



International Affairs Coordinating Council (IACC)  
 Meeting Minutes  
 Monday, March 16, 2026  
 Location: 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>	P	-	E	-	-	-							Mayor Vince Lago
<b>Vicky Rua</b>	UA	-	P	-	-	-							Vice Mayor Rhonda Anderson
<b>Alfonso Cueto</b>	P	-	P	-	-	-							Comm. Richard Lara
<b>Raoul Cantero</b>	E	-	P	-	-	-							Comm. Ariel Fernandez
<b>Richard Montes de Oca</b>	P	-	P	-	-	-							Comm. Melissa Castro
<b>Ilsa Danielson</b>	P	-	UA	-	-	-							Peter Iglesias
<b>Estrellita Sibila</b>	P	-	P	-	-	-							Council-at-Large Appointment

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

The International Affairs Coordinating Council (IACC) meeting was called to order at 4:08 p.m. Vice Chair, Montes de Oca welcomed everyone to the Committee.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

A motion to approve the minutes from January 26, 2026, IACC meeting was made by Board member Rua and Board member Cueto seconded the motion which was passed unanimously.

**COUNTRY REPORT**

**LA ANTIGUA, GUATEMALA**

Belkys Perez presented plans for a large-scale cultural exhibition inspired by La Antigua’s traditional alfombra de aserrín (colored sawdust carpets), created by visiting Guatemalan artisans in partnership with the International Affairs Coordinating Council, the Coral Gables Museum, the city, and sponsors. The indoor installation will run from late March through mid-April. The exhibition will launch with a VIP reception followed by free public access, serving as both a cultural showcase and community engagement initiative. Board members strongly supported the project as a meaningful opportunity to highlight Guatemalan heritage and strengthen international partnerships.

**SAN ISIDRO, ARGENTINA**

Vice Chair Montes de Oca reported progress in building a relationship with San Isidro through coordination with the Consulate General of Argentina. Discussions highlighted shared interests in

sustainability, smart city initiatives, urban design, and cultural exchange. A virtual follow-up meeting is anticipated to develop a structured framework for continued collaboration.

**CARTAGENA DE INDIAS, COLOMBIA**

Cartagena de Indias was discussed as an example of the challenges in maintaining long-term international partnerships. While previous exchanges were successful, inconsistent follow-up and leadership changes limited sustained engagement. Members emphasized the need for annual structured programming to strengthen international relationships.

**SEVILLA, SPAIN**

Past collaborations with Sevilla were recognized for their cultural richness and strong attendance, featuring Andalusian traditions such as music, equestrian programming, food, and festival experiences. At the same time, logistical challenges provided valuable lessons for planning future large-scale international events in Coral Gables.

**URUGUAY**

The committee discussed an upcoming exhibition featuring Uruguayan artist Daniel Supervielle, whose work captures the emotion and energy of soccer stadium culture. Timed to align with the FIFA World Cup, the exhibition will include an opening reception and programming reinforcing Coral Gables’ strategy of connecting cultural diplomacy with major international events.

**MEXICO**

In partnership with the Consulate General of Mexico, Coral Gables is developing a series of cultural and economic initiatives, including Sip & Shop on Miracle Mile and the public art installation Giralda Sky–Cielo Tejido at Giralda Plaza. Timed with seasonal events and World Cup momentum, these activations are designed to promote cultural exchange, support entrepreneurs, and enhance public spaces.

**OPEN DISCUSSION**

The committee discussed evolving beyond the traditional Sister Cities model toward a broader International Affairs framework centered on active partnerships, measurable engagement, and year-round cultural programming. Ideas included an International Food & Wine Festival, International Week, and rotating global marketplaces, supported by university partnerships, stronger consular coordination, and strategic public art initiatives to position Coral Gables as a leading international cultural destination.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Board member Cueto and seconded by Board member Sibila. The motion passed unanimously.

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