

# Europe in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Seminar: “Critical Issues in Europe Today”

## Speakers

### Alexis Andres, Consul General of France

Alexis Andres took up his post as Consul General of France in Houston on September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017. He holds a M.A. in History. He graduated from the Institut d’Etudes politiques in Strasbourg, France and also studied in St Louis at the University of Missouri. He joined the Ministère des Affaires étrangères after receiving his degree from the Ecole Nationale d’Administration in 2001. Alexis Andres held positions at the Ambassade de France in Hanoi, in Berlin, Germany; and most recently in Algiers, where he served as counselor for cultural affairs. He also spent time in Lorraine, as Sous-prefet for the District of Luneville. Born in 1972 in Epinal in the Vosges area, Alexis Andres is married to Emmanuelle and has 6 children.



### Karen Bell, Consul General of the United Kingdom

Consul General Bell took up her posting in Houston in July 2015. As Consul General, she has overall responsibility for leading the UK’s engagement in the states of Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Louisiana, and New Mexico. Bell’s business priorities and responsibilities include developing political ties between the UK and the consular district; enhancing trade and investment partnerships; promoting science and innovation links and supporting the delivery of consular services to the many British nationals who have made the region their home. (continued next page)



A career diplomat, Bell joined the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in the 1980's. Her most recent assignments have included:

- 1996-1999: Third Secretary (Trade Policy/Economic), British High Commission, Ottawa, Canada
- 1999-2003: Second Secretary (Economic), British High Commission, Abuja, Nigeria
- 2003-2007: First Secretary (Economic and External), British Embassy, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
- 2007-2010: Head of the EU/China team, Climate and Energy Department, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, London
- 2010-2014: Deputy Head of Mission, British Consulate-General, Hong Kong

## Adrian Farrell, Consul General of Ireland

Consul General Farrell is Ireland's first Consul General to Texas and the US southwest. The Irish Consulate General in March 2015.

Consul General Farrell was born in Dublin, Ireland and has a twenty-year diplomatic career with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Ireland. He previously served on the team that opened Ireland's Embassy in Ankara, Turkey in 1999. He was posted as Press and Information Officer at the Irish Embassy in Berlin, Germany from 2005-2010. Between postings abroad he worked on the EU policy team in Dublin at the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Department of the Taoiseach, including during Ireland's Presidencies of the EU in 2004 and 2013. He was also seconded to the Irish Business and Employers Confederation (Ibec) in 2014.

Farrell holds a degree in European Studies and a Higher Diploma in Education from the University of Dublin (Trinity College).



## Thomas Meister, Consul General of Germany

Consul General Thomas Meister was appointed Consul General of Germany to Houston, TX, USA, in 2017.

His academic and diplomatic career has included the following:

- 1980: Economist, University of Duisburg, Germany
- 1981-1983 Foreign Service Training, Federal Foreign Office
- 1983-1984: II. Secretary, Arms Control Division, Federal Foreign Office
- 1984-1987: II. Secretary, German Embassy in Canberra (Australia)
- 1987-1989: I. Secretary and Deputy Head of Mission, German Embassy in Kampala, Uganda
- 1989-1992: I. Secretary, European Affairs Division, Federal Foreign Office
- 1992-1996: Counsellor, Head of Cultural Affairs, Consulate General New York, USA
- 1996-1999: Deputy Head of Division, International Technology Cooperation, Federal Foreign Office
- 1999-2003: Consul General, Recife, Brazil
- 2003-2006: First Counsellor for Political Affairs, German Embassy Madrid, Spain
- 2006-2009: Head of Division, International Energy Policy“, Federal Foreign Office
- 2009-2012: Ambassador to New Zealand, also accredited to the Cook Islands, the Republic of Fiji, the Republic of Kiribati, the Independent State of Samoa, the Kingdom of Tonga, to Tuvalu
- 2012-2015: Ambassador to the Republic of Iceland
- 2015-2017: Head of Division “Climate and Environmental Foreign Policy, Sustainable Economy”, Federal Foreign Office



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## Enric Panés, Consul General of Spain

Consul General Panés holds the personal rank of Career Ambassador in the Spanish Foreign Service and has a Law degree, University of Barcelona (1971). Mr. Panés was appointed Consul General of Spain to Houston, TX, USA, May 2014.

His diplomatic career has included the following:

- 1974: Joined Foreign Service of Spain as a career diplomat,
- 1976-1978: Secretary of Embassy in Islamabad, Pakistan
- 1980-1985: Secretary of Embassy, then Counsellor, at the Embassy of Spain in Rome, Italy
- 1985-1987: Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) at the Embassy of Spain in Beijing, China
- 1987-1999: Joint Director General for European Political Cooperation at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), Madrid, Spain
- 2000-2001: Head of the Policy Planning Unit, MFA, Madrid, Spain
- 2001-2005 Ambassador to the Republic of Korea
- 2005-2008: Ambassador to the Portuguese Republic
- 2009-2012: Director of the Spanish Academy in Rome, Italy
- 2013-2014: Senior Advisor, Director General for Media and Public Diplomacy, MFA, Madrid

Mr. Panés speaks fluent Italian, English, French, and Portuguese and has an intermediate level of use of Russian.



## Elena Sgarbi, Consul General of Italy

Counselor Elena Sgarbi was appointed Consul General of Italy in Houston on August 2014.

Sgarbi graduated from the University of Trieste in 1997 with a degree in Diplomacy and International Relations and joined the Italian Foreign Service in 1998.

Her diplomatic career has included the following:  
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- 1998-2002: Diplomatic Protocol Office and Office of the Minister of Foreign Affairs
  - 2002-2006: Consul at the Consulate General of Italy in Barcelona, Spain
  - 2006-2010: First Secretary, and then Counselor for Commercial Affairs, Embassy of Italy in Tokyo, Japan
  - 2010-2014: Chief of Staff of the Directorate General for European Integration, Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Rome, Italy. Then became Chief of the Department for bilateral relations with Central-Eastern Europe Countries.
- Sgarbi is fluent in English, French, and Spanish.

## Ioannis Stamatekos, Consul General of Greece

Consul General Ioannis Stamatekos studied Political Science and International Relations at Boston University (B.A. 1996, magna cum laude) and International Relations and International Economics at the School of Advanced International Studies, The Johns Hopkins University, Washington, D.C. (MA 1999).

From May 2000 until October 2001 he served as a conscript in the Hellenic Army.

In January 2004 he joined the Hellenic Foreign Service and until September 2006 he worked in various positions at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Athens. From August 2006 until September 2009, he was Deputy Head of Mission at Embassy of Greece in Tripoli.

In October 2009 he was transferred to the Embassy of Greece in Budapest, where he served as Deputy Head of Mission until the summer of 2014.

In March 2015, he became Deputy Head of the Diplomatic Cabinet of the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Besides Greek, Mr. Stamatekos speaks English, French and is conversant in Italian.

