



Communication about SICOGA 2018

31st Servas International Conference and General Assembly
13- 20 October 2018
International Youth Center Youth Hostel, Seoul, Korea



August 15 2018

Dear Servas members worldwide,
As Servas International Conference and General Assembly (SICOGA 2018) in Seoul in October 13 to 20 is getting closer we would like to update you with new information.
In this communication you find a conference status report, an overview of the programme and other useful information.

Jonny Sägänger, SI President

president@servas.org

On behalf of:

SI Exco

Servas Korea

SICOGA 2018 Organizing Team sicoga2018@servas.org

Penny Pattison SI General Secretary & SICOGA 2018 Conference Manager

generalsecretary@servas.org



Conference theme:
Connecting people and cultures for Peace

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These are the SICOGA participants

After registrations closed the SICOGA 2018 Organizing Team (OT) has gathered the following preliminary statistics:

Number of participants: 169

Gender: Male 67, Female 102

Age: Between 18 and 77.

Languages spoken: 166 of the participants understand English. Most of them also speak English.

The SICOGA 2018 participants have the following roles:

Delegates: 47

SI Executive Committee (SI Exco) members: 6

International roles: 14

Youth: 15

Moderators: 3

Logistic Volunteers: 8

Observers: 76



Subject Working Groups discussions underway now

There are five different Subject Working Groups (SWGs) where the various motions submitted to SICOGA 2018 are being discussed now, before the start of SICOGA 2018 in October. All Servas members, in whichever country they may be residing, irrespective of whether they will be attending SICOGA or not, can participate in the discussions going on in the SWGs. We encourage all Servas members to go to the website and look at the motions and SWGs, and join in the conversation!

Information about the motions and SWGs, and the people to contact if you wish to join one, is on the conference website at <https://servas.org/sicoga2018/general-assembly-motions.php>.

A new communication channel via WhatsApp

The SICOGA OT has started to send some information to conference participants via WhatsApp (WA) as well as via email, for those who wish to use it. WA will also be used for communication during the conference.

SICOGA 2018 event is closed to visitors

SICOGA 2018 is a working conference, and the whole week-long schedule has been designed for the participants only. Therefore, it was decided many months ago by the SICOGA 2018 Team (Servas Korea and SI Exco) that participation is only for the full 7 days. Shorter stays, including day visits or people dropping in for a few hours, will not be accepted. This information was included as part of the terms of participation for the conference.

We have already received about 20 requests for a short visit or stay nearby and visit for a short while. I would, with this message, gently but firmly request anybody who is making such plans to refrain from such visits. These visits will cause challenges for both the organizers and those who plan to come.

If Servas members wish to meet participants, or if participants wish to meet with friends who are not attending the conference, this will need to happen outside the conference location or before or after the conference.

Ideally in the future we will have more inclusive SI conferences, open to everyone via a physical auditorium or via Internet transmission, but at this moment we don't have that possibility and that's a fact we have to accept.

Jonny Sågänger

SI President

Excursion day to Demilitarized Zone

The excursion day during the SICOGA 2018 week will be to the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) which is the one and only in the world.

The DMZ is a buffer zone, which was established on July 27, 1953 when the Armistice Agreement was signed between UN and North Korea. It is a de facto new border between South and North Korea. It vividly captures the scars and wounds of the Korean war as well as the wishes and hopes of all Koreans for the future.

It is not only the safest battlefield but also the one and only DMZ in the world. The tour includes visits in Imjinkak Peace Park, ID Check, Dorasan Station, Unification Village, Dora Observatory and the 3rd Infiltration Tunnel.

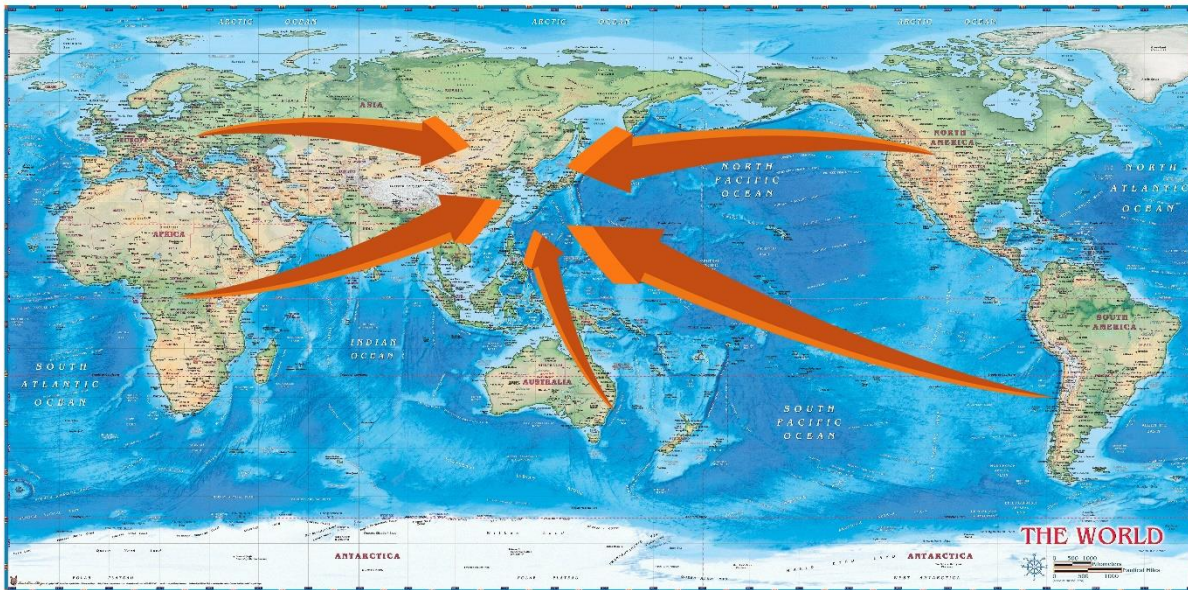
SICOGA Organising Team meets every month

Since the end of 2017 the SICOGA Organising Team meets on a regular basis for web-based video meetings.

Participants are key conference organizers from Servas Korea and SI. During the meetings, the participants share status reports and make plans for the upcoming conference. In between the meetings there is of course a lot of interaction between the members of the group.

Miscellaneous SICOGA 2018 information

* More information about SICOGA 2018 can be found at <https://servas.org/sicoga2018/> which will give the most up-to-date information about planning for the conference.



Members of Servas from all over the world will gather for SICOGA 2018 in Seoul in October.