

CORAL GABLES

THE CITY BEAUTIFUL

International Affairs Coordinating Council (IACC)
Meeting Minutes
Monday, October 23, 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
Olga Ramudo	-	-	-	-	-	X	P	P	A	P			Mayor Vince Lago
Vicky Rua	-	-	-	-	-	X	P	P	A	P			Vice Mayor Rhonda Anderson
Sadia M. Raja	-	-	-	-	-	X	P	A	P	E			Comm. Kirk Menendez
Raoul Cantero	-	-	-	-	-	X	E	P	A	E			Comm. Ariel Fernandez
Richard Montes de Oca	-	-	-	-	-	X	P	P	A	P			Comm. Melissa Castro
Alejandra Collarte	-	-	-	-	-	X	E	P	A	P			Peter Iglesias, City Manager
Rafael Gavarrete	-	-	-	-	-	X	E	A	P	E			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 4:18 p.m.

Chair Ramudo welcomed everyone.

Excused Board Members’ Absence

Board member Collarte made a motion to excuse Raoul Cantero, Rafael Gavarrete, and Sadia Raja. Board member Rua seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. There was no discussion regarding the absences.

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

COUNTRY REPORT

- AIX-EN-PROVENCE, FRANCE**

Board member Rua reported that she visited Aix-en-Provence on September 20th and stayed for 2 nights. Before she traveled to France she was in contact with Jerome Borgies from Aix-en-Provence, who tried to connect Board member Rua with the Mayor, but she happened to be out of town. She added that she met with Karina, who is the representative for International Cooperation and the one who invited her to lunch. She mentioned that Karina would like more people to know about France. She would like to see more engagements by promoting French events and activities.

Her main idea is to promote in Coral Gables everything that is French. She talked about a transit system they have in the downtown area of the city where only small taxis and electrical buses have access to; she would like to bring this transit system to the City of Coral Gables.

Mrs. Belkys Perez suggested putting her in contact with the director of the Parking Department, Kevin Kinney. Another idea that Karina had was regarding exchange students. There is a large university in Aix-en-Provence. Chair Ramudo reported that the University of Miami also has an exchange student program.

Karina also informed Mrs. Rua that she visited Coral Gables in November of 2017; she came with a delegation from Aix-en-Provence. Ms. Leticia Perez informed the Board members that she remembers the visit, she participated in a luncheon meeting with this delegation; and Javier Betancourt, who was then the Director of Economic Development gave a presentation about the City of Coral Gables.

Chair Ramudo believes Karina's ideas are wonderful, but she wants to know if they are going to do the same for Coral Gables, she said they should also promote our city in Aix-en-Provence. She proposed to draft a plan where both cities agree and sign off on it. She went on to mention that part of the plan could include having representatives in each of these cities write articles and publish them in the Coral Gables Magazine to distribute them in both cities. Also, she talked about connecting to Air France to get them to sponsor a few tickets for either coming or going to France. Also using our smart city platform as a way of collaboration between both cities.

Board member Rua finished her report saying that she would write a memorandum of understanding to send to the Mayor of Aix-en-Provence.

- **QUITO, ECUADOR**

Vice Chair Montes de Oca provided a brief update about Quito. He informed board members that Daniel Noboa, a conservative candidate won the elections on October 15th of this year. He said that at this point he is waiting to find out more about the election to have them reengage and move forward with the Sister City conversations and objectives.

In addition, he recently reached out to his counterpart Juan Teran who helped with the introduction and visit of the Minister of Ecuador, and with additional connections within Ecuador's legislature. Their main interests now are Telecom, Smart City, and some cultural components as well. He told Board members that he will have some bullet points ready for the next meeting like the ones Board member Rua prepared for today. He would like also to plan a trip to Quito, Ecuador during the first quarter of year 2024.

- **SAN ISIDRO, ARGENTINA**

Board member Collarte gave a brief report about the elections in Argentina. She informed the Board members that on October 22, 2023, Argentina had their presidential, governors and mayors elections; she reported that the party who had more points and more seats now is the same as Kirchner's. She added that the second candidate is not a politician, he is an Economist, who played football and had a rock band. Nevertheless, since none of these candidates reached the 50 percentage mark required, a runoff election has been scheduled for November 19th, 2023.

She reported that Gustavo Pose who has been the Mayor for San Isidro for almost all his life, wanted his daughter to follow the legacy but she lost on the primaries. Ramon Lanus won the election and is to take office on December 10th. Board member Collarte will try to find someone from his staff to start a conversation with to be able to continue the Sister City relationship.

OPEN DISCUSSION

Board member Collarte informed the Board about the delegation that came from Dubai. She said there were around 50 people. She mentioned that the Dubai Multimodal Commodity Center, which is the Free Zone in Dubai, has gaming and energy clusters with about 3,000 companies. They are also looking for companies in Miami Dade County to do business in Dubai.

She also talked about a delegation of 22 businesses coming from Chile on November 6th, 2023. She added that invitations were sent out to all members.

Vice Chair Montes de Oca brought the subject about the World Cup coming to the Americas in 2026. He announced that the entire legal and compliance department among other FIFA staff is relocating to Coral Gables. Board members and City of Coral Gables staff expressed their mutual interest in connecting with someone from FIFA. Chair Ramudo informed the members that she has a meeting on Friday with a FIFA representative, she will keep us posted.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned.

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