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МИНИСТЕРСТВО НА ВЪНШНИТЕ РАБОТИ
РЕПУБЛИКА БЪЛГАРИЯ

The Italian diplomats in Sofia since 1879 until present day: biographical profiles

H.E. Stefano Baldi

Synopsis

Diplomatic relations with Bulgaria were established shortly after the country's liberation from Ottoman rule and the signing of the Treaty of Berlin on July 13, 1879, when the Principality of Bulgaria was established.

First head of the Italian mission was Domenico Brunenghi who was accredited to the Bulgarian Prince Alexander I on July 3, 1879, in his capacity of head of the Italian diplomatic agency and consulate in Sofia. He presented his credentials to the Bulgarian Prince on July 25 the same year. This officially marked the beginning of diplomatic relations between Italy and Bulgaria. Italy was one of the first 10 countries (along with Austria-Hungary, Belgium, the United Kingdom, Germany, Russia, the Netherlands, France, Romania and Serbia) to establish, in 1879, diplomatic relations with Bulgaria.

Since then, 36 Italian diplomats have served, in various forms, as head of the Italian Embassy in Sofia. This is a long and eventful history recreated in this study mainly through the names, the dates, and the portraits of the main actors in the institutional relations between the two countries.

Bulgaria and Italy established diplomatic relations shortly after Bulgaria's liberation from Ottoman rule and the signing of the Treaty of Berlin on July 13, 1878, when the autonomous Principality of Bulgaria was created.

Since then, 36 Italian diplomats have headed – in one form or another, the Italian Embassy in Sofia. This is a long and eventful story, which is reproduced in this study mainly through the names, dates and portraits of individuals who used to play a major role in the institutional relations between the two countries.

During the Ottoman rule, there was already – within the Bulgarian territory, a couple of operating consular offices in some of the major Bulgarian cities, namely: in Varna – since 1864, in Ruschuk (currently Rousse) – since 1868, and in Sofia – since 1875. In addition, a consular office was opened in 1879 in Philippopolis (today's Plovdiv). A little later, Italy opened two new consulates, namely: in the river port of Lom – in 1881, and in the Black Sea port of Bourgas – in 1882. Until the establishment of the Principality of Bulgaria, all the consulates were under the leadership of the Italian Embassy in Constantinople.

However, before concentrating on the Italian diplomats representing Italy in this country over the past 140 years (in the period 1879-2019), we will have to focus on one particularly significant figure, i.e. the last Italian Vice-Consul in Sofia before the Liberation. That was Vito Positano – Doyen of the Consular Corps in Sofia¹, who, in 1877, i.e. in the final phase of the Russo-Turkish war, refused to obey the orders of the

¹ UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI LECCE, DIPARTIMENTO DI SCIENZE STORICHE E SOCIALI, *La Formazione della Diplomazia Nazionale (1861 – 1915)*, Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato, Roma, 1987, 595 – 596.

Turkish Army Commander – Osman Pasha, who intended to burn down the city before the arrival of the Russian troops. Jointly with his colleagues from France and Austria-Hungary, Positano gathered a group of Bulgarian volunteers who managed to save the city from the arson attacks that had already begun in some areas. Following this heroic act on his part, Vito Positano was proclaimed an honorary citizen of the new capital of Sofia and a square was named after him in the city center.

We need to also mention here Enrico De Gubernatis who was appointed [Italian] consul in Ruschuk in 1876 and stayed in the city during the 1877 bombing. De Gubernatis was the only foreign consul remaining in Ruschuk on the basis of the instructions he had received. In this way, he not only protected the Italian interests in the region but also helped save the city from destruction as he managed to persuade the Ottoman commandant not to kill civilians.² As a result, the Italian authorities honored him with a silver medal for civilian service and a street was named after him in Ruschuk.

The history of diplomatic relations between Italy and Bulgaria began on November 19, 1878, when Domenico Brunenghi was appointed Consul General in Sofia as delegate to the Consular Commission for Bulgaria. Brunenghi had already gained some experience in this region as he had already worked in the consular offices in Galați and Sulina (Romania), in Bucharest, and in Varna. He moved afterwards to Sofia after he had served as Consul General for four years in Izmir.³

On July 3, 1879, Brunenghi was accredited to His Highness, Prince Alexander I of Bulgaria, as head of the Diplomatic Agency and the Consulate in Sofia and, on July 25, he presented his credentials to the Prince. This is how the diplomatic relations between Italy and Bulgaria formally began. Italy was among the first 10 countries (together with Austria-Hungary, Belgium, the United Kingdom, Germany, Russia, the Netherlands, France, Romania and Serbia), to establish, in 1879, diplomatic relations with the newly-liberated Bulgaria.

Brunenghi remained in Sofia until 1880 when he was posted to Buenos Aires, with a mandate until 1888. Upon his return to the Ministry, he was awarded the honorary title of Consul General Class I. Brunenghi completed his diplomatic service on September 1, 1892, and died in 1910.⁴

In February 1880, Renato De Martino was posted to Sofia in his capacity of diplomatic agent and Consul General. He had begun his diplomatic career in 1858 and had served as a diplomat in a number of European cities, including Copenhagen, Bern, Madrid, London, and Stockholm. De Martino presented his credentials on May 14, 1880. His diplomatic service in Sofia lasted for four years when, in December, 1883⁵, he was posted to Tokyo with the credentials of an extraordinary envoy and minister plenipotentiary. He spent his next mandate in Rio de Janeiro and ended his diplomatic career in Beijing on April 1, 1902.⁶

2 DAVIDOV, A. – GUIDA, F., *Il Leone e la Scimitarra – La liberazione della Bulgaria nella testimonianza dei consoli italiani*, Edizioni Periferia, Cosenza, 1990.

3 MINISTERO DEGLI AFFARI ESTERI, *Annuario Diplomatico del Regno d'Italia per l'anno 1890*, Roma, Tipografia delle Mantellate, 1890, 123 – 124.

4 UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI LECCE, DIPARTIMENTO DI SCIENZE STORICHE E SOCIALI, *La Formazione della Diplomazia Nazionale (1861 – 1915)*, Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato, Roma, 1987, 111.

5 MINISTERO DEGLI AFFARI ESTERI, *Annuario Diplomatico del Regno d'Italia per l'anno 1890*, Roma, Tipografia delle Mantellate, 1890, 147.

6 UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI LECCE, DIPARTIMENTO DI SCIENZE STORICHE E SOCIALI, *La Formazione della Diplomazia Nazionale (1861 – 1915)*, Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato, Roma, 1987, 274 – 275.

Carlo Alberto Gerbaix de Sonnaz was posted to Sofia in January, 1884, in his capacity of diplomatic agent and Consul General. Prior to his diplomatic service in Sofia, he had also served as a diplomat: twice in Brussels and once in Copenhagen, Stuttgart, and The Hague. Gerbaix de Sonnaz remained in Sofia for 9 years – until 1893, which was one of the longest periods of service among all the Heads of Italian Mission in the Bulgarian capital. During his term of office, Prince Alexander I of Bulgaria was forced to abdicate in 1886 and, in the following year, Ferdinand Saxe-Coburg-Gotha was proclaimed Bulgarian King by the name of Ferdinand I. Gerbaix de Sonnaz was afterwards posted to Brussels. He stayed there from 1903 and completed his diplomatic career on February 21, 1904.⁷

Alessandro Riva was posted to Sofia in June, 1893, in his capacity of diplomatic agent and Consul General. He presented his credentials on November, 12, 1893. Prior to his arrival in Sofia, he had served in Varna, in 1872. And, before returning to Bulgaria, he had served in The Hague and in Bern (twice), as well as in Berlin and in Rio de Janeiro – in 1889, where he had been accredited as extraordinary envoy and minister plenipotentiary. In May, 1896, he was posted to Belgrade and, in November the same year – to Bern again. He completed his diplomatic service on July 28, 1901 and died in Milan on July 14, 1908.⁸

Giulio Silvestrelli was appointed diplomatic agent and Consul General in Sofia in November, 1895. He presented his credentials on May 3, 1896. In 1901, Mr. Silvestrelli was posted to Bern as extraordinary envoy and minister plenipotentiary and, later on, with the same credentials – to Athens. He accomplished his career as an Ambassador in Madrid and ended his diplomatic service on June 20, 1911.⁹

Giorgio Polacco arrived in Sofia in 1901 in his capacity of diplomatic agent and Consul General after having spent five years in Paris and after a brilliant diplomatic career in some important embassies (in London, three times in Paris, in The Hague, and in Buenos Aires). He presented his credentials on October 16, 1901, but, unfortunately, had a tragic death in Milan at the age of 42 during a holiday, while still being in diplomatic service in Bulgaria.¹⁰

Guglielmo Imperiali di Francavilla was posted to Sofia as diplomatic agent and Consul General in May, 1903, and presented his credentials there on June 1, 1903. That was his first term of office as Head of a Mission as a diplomat who was to stand, later on, at the head of some other important embassies in his future diplomatic career. Before being posted to Bulgaria, Imperiali di Francavilla had served in Berlin, Paris, and Washington.¹¹ During his stay in Bulgaria, he was appreciated highly by the Bulgarian authorities and Prince Ferdinand I for his support to the efforts of the Bulgarian people to reject any Russian or Austro-Hungarian influence, as well as for his call for moderation in the relations between Bulgaria and the Ottoman Empire. Imperiali's next mandates as an Ambassador were in Constantinople and in London. In 1913, he was appointed Royal Senator within the ambassadorial category while, at the end of World War I, he was member of the Italian delegation to Paris in connection with the Peace Treaty with Germany, which he and Crespi signed with the Italian party in Versailles on June 28, 1919. Since February 1921, he

7 Ibid, 358 – 360.

8 Ibid, 621 – 622.

9 Ibid, 681 – 683.

10 Ibid, 591.

11 Ibid, 391 – 392.

represented Italy in the Society of Nations. In January 1923, following the March on Rome, he quit his diplomatic career in order to devote himself to his job as a Royal Senator – a position he held until his death in Rome on January 20, 1944.

Fausto Cucchi Boasso was posted to Sofia as diplomatic agent and Consul General in March, 1904. He presented his credentials there on June 22, 1904. Cucchi Boasso spent in Bulgaria a total of nine years, though in different periods of time. During his first term of office (starting in 1904 and ending in June, 1910)¹², he attended the proclamation of the independent Kingdom of Bulgaria by Prince Ferdinand on October 5, 1908 in Tirnovo. As a result of the institutional change of 1909, the Bulgarian Diplomatic Agency in Rome and the Italian Diplomatic Agency in Bulgaria were renamed Legations while the relevant representatives of these two countries – Dimitar Rizov and Fausto Cucchi Boasso, became special envoys and ministers plenipotentiary. Cucchi Boasso's second term of office in Bulgaria spanned between 1913 and 1915¹³, after he had spent two years (1910-1913) as minister plenipotentiary in Bern. His next mission in Tokyo began in 1915 and, afterwards, he ended his diplomatic service in January, 1916.¹⁴

In the period 1910-1913, Alessandro De Bosdari was appointed to Sofia, on the basis of letters of credentials, as extraordinary envoy and minister plenipotentiary. He assumed office on August 23, 1910. His next mission at the same post was in Athens where he remained for five years. Then he was posted to Rio de Janeiro and, in 1922 – to Berlin, as Ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary. He remained there until the end of his term of office, in 1926.¹⁵

A new Head of Mission was sent to the Italian Legation in Sofia only after the end of World War I. Appointed as Commissioner of the Italian government Carlo Alberto Aliotti was posted to Sofia in December 1918. His work as a diplomat was appreciated highly by the local government for his empathy with the concerns of the Bulgarian party over the imposition of too strict conditions on the country's exit from the war.¹⁶

On September 14, 1920, the appointment of Luigi Aldrovandi Marescotti as extraordinary envoy and minister plenipotentiary in Sofia interrupted the period of absence of any Italian diplomats in the city, which had begun in 1915 on account of World War I. In 1919, when King Ferdinand abdicated in favor of his son – Boris III, Aldrovandi Marescotti presented his credentials to King Boris on October 3, 1920, and remained in Sofia until 1923. Before being posted to Sofia, Aldrovandi Marescotti used to head temporarily the Italian Embassy in Berlin and then served as minister extraordinary and plenipotentiary in The Hague. Following his term of office in Bulgaria, he was posted consecutively to Cairo and Buenos Aires and, finally, in March, 1926, he was sent as Ambassador to Berlin where he remained until 1929.

Sabino Rinella was Aldrovandi Marescotti's successor in Sofia, appointed in January, 1923, as extraordinary envoy and minister plenipotentiary. He had already got

12 More details of the composition of the embassy's diplomatic staff can be found in the annex to the book BALDI, S. (a cura di), *Storia delle Relazioni Diplomatiche tra Italia e Bulgaria – Attraverso i documenti diplomatici italiani*, Paradigma, Sofia, 2019, 895 e ss.

13 Ibid.

14 UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI LECCE, DIPARTIMENTO DI SCIENZE STORICHE E SOCIALI, *La Formazione della Diplomazia Nazionale (1861 – 1915)*, Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato, Roma, 1987, 222 – 223.

15 Ibid, 239 - 241.

16 BALDI, S. (a cura di), *Storia delle Relazioni Diplomatiche tra Italia e Bulgaria – Attraverso i documenti diplomatici italiani*, Paradigma, Sofia, 2019, 895 e ss.

some experience in this country as, in the wake of World War I, he had been Italy's representative in the Inter-Allied Reparations Committee in Sofia for some time, as of September, 1920. Rinella remained in Sofia until 1926. This was his last mission as he withdrew the same year and died in Rome in September, 1946.¹⁷

Sofia was also the last mission in the career of his successor, Renato Piacentini. He had been posted to Sofia on May 26, 1926 in his capacity of extraordinary envoy and minister plenipotentiary. Piacentini had presented his credentials on September 17, 1926. Later on, in October, 1930, he had returned to the Italian Foreign Ministry where he remained until 1932, i.e. up to the end of his career. He died in Rome in October, 1961. During this period Piacentini had watched closely and provided the necessary information on the developments and the religious difficulties accompanying the engagement, and then the marriage, of Princess Giovanna of Savoy and King Boris III in October, 1930. These difficulties, however, had been overcome also thanks to the assistance of Monsignor Angelo Roncalli (the future Pope Giovanni XXIII) – the then apostolic delegate in Sofia.¹⁸

Giuliano Cora was Piacentini's successor in Sofia. He was posted there in January, 1931, and presented his credentials on March, 20, 1931.¹⁹ He stayed in the Bulgarian capital for three years – until December, 1934.²⁰ His previous missions as extraordinary envoy and minister plenipotentiary had been in Albania – in 1926, and in Addis Ababa – as of 1926. Previously, he had been posted as an Ambassador – firstly to Santiago and then, in 1937, to Shanghai. Giuliano Cora retired in 1938 and was afterwards called again to service in Ankara, in 1944.

On December 31, 1934, Giuseppe Sapuppo was posted to Sofia in his capacity of extraordinary envoy and minister plenipotentiary. He presented his credentials on March 16, 1935.²¹ He remained in Bulgaria until 1938 and was afterwards posted to Copenhagen. Giuseppe Sapuppo returned to Rome in 1942 as Chairman of the Committee on the Study and Documentation of International Labor and Social Assistance. He died in 1945, while still in service.

While still serving at the Italian mission in Lima, Giuseppe Talamo Atenolfi received an appointment in Sofia on September 27, 1937, with the credentials of extraordinary envoy and minister plenipotentiary, which he presented on March 26, 1938. Talamo remained in Sofia until 1940. These were the years in which Bulgaria had not made a firm decision yet as to which party to side with, meaning the allied forces that were looming in Europe and on the horizon of the region. This was also the time of rearmament of the country in which Turkey was still seen as a serious threat. In 1940, Talamo was posted to Bucharest while, in November, 1941, he returned to Rome. In the wake of World War II, he was not posted anywhere abroad and worked for the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In 1950, he retired for official reasons and was then re-appointed to service, in 1958, until his final retirement due to his old age, in 1961. Giuseppe Talamo Atenolfi died in Rome on February 28, 1983.

17 Ibid.

18 Ibid.

19 Ibid.

20 For more information about the time spent by Cora in Sofia, please refer to MONZALI, L. "Giuliano Cora e le relazioni italo-bulgare nella prima metà degli anni Trenta" in the same edition.

21 BALDI, S. (a cura di), *Storia delle Relazioni Diplomatiche tra Italia e Bulgaria – Attraverso i documenti diplomatici italiani*, Paradigma, Sofia, 2019, 895 e ss.

While still serving as Advisor at the Italian Embassy in Berlin, Massimo Magistrati received an appointment, on the basis of credentials, as extraordinary envoy and minister plenipotentiary in Sofia in March, 1940. He remained there until mid-1943.²² This was a particularly intense period in the relations between the two countries in which the borders were defined between Bulgaria and Albania, which were, in reality, the border between Bulgaria and Italy. In addition, Magistrati was still in Sofia in March, 1941, when Bulgaria joined the Tripartite Pact and declared war on England and the United States. But that was also the time when some racist laws were enforced in Bulgaria (1943) and cooperation with Nazi Germany was not always easy. In July, 1943, Magistrati was posted to Bern. In the period 1950-1961, he held varied positions at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and, in December, 1954, he became Director-General for Political Affairs. He completed his career in Cairo where he had been posted as Ambassador in 1961. He ended his diplomatic service in 1964.²³

Francesco Giorgio Mameli was posted to Sofia with the credentials of extraordinary envoy and minister plenipotentiary in June, 1943.²⁴ Two months later – in August the same year, he had some hard time after the death of Boris III while the Regency Council was being created. Despite the dramatic conditions in the country, however, the Italian mission decided to stay. In November, 1943, after more than two months of persistence, the employees left the Legation and left it in the hands of the ones who recognized the Italian Social Republic (Salò), after having previously destroyed the entire archive and all the secret codes.²⁵ The mission personnel, who were loyal to the King, remained in Sofia during the bombing of January 10, 1944, when they were interned outside Sofia in Kostenets and Varshets. They returned to Sofia only after the coup of September 9, 1944. After having come back to Sofia, Minister Mameli turned out to be without official recognition; however, he still had the right to defend the Italian interests and thus saved his compatriots and the Italian property from the danger of internment and confiscation arising from the consent to a truce.

The normal relations between Italy and Bulgaria were resumed on January 1, 1945. Minister Mameli was reconfirmed as Italian minister plenipotentiary in the country in which he had previously been interned. Thousands of former Italian prisoners of war from all parts of the Balkans and the Soviet Union arrived in Sofia that winter in order to be repatriated to Italy. In the period September 21, 1945 – September, 1946, the Italian Legation was headed by Piero Vinci, in his capacity of *charge d'affaires ad interim*. Mameli left definitely Sofia on December 26, 1946. Upon his return to Italy, he held varied positions at the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, being promoted, in March, 1950, to the position Director General for Cultural Relations Abroad. In April, 1952, he was appointed Ambassador to the Holy See and remained in this position for almost six

22 Ibid.

23 MINISTERO DEGLI AFFARI ESTERI, *Annuario diplomatico della Repubblica Italiana, 1963, Volume Primo*, Roma, Istituto Poligrafico dello Stato, 1963, 449 – 450.

24 BALDI, S. (a cura di), *Storia delle Relazioni Diplomatiche tra Italia e Bulgaria – Attraverso i documenti diplomatici italiani*, Paradigma, Sofia, 2019, 895 e ss.

25 For additional information about this difficult and complex time, please refer to some of the memoirs of the mission's employees who were, at that time, both spectators and actors in different forms. You can look this information up in: Si veda DE MOHR, C., DE MOHR U.G., *Odissea di un diplomatico*, Gangemi Editore, Roma, 2018 e SAPORITO, L., *Anche l'insuccesso è bello. Memorie di un uomo comune*, Progetto 2000, Cosenza, 1987.

years. In January, 1958, he was reappointed to service at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as Deputy Chair of the Diplomatic Disputes Council. He ended his service in October of that year due to reaching retirement age.

Having arrived in Sofia in 1942 as third secretary, Piero Vinci found himself responsible for temporarily managing the mission over two different periods of time, namely: between September 21, 1945 and September, 1946; and in the period September 27, 1946 – February 9, 1947. Consequently, Vinci had a successful career, both at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as Chief of Cabinet, as well as overseas – as head of the United Nations Permanent Mission to New York – since 1967, for nine years. In March, 1973, he was appointed Ambassador to Moscow but remained in the Russian capital for only two years because, in August, 1975, he was reappointed Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York. He ended his diplomatic service in December, 1977, due to his retirement age, and died in Ischia on July 17, 1985.

Giovan Battista Guarnaschelli was posted to Sofia with the credentials of extraordinary envoy and minister plenipotentiary on December 14, 1946. He assumed office on February 10, 1947, and remained in the country for 5 years.²⁶ Guarnaschelli had arrived in Sofia at a time in which he had to resolve a lot of issues related to the complex immediate post-war situation, including the closure of the Apostolic Delegation in Bulgaria in 1948 and the resumption of diplomatic relations between Italy and Albania. Prior to his mission in Sofia, Guarnaschelli had been extraordinary envoy and minister plenipotentiary in Helsinki. He completed his diplomatic career as an Ambassador in Warsaw, where he had been posted in April, 1952, and ended his diplomatic service in April, 1955.

On January 22, 1952, Gastone Rossi Longhi arrived in Sofia with the credentials of extraordinary envoy and minister plenipotentiary. He remained in Bulgaria until 1955 when he was appointed Ambassador to Lima. Rossi Longhi died in March, 1957, while still in diplomatic service.

Filippo Muzi Falconi was Rossi Longhi's successor in Sofia and was posted there with credentials of extraordinary envoy and minister plenipotentiary in August, 1955. He remained in the country until 1958. Afterwards, in the period 1959-1965, he was sent as Ambassador to Jakarta (Indonesia) and, in 1966, he ended his career due to retirement age.²⁷

In 1958, Roberto Gaja, the future Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was posted to Sofia as minister plenipotentiary – the first mission he had been in charge of, ever. Until that point, he had been general manager of staff. Gaja remained in Sofia until February, 1963, when he was recalled by the Foreign Ministry in order to perform there the function of Assistant Director-General for Political Affairs. In September, 1964, he was appointed Assistant Director-General for Political Affairs while, in January, 1970, he was promoted to the position of Secretary General. Gaja ended his career as an Ambassador to Washington, where he had been appointed in July, 1975. He ended his service two years later due to retirement.

Orazio Antinori di Castel San Pietro was appointed in Sofia with the credentials of extraordinary envoy and minister plenipotentiary in February, 1963. In September, 1964,

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ MINISTERO DEGLI AFFARI ESTERI, *Annuario diplomatico della Repubblica Italiana, 1963, Volume Primo*, Roma, Istituto Poligrafico dello Stato, 1963, 487.

the Legation was raised to the rank of an Embassy and Antinori found himself as the first Head of Mission accredited as Italian Ambassador. He ended his career as an Ambassador in Luxembourg where he had been posted in March, 1969. Antinori ended his diplomatic service in September, 1970, after having reached retirement age.

In April, 1968, Giuseppe Puri Purini was posted to Sofia as an Ambassador after he had had the same position in Khartoum (Sudan). Puri Purini remained in Sofia until 1971 when he ended his diplomatic service due to retirement.

Franz Cancellario d'Alena was posted as an Ambassador to Sofia in January, 1972, where he remained until he ended his service in May, 1979.

Carlo Maria Rossi Arnaud was the Italian Ambassador to Sofia as of June 9, 1980, after having spent some time as Ambassador in Dakar. On December 13, 1982, Rossi Arnaud was called to Rome for consultations by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as a preliminary measure in connection with the Antonov case and his alleged involvement in the assassination of Pope Giovanni Paolo I. Carlo Rossi Arnaud died on September 4, 1983, while still in service, without ever getting back to the Bulgarian capital.²⁸

After Ambassador Carlo Rossi Arnaud had been called for consultations in Rome in December, 1982, Councilor Alessandro Pietromarchi remained at the Italian embassy in Sofia as *charge d'affaires ad interim* until April, 1983. Then, this position was assumed by Councilor Fabrizio De Agostini. Fabrizio De Agostini remained *charge d'affaires ad interim* until April, 1984, when Giovanni Battistini was posted to Sofia in his capacity of the new Italian Ambassador.²⁹

Giovanni Battistini's successors at this position included: Paolo Taroni (as of November 21, 1987), Agostino Mathis (as of February 12, 1990), Stefano Rastrelli (as of June 21, 1994), Tommaso Troise (as of October 31, 1996), Alessandro Grafini (as of April 28, 1999), Gian Battista Campagnola (as of May 20, 2003), Stefano Benazzo (as of May 16, 2008), and Marco Conticelli (as of September 3, 2012).

Since September 19, 2016, Stefano Baldi has been the Italian Ambassador to Sofia.

Stefano Baldi is Ambassador of the Italian Republic to Bulgaria and career diplomat with the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International cooperation. Prior to his appointment as Ambassador to Bulgaria, he had been a Training Director at the Ministry as of 2011, Head of the Science and Technology Cooperation Department at the Ministry (2010- 2011), and First Counsellor at the Permanent Mission of Italy to the EU, responsible for the legal and financial aspects of the Common Foreign and Security Policy as Relex Counsellor (2006-2010). Also served at the Permanent Mission of Italy to the International Organizations in Geneva and at the Permanent Mission of Italy to the United Nations in New York in charge for disarmament affairs. He has worked with many Italian universities (Roma La Sapienza, LUISS, Roma TRE, LUMSA, Trento, Pavia, Firenze) holding seminars and courses in international affairs, multilateral diplomacy, soft skills applied to international careers.

His most recent research focuses on diplomatic management, Social media for International Affairs and books written by diplomats. He is author of more than 15 books among which, a book on the activities of diplomats (*Diplomatici in azione*, 2016) and a book on management for diplomats (*Manuale di management per diplomatici*, 2016). He has published, both in Italian and in English, the results of a comprehensive research on books written by Italian diplomats (*Through the Diplomatic Looking Glass, Diplo*, 2007).

28 MINISTERO DEGLI AFFARI ESTERI, *Annuario Diplomatico e delle carriere direttive*, 1983, Roma, Tipografia riservata M.A.E., 1983, 482.

29 Ibid, 265.

**ЕВРОПА СЛЕД COVID-19
МЕЖДУНАРОДНА СИГУРНОСТ
ДВУСТРАННА ДИПЛОМАЦИЯ
МНОГОСТРАННА ДИПЛОМАЦИЯ
БЪЛГАРИЯ – КАНДИДАТ ЗА
ЧЛЕНСТВО В ОИСР**

24 / 2020

**EUROPE AFTER COVID-19
INTERNATIONAL SECURITY
BILATERAL DIPLOMACY
MULTILATERAL DIPLOMACY
BULGARIA – CANDIDATE FOR
MEMBERSHIP IN OECD**

