



EST. 1925

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#### **Art & Diplomacy Exhibition Marks the Start of SoFC's 100th Anniversary Celebrations**

**New York, January 10, 2025** –The Society of Foreign Consuls (SoFC) in New York, in collaboration with the Consulate General of the Kingdom of Morocco and in partnership with the Moroccan National Tourism Office, proudly hosted the Art & Diplomacy Exhibition this evening at The Mezzanine, 55 Broadway, New York. The event, attended by approximately 150 distinguished guests, marked the beginning of SoFC's centennial anniversary celebrations.

This exclusive event brought together the diplomatic corps, New York City officials, the U.S. Department of State's Office of Foreign Missions (OFM), and prominent members of the city's art and cultural community to celebrate the intersection of art and cultural diplomacy. The exhibition showcased an extraordinary collection of artworks from eleven member countries: Barbados, Bulgaria, Georgia, Malaysia, Morocco, Republic of Kosovo, Serbia, South Africa, Switzerland, The Philippines, and Türkiye. These artworks, including private collections and never-before-seen pieces, highlighted the diversity and richness of global artistic heritage, offering attendees a glimpse into the creative expressions that unite nations.

Adding to the evening's vibrancy were captivating cultural performances that delighted the audience. Morocco's traditional Gnawa Music set the stage with its rhythmic and spiritual melodies, followed by a classical piano performance from Georgia that blended technical mastery with cultural storytelling. Thailand's Isan Musical Ensemble brought the evening to life with the vibrant sounds of northeastern Thai culture, creating a tapestry of music and tradition that resonated deeply with the audience. A Moroccan tea ceremony further enriched the experience, offering guests an immersive cultural moment that reflected the elegance and hospitality of Moroccan traditions.

The Art & Diplomacy Exhibition is the first in a series of events planned for 2025 to commemorate the centennial anniversary of the SoFC. Since its establishment in 1925, SoFC has been committed to promoting cultural diplomacy and fostering mutual respect among nations. In his remarks, Mr. Amir Farid Abu Hasan, President of SoFC and Consul General of Malaysia in New York, said, "This exhibition is a testament to the power of art as a unifying language. It bridges divides, celebrates diversity, and strengthens the bonds between nations."

The evening also featured inspiring remarks from the host, Mr. Abdelkader Al Jamoussi, the Consul General of the Kingdom of Morocco who emphasized the importance of cultural partnerships in promoting mutual understanding and global unity. Adding depth and perspective to the evening was a keynote address delivered by renowned cultural scholar Dr. George Emilio Sanchez, who spoke passionately about the profound role of art in fostering international understanding and diplomacy. Dr. Sanchez emphasized how art transcends boundaries, serving as a universal language that bridges divides and fosters collaboration among nations.

Commissioner Edward Mermelstein, representing the Mayor's Office for International Affairs, spoke about New York City's unique role as a hub for global diplomacy and cultural exchange, highlighting the city's unwavering commitment to diversity and collaboration. Similarly, Ms. Kathleen Eagen of the OFM expressed the U.S. government's support for initiatives like the Art & Diplomacy Exhibition, which deepen international relationships and underscore the value of cultural diplomacy in today's interconnected world.

The evening concluded with a shared celebration of unity and diversity, as attendees explored the artworks and engaged in meaningful conversations about the role of art in diplomacy. The success of the Art & Diplomacy Exhibition sets the tone for a year of vibrant centennial celebrations, reflecting the mission of the SoFC to promote harmony and understanding among nations.

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For more information about the event or to inquire about future initiatives, please contact the Society of Foreign Consuls at:  
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