bags or envelopes shall be used for diplomatic correspondence intended for despatch by air, and that the gross weight of each bag or packet intended for transmission by this means shall not exceed 2 kgs.

8. If the foregoing proposals are agreeable to the Netherlands Government I would suggest that the present Note and Your Excellency's Note in reply be regarded as constituting an agreement in this matter between His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the Royal Netherlands Government, which would enter into force from the date of your reply and remain in force until three months from the date on which either Government shall have given notice of termination to the other.

9. His Majesty's Government would be glad to learn in due course at what Post Office in London the diplomatic bags from the Netherlands Embassy will be handed in so that suitable instructions may be issued to the postal authorities concerned.

I avail myself of this opportunity to renew to Your Excellency the assurances of my highest consideration.

(Signed) Philip NICHOLS

His Excellency Mr. D. U. Stikker  
etc., etc., etc.

## II

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
THE HAGUE

Minister's Cabinet and Protocol  
Department.  
No. 119039.

The Hague, November 30th, 1951

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of Your Excellency's note No. 229 of to-day's date, reading as follows :

[See note I]

I have the honour to inform Your Excellency that Her Majesty's Government are agreeable to the terms as stated in Your Excellency's note, quoted above. As regards the question contained in paragraph 9, I have the honour

to inform Your Excellency that the diplomatic bags from the Netherlands Embassy in London will be handed in at : Post Office Cumberland Place, Marble Arch, London W.1.

I avail myself of this opportunity to renew to Your Excellency the assurances of my highest consideration.

W. DREES

His Excellency Sir Philip Nichols  
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary  
of Great Britain

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