Biography

Ambassador Dennis Francis has had a career spanning approximately 40 years in the Diplomatic Service of Trinidad and Tobago. For eighteen of those years unbroken, he held the rank of Ambassador until his compulsory retirement from the career service in 2016, according him the distinction of being the longest serving Ambassador of his country. Before demitting office as the Director of Multilateral Relations, he functioned as Senior Adviser to the Minister of Foreign Affairs on all multilateral matters including Climate Change and the negotiations for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

His transfer back to Port of Spain in 2011 capped Ambassador Francis' posting as Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Geneva, as well as Permanent Representative to the World Trade Organization and to the UN Human Rights Council. He was also accredited concurrently to the U.N. Specialized Agencies in Vienna and Rome, besides having bilateral accreditation as Ambassador to Austria and Italy. Ambassador Francis was also appointed Permanent Delegate to UNESCO.

In 2010 at a period of renewed engagement in Multilateral Trade Negotiations, Ambassador Francis was elected to the sensitive Chairmanship of the Negotiating Group on Rules of the WTO, namely Anti-Dumping, Subsidies and Countervailing Duties and Fisheries Subsidies. He also served as Chairman of the Committee on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights in Regular Session as well as Chairman of the Commonwealth Group of Developing Countries (2007/8).

He has led many national delegations including to the First Universal Periodic Review of Trinidad and Tobago in the UN Human Rights Council in October 2011 and to UNCTAD 10, which was held in Accra, Ghana in 2008.

Ambassador Francis' assignment in Geneva in 2006 followed a seven-year tour of duty as High Commissioner of Trinidad and Tobago to Jamaica and Permanent Representative to the International Seabed Authority. During this period, Ambassador Francis was also accredited as Ambassador (non-resident) to the Dominican Republic, Haiti and Cuba. When he demitted office in Jamaica, he had held the position of Dean of the Diplomatic Corps for almost two years. Ambassador Francis took an active interest in the issues before the International Seabed Authority, leading to his election to the Chairmanship of the Assembly in 2003.

In July of 2021, he completed a three-year assignment as Chairman of the Trinidad and Tobago National Commission for UNESCO.

Ambassador Francis co-facilitated a training course entitled "Protocol and Diplomacy: A Guide for the Modern Professional," at the Diplomatic Academy of the Caribbean; an institution in the conceptualization of which he was intimately involved as Lead Technical Adviser to the Foreign Minister. In 2018, Ambassador Francis also co-authored a book entitled "Heads of Mission-A Handbook," which has received regional and international acclaim. In 2020, Ambassador Francis returned to The University of the West Indies, his alma mater, as a Visiting Scholar at the Institute of International Relations at the St. Augustine Campus. He is also a graduate of The School of Advanced International Studies, the Johns Hopkins University in Washington DC. (1985).

Ambassador Francis is married to his best friend, Joy Thomas-Francis and they have three adult sons.