**FIRST EVER HONORARY CONSULATE OF MEXICO IN NORTHERN IRELAND**

**BELFAST, Northern Ireland, 30th November, 2015. -** In order to strengthen the promotion of Mexico in the economic, commercial, cultural and touristic areas in Northern Ireland, the Government of Mexico has opened its first ever Honorary Consulate in this capital city.

Inaugurated on 29 October 2015, in the frame of The Year of Mexico in the United Kingdom, the Honorary Consulate will also be a conduit between the Mexican community established in this northern area and the Embassy of Mexico to the UK, in order to provide them support with consular assistance when needed.

Mr. Brendan McGinn, an entrepreneur, 46, was appointed by the Mexican Government as its Honorary Consul in Belfast. He has held a number of finance, operational and strategic roles in UK, Irish and European businesses which have assisted in driving investment, building and promoting trade.

The opening ceremony of the representation -the first of its kind in the bilateral relation history between Mexico and Northern Ireland- was headed by the Ambassador of Mexico to the United Kingdom and attended by authorities, Mexican nationals living in Northern Ireland, diplomats, media representatives, businessmen and artists.

On the occasion of the inauguration, Ambassador Gomez-Pickering was received by Ms Arlene Foster, Acting First Minister of Northern Ireland, to whom he shared the Honorary Consulate´s project which also will underpin the goal to increase exchanges and cooperation in education, science and technology with Belfast.

Accompanied by The Deputy First Minister, Martin McGuinness, Acting First Minister welcomed the opening of the new office in Belfast and also the appointment of Mr McGinn as Honorary Consul, in order to promote an increasing economic relationship between Mexico and Northern Ireland. “I hope it will contribute to trigger trade and investment between Mexico and Northern Ireland.”

During his working visit to Northern Ireland, Ambassador Gomez-Pickering also held a meeting with Councillor Arder Carson, Lord Mayor of Belfast, with whom he shared his expectations from the new Honorary Consulate in terms or promoting trade, investment and tourism.

The Mexican diplomat invited Lord Mayor to consider a future working visit to Mexico´s cities such as Tijuana, Baja California -taking advantage of his visit planned to California in January 2016- where he might be able to explore business opportunities in technology and creative industries due to the borderline city´s long tradition in those fields.

He also mentioned that the new Honorary Consul of Mexico is a non-executive Director at Globalvia Inversiones SAU, a world leader in the management of infrastructure assets and funds, which owns six major concessions in Latin America, including Mexico.

From Ambassador Diego Gomez-Pickering perspective, "Honorary Consul Brendan McGinn will provide valuable support promoting Mexico in the economic, commercial, cultural and touristic areas of Northern Ireland, where there is still a great potential for the development of strategic links”.

Mr McGinn said the appointment was an outstanding honour. “It is a great honour to accept this appointment from The Government of Mexico .I look forward to working with local and Mexican institutions, businesses and cultural groups to maximize this new opportunity ”.

The Honorary Consulate in Belfast is the third one opened by Mexico during the celebration of its Dual Year with the United Kingdom. Previously, the offices in Manchester and Cardiff were inaugurated on 16th June and 8th July, respectively.

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