



## **Apostille Certificates**

### **Hague Convention of 5 October 1961.**

#### **Abolishing the Requirement of Legalization for Foreign Public Documents.**

The Apostille Convention facilitates the circulation of public documents executed in one State party to the Convention and to be produced in another State party to the Convention. It does so by replacing the cumbersome and often costly formalities of a full legalization process with the issuance of an Apostille Certificate.

The Convention only applies to public documents. These are documents emanating from an authority or official connected with a court or tribunal of the State (including documents issued by an administrative, constitutional or ecclesiastical court or tribunal, a public prosecutor, a clerk or a process server); administrative documents; notarial acts; and official certificates which are placed on documents signed by persons in their private capacity, such as official certificates recording the registration of a document or the fact that it was in existence on a certain date and official and notarial authentications of signatures. The main examples of public documents for which Apostilles are issued in practice include: birth, marriage and death certificates; extracts from commercial registers and other registers; patents; court rulings; notarial acts and notarial attestations of signatures; academic diplomas issued by public institutions; etc. Apostilles may also be issued for a certified copy of a public document. On the other hand, the Convention neither applies to documents executed by diplomatic or consular agents nor to administrative documents dealing directly with commercial or customs operations (e.g., certificates of origin or import or export licenses).

Once an Apostille is obtained, the document may be delivered directly to the country of intended use and bypass further certification from the US Department of State.

#### **Apostille Certificates for US Documents**

For information about how to obtain an Apostille certificate in the US, please see this website: [www.apostilleinfo.com/usa.htm](http://www.apostilleinfo.com/usa.htm).

#### **Apostille Certificates for French Documents**

If you need to obtain an Apostille for a document issued in France and in French, please contact your local courthouse (palais de justice) which should have a Service de l'Apostille. In Paris, the Apostille Service at the Paris courthouse can be reached by calling the courthouse switchboard at 01.44.32.50.50 and they will transfer your call.

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