

HIGH COMMISSIONER SHYAMALA B. COWSIK: A PROFILE

Shyamala Balasubramanian Cowsik is a professional diplomat. Before joining the Indian Foreign Service through the regular All India Civil Services examination – where she was the first woman to top the country-wide list of successful candidates from over 100,000 contenders – she rounded off her academic career with a university first in her Master's degree in Physics.



Her first diplomatic assignment was in Geneva, where she served as Vice Consul and, later, as Consul of India, while simultaneously acting as Alternate Delegate to various UN conferences. Her subsequent postings took her across the world and back again – to Washington, Bangkok, and Belgrade - and then home to New Delhi as the Joint Secretary/Head of Division at the Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi.

Her first assignment as Head of Mission was in 1992, as Ambassador of India to the Philippines, from where she returned to Washington as the Deputy Chief of Mission, again a first for a woman. Before becoming the High Commissioner for India to Canada in December 2004, she had been the Indian Ambassador to the Netherlands and the High Commissioner for India to Cyprus.

Her extra curricular activities include classical music, both Western and Indian, reading and trekking. She has a 23-year old son, Siddhartha.
