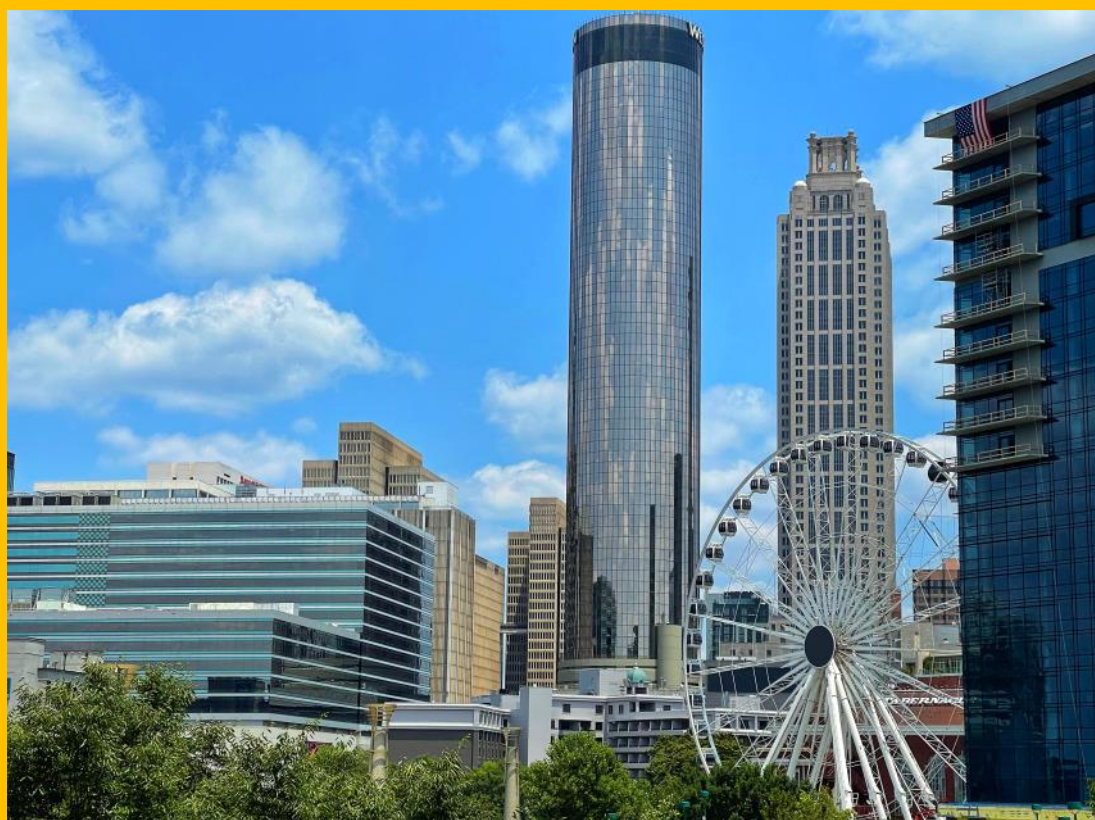


ATLANTA SISTER CITIES COMMISSION



ANNUAL REPORT 2024



CITY OF ATLANTA

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Greetings:

As the 61st Mayor of Atlanta, I am pleased to offer my support to the Atlanta Sister Cities Commission (ASCC) and Atlanta's 17 sister-city relationships. Our involvement with the ASCC spans decades, and it serves as an essential part of Atlanta's international community.

My administration and the Mayor's Office of International and Immigrant Affairs work to promote peace and prosperity through subnational diplomacy. The work of the dedicated ASCC chairs and committee members supports this mission and continues to position Atlanta as a global city.

This year, the ASCC celebrated two milestone anniversaries. We commemorated the 50th anniversary of Atlanta's sister-city relationships with Lagos, Nigeria, and Toulouse, France. In partnership with the Mayor's Office of International and Immigrant Affairs and the Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs, we unveiled Atlanta's newest murals created by Nigerian and French artists. Atlanta-based and Lagos-born artist Chinemerem Omeh unveiled his mural titled "Old Tunes Awaken the Young Spirit," which incorporates cultural elements of his native Nigeria and the state of Georgia. In addition, Toulouse artist Tilt returned to Atlanta to restore his Downtown mural, "Flag," which he created in 2012. This mural, a Downtown staple for over ten years, highlights the lasting relationship between our two cities.

Continuing our Year of the Youth initiatives, we have also welcomed several high school youth delegations to the City of Atlanta from Belgium, Fukuoka, and Nuremberg. These students visited Atlanta to interact with local high school students, learn about Atlanta's civil rights history, and expand their cultural awareness.

I encourage you to explore the ASCC 2024 Annual Report to view the dozens of activities and achievements of the Committees this year. I always say that Atlanta is a group project. Progress would not be possible without the efforts made by the Atlanta Sister Cities Commission, advocates, and volunteers who work tirelessly to empower and build upon people-to-people diplomacy.

The City of Atlanta salutes the Atlanta Sister Cities Commission's continued efforts to strengthen relations with our counterparts across the globe. We look forward to continuing to foster and strengthen these relationships.

Sincerely,

Mayor Andre Dickens

Atlanta Sister Cities



Ancient Olympia – Greece 1994

Brussels – Belgium 1983

Bucharest – Romania 1994

Cotonou – Benin 1995

Fukuoka – Japan 2005

Lagos – Nigeria 1974

Montego Bay – Jamaica 1972

Newcastle-Upon-Tyne – Great Britain 1977

Nuremberg – Germany 1998

Port-of-Spain – Trinidad 1987

Rio de Janeiro – Brazil 1972

Ra'anana – Israel 2000

Salcedo – Dominican Republic 1996

Daegu – Korea 1981

Taipei – Taiwan 1979

Tbilisi – Republic of Georgia 1988

Toulouse – France 1974



About ASCC

The Atlanta Sister Cities Commission (ASCC) fosters global connections by forming friendship links between the Atlanta community and similar jurisdictions worldwide. These partnerships promote goodwill, cultural understanding, and collaboration through a wide range of mutually beneficial programs.

ASCC actively encourages the participation of diverse citizens in developing and maintaining international relationships. It oversees the establishment of sister city affiliations, managing the process and supporting dedicated committees for each recognized partnership.

The commission's vibrant exchange programs span education, culture, philanthropy, economic development, and social initiatives. These efforts have earned recognition and awards from Sister Cities International for their outstanding contributions to community outreach and economic and educational advancement.

Currently, ASCC oversees Atlanta's 17 sister city relationships, striving to enhance global awareness and foster goodwill through people-to-people diplomacy. Its platform empowers Atlantans to explore diverse cultures, expand academic horizons, stimulate trade and investment, support philanthropic efforts, and elevate Atlanta's standing in the global community.



Atlanta's sister cities activities contribute to the local economy through business and trade, tourism, education, and cultural programs.

Through strategic relationships, ASCC has contributed significantly to Atlanta's global footprint. Notable achievements include:

- **Economic Impact:** Companies like Sage North America and NurnbergMesse have chosen Atlanta for their North American operations.
- **Global Connectivity:** Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport has extended its reach to Belgium, Nigeria, Jamaica, and the Dominican Republic.
- **Educational Growth:** Georgia Tech established a global campus in France.
- **Philanthropy:** Over \$80 million in medical supplies and services have been donated, benefiting more than 50,000 patients in Jamaica.
- **Cultural Engagement:** Over 300,000 visitors annually enjoy the Atlanta Christkindl Market, celebrating German culture.

Collectively, these initiatives contribute nearly \$100 million to the local economy, driven by business and trade, tourism, education, and cultural programs. ASCC continues to position Atlanta as a leading city for international collaboration and cultural exchange.

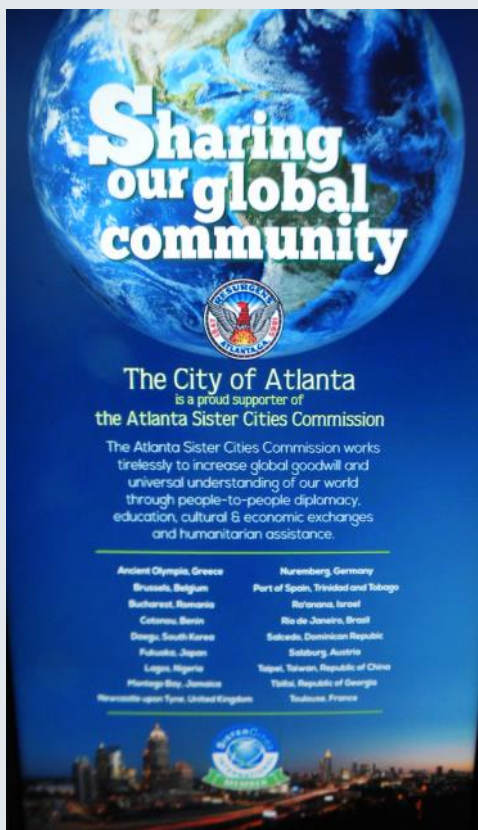
Chairman's Letter



Matt Ohm
Chair
Atlanta Sister Cities Commission

I am pleased to submit to you the 2024 Annual Report of the Atlanta Sister Cities Commission (ASCC). In addition to the activities of the various committees, ASCC carries out its role and function in relation to Atlanta's Sister Cities program.

We were pleased to serve the City of Atlanta and its international community during 2024 and look forward to the continued growth and expansion of the Sister Cities program under your administration.



The Atlanta Sister Cities Commission (ASCC) was chartered by the City of Atlanta and codified in Atlanta City Ordinance No. 1979-71. The organization is managed by a Chair appointed by the Mayor of Atlanta and ratified by a majority of the Atlanta City Council.

The full 'board' of the Commission comprises the Chair, three additional Mayoral appointees and two members appointed by the City Council. In addition, the chairpersons of each Sister City Committee, or their designee, serve on the Commission.

Elections are held annually to select a Vice Chair, a Secretary and a Treasurer. Each elected officer serves a one-year term. Elected officials of the Commission are restricted to two consecutive terms in office.

The Commission is supported by members of the Mayor's Office staff who participate in monthly and special meetings, help shape the Commission's policy and act as liaison with the Mayor.

ASCC maintains a web site with annual reports and information on each of the sister cities. Please visit www.atlsistercities.com. Also, please visit the Commission's page on LinkedIn <https://www.linkedin.com/company/atlanta-sister-cities-commission/>

The Atlanta Sister Cities Commission Foundation, Inc is a Nonprofit 501(c)(3) Corporation, organized to engage in charitable, educational and scientific programs that support the Atlanta Sister Cities Commission and the international endeavors of the City of Atlanta.

50th Year Celebrations

Atlanta sister city partnerships celebrate their 50th year in 2024 —Lagos, Nigeria and Toulouse, France.



The 50th Anniversary of the Atlanta-Lagos sister-city relationship is celebrated at a reception honoring the placement of a mural by Lagos artist Chinemerem Omeh in downtown Atlanta.

The sister city relationship between Atlanta and Lagos dates back to 1974 under Mayor Maynard Holbrook Jackson whose sister was married to a Nigerian living in Lagos. It was Atlanta's first African sister city, validating Atlanta's claim as America's gateway city to Africa.

The Atlanta-Lagos Sister City Committee played a major role in the establishment of the Consulate General of Nigeria in Atlanta and the addition of Delta Air Lines' direct nonstop flight between Atlanta and Lagos.

Through these efforts there has been a steady rise in Atlanta's Nigerian population and Nigerian organizations in the metro Atlanta area. Atlanta is now home to the fifth largest Nigerian diaspora population in the United States.

It has also created improved opportunities for Nigerians living in the Atlanta Metro area but particularly students attending area schools.

Atlanta-Lagos Sister City Committee developed a counterpart committee in Lagos to provide a link and official ties between Lagos and Atlanta. It provides support for the Consulate and a leadership mentoring role for the emerging multitude of Nigerian organizations.

Atlanta began her official sister city relationship with Toulouse on December 17, 1974 when then mayors Maynard Jackson of Atlanta and Pierre Baudis of Toulouse signed a proclamation declaring Toulouse and Atlanta sister cities. Jackson had lived in Toulouse as a child, while his mother was pursuing her doctorate in French. He felt that the two sister cities would make excellent partners.

Since 1974, the Atlanta Toulouse Sister City Committee has maintained an active and productive relationship with Toulouse, France. With a membership in Georgia of over 100, the Atlanta Toulouse Sister Cities Committee communicates with our corresponding committee in Toulouse, and we maintain a focus on French culture. We host visitors from Toulouse who come to Atlanta for business or social purposes. We share activities with Alliance Francaise, the French American Chamber of Commerce-Atlanta, and the French Heritage Society that promote French-American collaborations and expansion of interests.



The 50th anniversary of the Atlanta-Toulouse partnership is celebrated in Toulouse City Hall.

Events In 2024

1. Remembrance / January

Atlanta—Ra'anana: Holocaust Remembrance event, 'Courage and Conviction' addressing the Holocaust in Lithuania.

2. Fete des Rois / January

Atlanta—Toulouse: ATSCC celebrates the New Year at the Fete des Rois soirée.

3. Vasilopita / January

Atlanta—Olympia: Committee sponsors Greek New Year celebration.

4. Brunch Meeting / January

Atlanta—Toulouse: ATSCC members enjoyed brunch at Tiny Lou's in the Hotel Clermont.

5. Tour / January

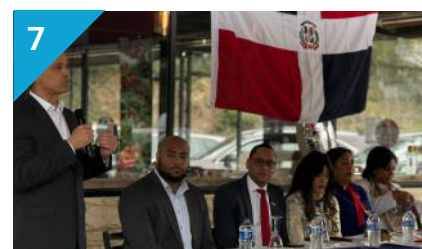
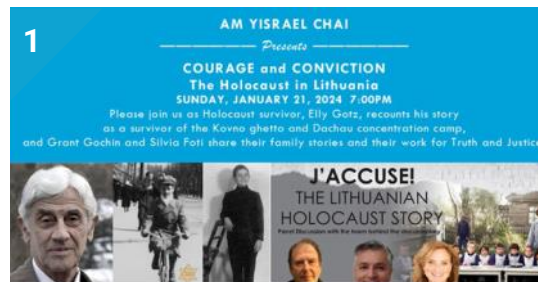
Atlanta—Toulouse: ATSCC members enjoy a visit to the art gallery—The Distillery of Modern Art— in Chamblee.

6. Emperor Birthday / February

Atlanta—Fukuoka: Birthday reception in Atlanta for His Majesty the Emperor of Japan. Fukuoka table display.

7. Independence Day / February

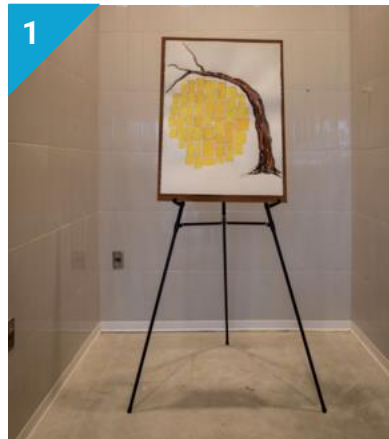
Atlanta—Salcedo: Dominican Independence Day is celebrated with addresses from the ASSCC chair, Dominican Consular staff, a sports journalist and a representative of the Mayor's Office of International and Immigrant Affairs.



Events In 2024

1. Beltline Art / February

Atlanta—Lagos: Atlanta BeltLine commences an artist residency and exhibition, featuring two Lagos-based artists. (Photo: Isadora Pennington, Rough Draft Atlanta).



2. La Chandeleur / February

Atlanta—Toulouse: ATSCC celebrates La Chandeleur, the traditional French evening to enjoy crepes.



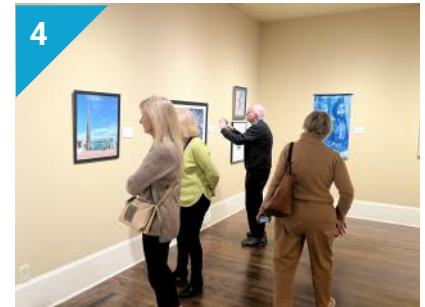
3. Black History / February

Atlanta—Cotonou: Cotonou chair visits Benin to celebrate Black History Week.



4. Exhibition / February

Atlanta—Toulouse: ATSCC members take in the Georgia Photography exhibition at the Marietta Museum of Art.



5. Exchange Lessons / March

Atlanta—Fukuoka: Students from Coretta Scott King Young Women's Leadership Academy presented lessons learned on their 2023 trip to Fukuoka to the Consul General of Japan in Atlanta, Mr. Mio Maeda.



6. Daffodil Dash / March

Atlanta—Ra'anana: The 2024 Daffodil Dash was held in March. The Daffodil Dash raises funds for holocaust education and genocide awareness.



Events In 2024

1. Group Tour / March

Atlanta—Toulouse: ATSCC members toured Paradise Gardens, the home of visionary artist Howard Finster in Summerville.

2. Documentary / March

Atlanta—Nuremberg: A screening of Nuremberg native Steffen Thomas's documentary, 'Rock and Chisel' took place at the Halle Foundation in Atlanta.

3. Student Exchange / April

Atlanta—Fukuoka: Five students from Fukuoka visit Atlanta for a week of cultural exchange activities.

4. Lecture / April

Atlanta—Toulouse: Historian, Dr. Monique Seefried, gave a lecture to ATSCC members on France's role in World War I.

5. Outing / April

Atlanta—Toulouse: After a visit to the planetarium, ATSCC members enjoy a hike in Deepdene Park in Druid Hills.



Events In 2024

1. A Gift Of Art / May

Atlanta—Nuremberg: A painting by artist Steffen Thomas was presented as a gift from Atlanta Mayor Dickens to the Mayor of Nuremberg.

2. Exhibition / May

Atlanta—Toulouse: ATSCC members toured the Balenciaga exhibition at SCAD Fash.

3. Artist Presentation / May

Atlanta—Lagos: The Atlanta Mayor's Office of International and Immigrant Affairs hosted two artists from Lagos for a talk on the sister city agreement and the unveiling of public art.

4. Wine Tasting / May

Atlanta—Toulouse: ATSCC members sampled wines from around France at a tasting.

5. Student Festival / June

Atlanta—Daegu: The 18th Daegu International University Student Camp, was attended by students from Daegu's sister and friendship cities.

6. Sneaker Ball / June

Atlanta—Cotonou: The committee hosted the First Annual Sneaker Ball to raise awareness and resources for the work in Cotonou.



Events In 2024

1. Anniversary Planning / June

Atlanta—Fukuoka: Atlanta chair held a meeting with the International Affairs Section's staff at Fukuoka City Hall discuss the 20th anniversary in 2025.



2. Consul Welcome / June

Atlanta—Lagos: The Mayor's Office welcomed the newest Consul General at the Consulate General of Nigeria in Atlanta, Ambassador Auwalu Jega



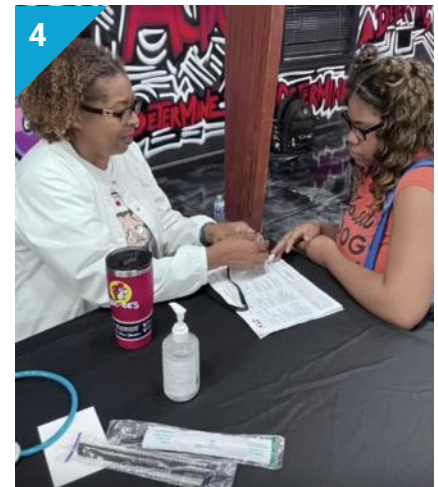
3. Nuit en Blanc / June

Atlanta—Toulouse: ATSCC members turned out for the annual Nuit en Blanc soirée.



4. Back to School / July

Atlanta—Montego Bay: Children receive dental, medical, vision and hearing screenings before returning to school.



5 Hurricane Relief / July

Atlanta—Port of Spain: After Hurricane Beryl ravaged the islands of Grenada, Carriacou and Petit Martinique and St Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad & Tobago's government, stakeholders and humanitarian organizations such as Port of Spain Sister Cities Network sent hurricane relief supplies.



6. Trilith / July

Atlanta—Toulouse: ATSCC members stopped at Trilith and other sites on the Southern Hollywood Film Tour.



Events In 2024

1. Exhibition / July

Atlanta—Toulouse: ATSCC members toured *Al Dente: The History of Pasta* exhibition at the Museum of Design Atlanta.

2. Independence / August

Atlanta—Cotonou: The committee co-hosted Benin Independence Week with the Benin Diaspora USA.

3. Remembrance / August

Atlanta—Port of Spain: Committee assisted with The Emancipation Day of remembrance to celebrate African culture.

Mission Preparation / August

Atlanta—Montego Bay: The committee spent the month gathering supplies for shipping to Jamaica ahead of the October Medical Mission.

4. Museum / August

Atlanta—Toulouse: ATSCC members viewed the collection at the CDC Museum.

5. JapanFest / September

Atlanta—Fukuoka: Committee and Fukuoka City Hall staff participated to promote Fukuoka.



6. Korean Event / September

Atlanta—Daegu: The Daegu relationship is represented at the Korean Festival by The Korean Association of Greater Atlanta.

Events In 2024

1. Student Brunch / September

Atlanta—Toulouse: ATSCC held a brunch for Georgia Tech graduate students from the Metz, France, campus.



2. Fundraiser / September

Atlanta—Montego Bay: Fundraising event to provide supplies to the annual health mission in October.



3. Anniversary / September

Atlanta —Toulouse: ATSCC President Wes Samson with the Vice Mayor of Toulouse at Toulouse City Hall for the kickoff of the Atlanta Toulouse 50th Anniversary.



4. Greek Festival / September

Atlanta—Olympia: The Atlanta Greek Festival celebrates Greek culture with authentic food, and music dancing,



5. Planning / October

Atlanta—Cotonou: Atlanta Cotonou committee meeting with Mayor Luc Atrokpo to plan 2025 program.



6. Student Exchange / October

Atlanta—Nuremberg: Committee helped facilitate a student exchange between the Martin Behaim Gymnasium Nürnberg and the Atlanta Mays High School.



Events In 2024

1. Medical Mission / October

Atlanta—Montego Bay: Annual Vin Martin Memorial Health Mission provides dental, medical, vision, gynecological, mammogram and prostate screenings, as well as high school scholarships.



2. Mural Restoration / October

Atlanta—Toulouse: To celebrate the 50th anniversary, the mural 'Flag' by Toulouse artist Tilt, is restored in downtown Atlanta.



3. School Benefit / October

Atlanta—Cotonou: Atlanta Cotonou Committee School Supplies give away.



4. Film Festival / October

Atlanta—Olympia: The 9th annual Atlanta Greek Film Expo showcases five critically-acclaimed Greek feature films



5. Memorial / October

Atlanta—Ra'anana: 4,000 people gathered inside and outside Sandy Springs' Byers Theatre to commemorate those who died and those who remain hostages of the October 7th 2023 attack.



Photo: Bob Pipalis

6. Wonderland / November

Atlanta—Port of Spain: Committee presents a 'Carnival in Trinidad' theme decorated tree at the Winter Wonderland exhibition at Fernbank Museum.



Events In 2024

1. Anniversary Mural / November

Atlanta—Lagos: The 50th Anniversary of the Atlanta-Lagos sister-city relationship is celebrated in downtown Atlanta with the unveiling of a mural by Lagos artist Chinemerem Omeh.



2. Thanksgiving / November

Atlanta—Montego Bay: Committee provides food and fellowship to the residents of Nicholas House shelter.



3. Holiday Gifts / December

Atlanta—Cotonou: Committee distributes toys for children in Cotonou.



4. Migrants Day / December

Salcedo, Montego Bay, and Port of Spain Sister City Committees showcase cultural traditions, and diversity through food, and cultural traditions at World Migrants Day, organized by the Mayor's Office of International and Immigrant Affairs.



5. Fellowship / December

Atlanta—Montego Bay: Holiday food, fellowship and gifts for children are served in Atlanta and Montego Bay.



6. Holiday Market / December

Members of the Atlanta Sister Cities Commission and friends come together to celebrate the season at the Chriskindl Market in Atlanta.





Atlanta Sister Cities Commission

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COMMISSION LEADERSHIP

Mr. Matt Ohm, Chair

Dr. Margo Alexander, Ancient Olympia
Chair, Brussels

Mr. Nick Modares, Bucharest

Mr. Brandyn Pierce, Cotonou

Mr. John Lee, Daegu

Ms. Keiko Scott, Fukuoka

Dr. Augustine Esogbue, Lagos

Dr. Yvonne Smith, Montego Bay

Mr. David Smith, Newcastle

Ms. Dorothea Hockel, Nuremberg

Ms. Karen Clarke, Port of Spain

Dr. Arnold Heller, Ra'anana

Ms. Alexis Powers, Rio de Janeiro

Mr. Victor Ramirez, Salcedo

Mr. Allen Chang, Taipei

Ms. Nina Tickaradze, Tbilisi

Mr. Weslyn Samson, Toulouse