

# CORAL GABLES

THE CITY BEAUTIFUL

International Affairs Coordinating Council (IACC)  
Meeting Minutes  
Monday, November 27th, 2023

Location: The Fink Studio  
2506 Ponce de León Blvd., Coral Gables, Florida

Members:	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	Commissioners
<b>Olga Ramudo</b>	-	-	-	-	-	X	P	P	A	P	A	-	Mayor Vince Lago
<b>Vicky Rua</b>	-	-	-	-	-	X	P	P	A	P	A	-	Vice Mayor Rhonda Anderson
<b>Sadia M. Raja</b>	-	-	-	-	-	X	P	A	P	E	P	-	Comm. Kirk Menendez
<b>Raoul Cantero</b>	-	-	-	-	-	X	E	P	A	E	P	-	Comm. Ariel Fernandez
<b>Richard Montes de Oca</b>	-	-	-	-	-	X	P	P	A	P	A	-	Comm. Melissa Castro
<b>Alejandra Collarte</b>	-	-	-	-	-	X	E	P	A	P	A	-	Peter Iglesias, City Manager
<b>Rafael Gavarrete</b>	-	-	-	-	-	X	E	A	P	E	P	-	Council-at-Large Appointment

A = Absent P=Present E= Excused UA= Unexcused Absence X= No Meeting -=Former Member

The International Affairs Coordinating Council (IACC) meeting was called to order at 4:05 p.m.  
Active Chair Rafael Gavarrete welcomed everyone.

**There are no minutes to be approved today. Last IACC meeting was an informational meeting only.**

## COUNTRY REPORT

### LA ANTIGUA, GUATEMALA

Acting Chair Gavarrete reported that Guatemala is going through political turmoil due to the elections that took place in July of 2023. President elect Bernardo Arevalo, scheduled to be sworn into office in January of 2024, has had issues with his own political party and the Congress and Senate do not approve of him. La Antigua recently elected a new Mayor who is vetoing actions taken by the former Mayor.

### SANTA TECLA, EL SALVADOR

Acting Chair Gavarrete reported that contrary to Guatemala everyone is happy in El Salvador. The government is trying to lower all official expenses and one way they are doing this is by reducing the number of municipalities. Government officials are looking to reduce the number of municipalities from 270 to 40. Mr. Gavarrete was unsure what would happen to Santa Tecla.

### SAN JOSE, COSTA RICA

Mayor in San Jose, Costa Rica had some serious problems that made him resigned from his post. No more information is available at this time.

#### STELLENBOSCH, SOUTH AFRICA

Board member Sadia Raja reported that Stellenbosch has some budget issues and they have not been able to apply for membership of the Sister Cities International Organization. She will try to contact the City of Stellenbosch tomorrow. Board member Raja also reported that the Coral Gables Community Foundation gala was a great success, and it included a collaboration with the Japanese Consul General. She also mentioned that she had a conversation with the Consul General of Japan regarding setting up a Sister City relationship with a City in Japan. She added that it would be a good idea to wait for The Consul General's and for Board member Olga Ramudo's feedback upon their return from Japan.

#### CARTAGENA DE INDIAS, COLOMBIA

There are no updates to report.

#### **OPEN DISCUSSION**

Mrs. Belkys Perez informed the Board that the City hosted a delegation from Manta, Ecuador. Manta is located on the coast of Ecuador and is known for their surf and tuna industry. Mayor Mariana Valdivieso was among this group of delegates. The delegation was interested mainly in Smart City's best practices, sustainability, and resiliency. Raymundo Rodulfo, IT Director and Matthew Anderson, Assistant Director of Sustainability and Resiliency provided a presentation on each of the topics of interest. The group was very impressed with all the City's technology and best practices. Mayor Valdivieso also expressed her interest in establishing a Sister City Relationship with Coral Gables.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned.

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Respectfully submitted,  
Leticia Perez  
International Business Development Representative  
Economic Development Department  
City of Coral Gables