



Communiqué

MARCH 2008

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Calendar of Upcoming Events

March

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12 Greek Cultural Dinner	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20 Young Professionals Event	21	22
23	24	25	26	27 Sir Eldon Griffiths	28	29
30	31					

April

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9 Ambassador of Pakistan	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17 Ambassador of Bahrain	18	19
20	21	22	23 Young Professionals Event	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

For more details on upcoming events please visit our website:
www.sdwac.com

Past Events



Ambassador of Nicaragua, A. Cruz Sequeira, Jr.



Peter Kovach, U.S. State Department



Ambassador of Estonia, Väino Reinart



Ambassador of El Salvador, Rene Antonio León



Ambassador of Kazakhstan, Erlan Idrissov



Italian Cultural Dinner



Ambassador of Greece, Alexandros P. Mallias



Message from the new President of the San Diego World Affairs Council, Patrick Drinan, Ph.D.

Dear members,

The beginning of 2008 brought some changes to the San Diego World Affairs Council. Our President, Dr. Ina von Ber, had to step down because of occupational travel commitments that keep her out of San Diego much of the time. I stepped up from Vice President to President to fill the remainder of Ina's term through June 2008. The Board met in early January and elected two new Vice Presidents, Farouk al-Nasser and Joanne Snyder.

The fine trajectory of ambassadorial roundtables established by Dr. von Ber continues. Indeed, Council programming for the new year has been astounding!! The Ambassador of Kazakhstan to the United States spoke to us in mid-January and regaled us with size of the territory, its mineral wealth, physical beauty, and delicate position sitting between Russia and China. The Ambassador of Greece to the United States also spoke to us in mid-February. His expertise on Kosovo and the Balkans was not only impressive, but shared with more candor and detail than I have heard from a diplomat for a very long time. His excellent presentation was especially timely because of Kosovo's declaration of independence on February 17. We are following up the Ambassador's speech with a Greek cultural dinner in La Jolla on March 12. Call the office as soon as possible because this cultural dinner will be popular and will fill up quickly. Our good fortune on timing has not run out! We have secured the Ambassador of Pakistan to the United States on Wednesday, April 9. By the time you receive this Communiqué, we will have details to you by e-mail. There is probably no political situation in the world more sensitive than Pakistan's right now, with massive implications for south Asia and American foreign policy. Don't miss this one!

The Board is seeking the views of members on the full range of programming. You will see a membership survey in this Communiqué. It is important to gain your feedback; please fill out the survey and return to the office within the next two weeks. This data will be crucial for planning purposes for the next year. The Council plays an important civic function in promoting global political literacy. In a U.S. presidential election year, this importance should not be downplayed. The electronic media can saturate us with "spin" and the "horserace" attributes of the election. But we as citizens need more "meat" (apologies to my vegetarian friends!). Given that presidents have more power on foreign policy than domestic, the need for sustained, intense, and sophisticated discussion of international affairs by citizens is essential. I hope you are as proud as I am in the leadership role of the Council on this.

Please keep your eyes open for announcements of upcoming programs that we send out by e-mail. Some of our members may prefer invitations by regular postal service instead of by e-mail. If this describes you, please indicate by checking the appropriate line on the survey and make sure we have your best mailing address by phoning the office and indicating your name, address, and phone number as clearly as possible if the voice mail system is in use. Again, I want to thank the Board for their support as we reorganized in January. Special thanks also goes to our Management Intern, Alexis Romero, who has ably assisted us during the transition. Remember, return your surveys as soon as possible, and I look forward to seeing you and your guests at Council functions.

Sincerely,

Patrick Drinan, Ph.D. President, San Diego World Affairs Council

Membership Survey

Please respond by March 17, 2008. Thank you for taking time for this feedback and your commitment to global political literacy by your membership in the Council.

1. How long have you been a member of the San Diego World Affairs Council?

Under three years ____ Three to five years ____ More than five years ____

2. Are you a member of the North County chapter?

No ____ (If you select "no", move directly to question 3)

Yes ____ (If you select "yes", please answer the following questions)

Are you retired? Yes ____ No ____

If not retired, specify your profession: _____

3. How many events do you typically attend each year including cultural dinners and North County meetings?

Fewer than three ____ Three to five ____ More than five ____

4. What is your favorite program setting?

Visiting Diplomat luncheon ____ Visiting Diplomat dinner ____

North County programs ____ Young Professionals events ____

5. Do you bring friends or guests?

Frequently ____ Occasionally ____ Rarely ____

6. What kind of programming would you like to see more of?

Academics with expertise on a region or issue ____

Politicians speaking on foreign policy ____

Students speaking about what they are learning of the world ____

Journalists or editors speaking of their experience ____

More informal receptions ____

Other _____

7. What do you rely on most for your information on the world? (Check One)

Television and radio ____ Newspapers ____ The internet ____

8. Do e-mail program announcements fit your needs?

Yes ____

No ____ (If "no", please call the office at (619) 325-8200 to confirm your mailing address so that we may send program announcements to you via the USPS)

9. Have you changed your e-mail address in the last year?

Yes ____ (If "yes", please call the office at (619) 325-8200 with your new e-mail address)

No ____

Membership Survey Continued

10. Do you prefer...? (Check One)

Early events (Breakfast or Luncheons) ____

Later in the day events (Receptions or Dinners) ____

11. What is more important in your decision to attend a Council program?

Location ____

Cost ____

Something Else ____ Please Specify: _____

12. What is your general satisfaction with the SDWAC? (Check One)

Exceedingly satisfied ____ Moderately satisfied ____

Dissatisfied ____ Exceedingly dissatisfied ____

* Please add comments on your answer to question 8 below or on an additional page:

Please respond by March 17, 2008.

Thank you for taking time for this feedback and your commitment to global political literacy by your membership in the Council.
Place in a stamped envelope, addressed to:

San Diego World Affairs Council
1250 6th Avenue, Suite 110
San Diego, CA 92101

Recapping Past Events

OCTOBER



Ambassador of Nicaragua to the United States, Arturo Cruz Sequeira Jr., addressed the San Diego World Affairs Council on October 9, 2007 at Tom Ham's Light House on Harbor Island. After lunch, Ambassador Cruz openly discussed Nicaragua's political and economic situation, and with the help of his personal computer, the Ambassador provided detailed figures and statistics to help understand his country's economic plight. The Ambassador also offered a keen explanation of Nicaragua's delicate relationship with the International Monetary Fund, the United States, and Venezuela, and how crucial ties with all three are needed to ensure progress in the country.

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NOVEMBER



U.S. State Department Minister-Counselor for Public Affairs, Peter Kovach, addressed the Council on November 7, 2007. The presentation was held at UCSD's Garren Auditorium in La Jolla. Mr. Kovach discussed Pakistan's society and customs, highlighting differences between Punjab, Balochistan, and Sindh provinces. Mr. Kovach also addressed the state of emergency at that time, reflected on the political ramifications of the elections, and the defined differences between President Pervez Musharraf and the now deceased Benazir Bhutto.

On Tuesday, November 13th, 2007, the Council hosted a luncheon for the Ambassador of Estonia to the United States, Väino Reinart at Tom Ham's Lighthouse. Ambassador Reinart discussed Estonia's economic rise since the country's independence in 1992 from Soviet occupation. The Ambassador provided a detailed outline of the country's achievements in monetary reform, inflation reduction, the flat tax, property rights, and other issues such as asserting the rule of law.

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DECEMBER



Ambassador of El Salvador to the United States, Rene Antonio Leon Rodriguez, addressed Council members on Thursday, December 6th, 2007. The luncheon was held at Paradise Grille Restaurant in Del Mar. Ambassador Leon discussed the need for foreign investment in El Salvador in order to increase the country's moderate, but steady economic growth. His Excellency also addressed some of the most important issues on his agenda in the United States: immigration, immigrant rights in the United States, and how El Salvador's economy relies heavily on remittances sent home by these individuals. Finally, Ambassador Leon talked about the importance of building upon and strengthening, not just U.S.-El Salvador relations, but U.S.-Latin America relations as well, and reminded the audience that El Salvadorian troops continue to support U.S. efforts in Iraq.

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JANUARY 2008



On Wednesday, January 16th, 2008, the Council hosted a luncheon for the Ambassador of Kazakhstan to the United States, Erlan Idrissov, at Admiral Baker Clubhouse in Mission Valley. The Ambassador discussed Kazakhstan's future goals for economic growth and development, possible in large part, by the high demand for its natural resources from countries such as Russia, China, the U.S. and E.U. members. Ambassador Idrissov outlined the liberal economic reforms that brought Kazakhstan to its prominent position in central Asia and gave a detailed review of Kazakhstan's rich history, culture, geography and politics.

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On Tuesday, January 29th, 2008, Council members enjoyed a lovely evening at Jack and Giulio's Italian Restaurant in Old Town. Featuring USD professor, Dr. Susan Briziarelli, the event reminded everyone of the marvelous contributions of Italian culture.



FEBRUARY



Ambassador of Greece to the United States, Alexandros P. Mallias, addressed Council members on Wednesday, February 20, 2008 at the Handlery Hotel in Mission Valley. Focusing the discussion on South Eastern Europe as a region of utmost concern for Greece, the Ambassador displayed a superior knowledge of Kosovo and the Balkans, and explained his country's position with great detail and candor. The Ambassador also explained the country's dynamic presence in the region as a channel of communication between countries, and outlined his country's vision, where in 10 to 15 years, the Balkans will become full members of the European Union, with full compliance of EU standards and values. The Ambassador's visit was especially timely considering that Kosovo declared its independence only three days prior to the luncheon.

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Areas of Interest _____

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