



NEWS BULLETIN

FROM THE SERVAS INTERNATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

– News from Servas International Executive Committee (Exco) –

===== Vol. 11 No 4 December 2018 =====

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Servas delegates and guests from around the world gather at the 2018 General Assembly in Seoul, Republic of Korea.

SI GA DECISIONS TO BUILD FOR THE FUTURE

- ★ AN INCREASED AMOUNT OF SERVAS INTERNATIONAL'S EXPENDITURES WILL DURING THE NEXT THREE YEARS BE SPENT ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SERVAS ONLINE PLATFORM - TO MAKE SERVAS AS A MODERN, SOCIAL MEDIA SAVVY PEACE AND HOSPITALITY ORGANISATION.

The above will be the effect of the decisions outlined below that were made by national delegates from almost 50 countries during the Servas International General Assembly (SI GA) that took place in Seoul, the capital of the Republic of Korea on October 13-20 2018.

With the increased expenditure for Servas Online, Servas International will run at a deficit over each of the next three years (See the graphic image in the sidebar to the right) and may potentially run out of money within the next few years unless revenues are increased.

FUTURE OF SICOGA IS AT RISK

The SI GA delegates envisioned that Servas should separately raise donations to strengthen the finances of the Servas International movement. SI Exco needs your help to carry out the mission to raise money. Those with ideas and experience in fund raising, please volunteer your time and write to president@servas.org. The future of the triannual Servas International Conference and General Assembly (SICOGA) will also be at risk unless we independently raise money for this global event.

Another major SI GA decision was to make an amendment to the SI statutes. The statutes will after an amendment better reflect the principles, values, ethos, vision and mission that the organisation is based on: the belief in the equal rights of all human beings as a foundation for a more peaceful world.

We list below some of the principal decisions that were made by the national delegates.

Guide to the text: All the decisions and general assembly minutes can be found on this website:

<https://servas.org/sicoga2018/general-assembly-post-ga.php>

All the decisions have a serial number and a decision number.

Short summaries of a selection of decisions (the name and number of the SI GA motion is written in the bold headline):

- **Establish Working Group to Manage and Develop ServasOnline (AUS-001)**

A working group will be established to manage and develop the ServasOnline System which is the foundation for the website servas.org, the membership administration system and other functions on the Servas International platform on the Internet. *Serial number 87, decision 40.*

- **ServasOnline priority (GER-001)**

The completion of the transition to the ServasOnline System should be the number 1 priority for Servas International for the next 3 years. *Serial number 86, decision 39.*

Budget for 2019 - 2021			
NOTE: FY Apr 1 - Mar 31			
OPERATIONAL BUDGET			
	(Currency: Swiss Francs - CHF)	Previous	Notes
	2018/19	2017/18	2016/17
INCOME			
Stamp Fees	55,000	55,000	55,000
GA Participation fees collected	71	100,000	100,000
Bank Interest Income	25	25	25
TOTAL INCOME	55,096	155,025	155,025
EXPENDITURE			
EXCO			
Field expenses, Meetings	6,500	6,500	6,500
Internet	1,500	1,000	500
Administrative / Administration	0	0	0
Total EXCO	8,000	7,500	7,000
REGIONAL AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES			
Regional and Youth Development Activities	1,000	1,000	1,000
Total Regional and Youth Development	1,000	1,000	1,000
Other Operating Expenses	26,767	8,200	0
TOTAL EXPENSES	118,867	100,367	250,366
Surplus/(Deficit) after normal operating expenses	-63,842	-45,342	-45,341
OTHER NON-OPERATING EXPENSES			
Legal expenses for incorporating Servas International	10,000	0	0
Surplus/(Deficit) after planned expenses	-73,842	-45,342	-45,341
OTHER NON-OPERATING EXPENSES			
Legal expenses for incorporating Servas International	10,000	0	0
Surplus/(Deficit) after planned expenses	-73,842	-45,342	-45,341
Balance of cash balance (beginning of 2018)			
Cash balance (beginning of 2018)	612,510	55,000	55,000
Projected operational outflow 2018	686,384	0	0
Projected cash balance (beginning of 2019)	(73,874)	55,000	55,000

To download a pdf of the 2019 SI Budget
[CLICK HERE.](#)

- **ServasOnline maintenance by professionals (FRA-001)**

The ServasOnline System yearly budget for maintenance and development will be upgraded to 72 450 Swiss francs (CHF) per year during the period 2019-2021.

Serial number 58, decision 28.

- **SI DC was approved 18 000 Swiss Francs (POL-RWA-001)**

SI GA approved a one-off contribution of 18 000 Swiss Francs (CHF) from Servas International to the SI Development Fund reserve to support the work of the Development Committee, SI DC, between 2019 and 2021. The amount is based on what SI has contributed for SI DC during previous years.

- **App for mobile phones (SPA-ITA-002)**

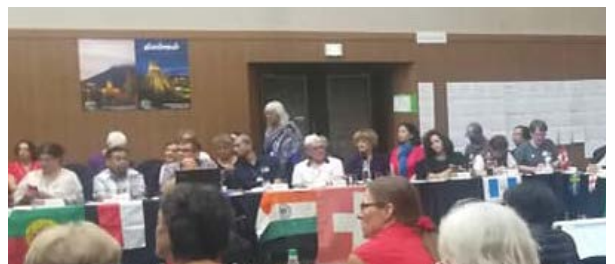
It will be investigated how Servas International can improve the new generation of communication tools, with special focus on mobile, easy to use communication tools. Special attention should be given to the modern tools used by young people and other tech savvy Servas individual members. *Serial number 88, decision 41.*

- **SI Statutes change: Principles, organization, minimize ecological footprint (EXC-015)**

Servas International's statutes will after a General Assembly decision better reflect the principles, values, ethos, vision and mission that the organisation is based on, as well as the organisation's goals on long term and short term. The first fundamental principle of Servas International is according to the amended statutes the belief in the dignity and worth of the human person, and in the equal rights of all human beings as a foundation for a more peaceful world. The second fundamental principle is to respect and care for the Earth and to live within its capacity to support life. The ethos and values are based on that the members of Servas believe that our lives are enriched when we meet, interact, share and learn from each other. *Serial number 94, decision 45.*

- **Flat Rate Quotas (ITA-001)**

The formula for the financial contribution made by member countries to Servas International will be changed. During a trial period (2019-21) the amount of contribution will be fixed, based on the average contribution paid for stamps in the last 3 years (2016-2017-2018). After that the contribution will be computed based on a formula that uses a combination of: a) average contribution of last three



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years b) number of members c) per capita income of country. This formula will be tested during the trial period (2019-2021).

The next SI General Assembly will vote to decide whether to adopt the new system being tested during the trial period. *Serial number 85, decision 38.*

• **Develop procedures for recruitment of new Servas individual members (EXC-016)**

SI GA 2018 decided that a team should be appointed to explore methods, in coordination with the national groups in charge of interviews, for handling applications from people who would like to become members of Servas as travellers, hosts and day hosts. *Serial number 42, decision 24.*

• **Servas commitment to gender balance in decision making bodies (EXC-018)**

SI GA 2018 decided that SI should be committed to the active pursuit of gender balance in all areas of SI's work and at all levels of governance. *Serial number 95, decision 46.*

• **Climate change consciousness: priority for Servas (CAN-001)**

Servas International will raise the climate consciousness of its global community. *Serial number 93, decision 44.*

• **Improve Servas International Conference and General Assembly, SICOGA (EXC-017)**

A team named SICOGA Development Team, SDT, will be appointed by the SI Exco for 2019-2021 to lead the project to develop the concept for the triannual Servas International Conference and General Assembly (SICOGA). Two main goals have been identified: a) Introduction of measures to increase active and passive participation from the Servas community by members of Servas who are not able to be physically present at the venue in the country where the SICOGA takes place.

b) Introduction of measures to minimize the environmental impact of the SICOGAs. *Serial number 35, decision 20.*

• **Commission re: organizational change in Servas (BRI-002)**

The SI GA approved the setting up of a Commission by SI Exco to investigate options for a new global structure that incorporates both Servas International and national member groups.

The Commission will:

1. Identify where there are barriers to change.
2. Explore the viability of a range of organisational models to meet the changing needs of Servas whilst retaining its core values as a peace organisation.
3. Work to a clearly defined remit and prepare a report with recommendations for consultation with national member groups and the wider membership.

Where options involve changes to the SI statutes these would be decided upon at the next General Assembly in 2021. *Serial number 30, decision 17.*

• **Youth and Families Opportunities (SPA-ITA-003)**

The SI GA encouraged the Youth & Families committee to develop new and existing programs, for example the SYLE and JUNIOR SYLE, UP & DOWN (young travellers hosted by elder members) and LET'S GO (group of youngsters from one country inviting other groups of different countries).

Serial number 34, decision 19.

Jonny Sägänger, SI President

PILOT FOR E-LOIS AND E-STAMPS EXPANDS 2019

The ServasOnline Developers will expand the use of e-LOIs and e-stamps to more countries during 2019. A number of Servas countries that use the ServasOnline System have during December been invited to use e-stamps in place of paper stamps in 2019.

Servas Canada has piloted the e-LOI and e-stamp process during the 2018 calendar year. The project leaders have been very happy with the process, except for a few problems that needed to be worked out before more countries could come onboard.

Some things to consider when deciding whether to adopt e-Stamps this year:

Candidates for the extended pilot should have good familiarity with ServasOnline administrative processes and be prepared to do some country customization of the LOI.

To use only e-stamps, all LOIs must be issued through ServasOnline.

For more information contact Judy Bartel: judy.bartel@gmail.com

Judy Bartel, Servas Canada & ServasOnline Team

VISIT SICOGA 2018 WITH YOUR EARS

Lauren Gordon is the National Secretary of Servas Australia, and she's also the editor of the podcast "*Letter of Introduction*".

Episode 2 of the podcast has the title "*Six Nights in Banghwa: Tales of the Seoul International Conference*" where you as a listener get an insight to what happened during the global Servas conference in October 2018 through a number of interviews and editorial comments.

You can listen to the podcast "*Letter of Introduction: Episode 2*" on both iTunes and Spotify.

The Spotify link: https://open.spotify.com/show/62lCaQ8ATwBa37jPCY6UdE?si=KOAx02aaS46RYZSvnhtj_Q

The iTunes link: <https://itunes.apple.com/au/podcast/six-nights-in-banghwa-tales-seoul-international-conference/id1446133715?i=1000425382703&mt=2>

On Servas Australia's website you can listen to all episodes of the podcast Letter of Introduction. The website is here: <http://servas.org.au/archives/8789>

Jonny Sägänger, SI President

BELARUS AND KENYA AMONG 49 MEMBER GROUPS AT SI GA

Belarus, Kenya, Bolivia and Gambia were granted SI Member Group status at the 2018 SI General Assembly, SI GA. The delegates from Belarus and Kenya participated for the remainder of the SI GA.

This is the list of the 49 SI Member Groups with delegates present at 2018 SI GA: Argentina, Australia, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Brazil, Britain, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Guatemala, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Malawi, Malaysia, Mexico, Nepal, New Zealand, Panama, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Russia, Rwanda, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand, Turkey, Uganda, United States, Venezuela, Vietnam.

Jonny Sägänger, SI President

SERVAS PEACE CALENDAR 2019 NOW AVAILABLE

Servas International 2019 Peace Calendar is available for download from the Servas web site (servas.org). The Peace Calendar focuses on peace activities developed by Servas members around the world in 2018. It highlights key UN dates to inspire Servas members to take part in related peace activities in 2019, and in particular during International Servas Week around September 21 Peace Day. In 2019, we are celebrating 70 years of Servas! [CLICK HERE to download!](#)



Danielle Serres, Former SI Peace Secretary

WOMEN TRAVELLING: LILLY KEREKES

This is the third in a series of stories about women's experiences travelling with Servas. The stories will appear on servas.org, on Facebook and other social media. Please enjoy reading the stories as they are published. If you have stories please email them to president@servas.org

Travelling Alone Through Japan

By Lilly Kerekes

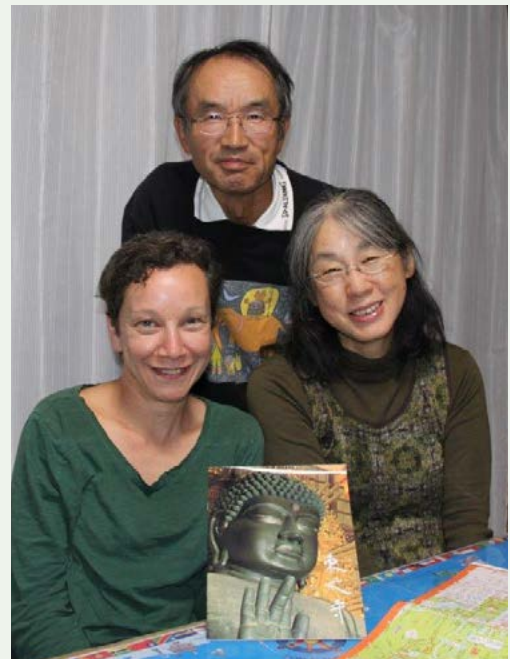
Since I had the great opportunity of going to my first SICOGA in South Korea, a country far away from Mexico City, where I live, I decided that I needed to explore another country in Asia, since it would be my first time in that continent.

I chose Japan. Some friends told me that I had to save a great amount of money and that I must be prepared to encounter the very First World face to face.

During and after SICOGA, and also after my visit to Japan, I thought about these labels. They are only labels. The First, Second, and Third world do not exist, it's only people with different lifestyles, points of view, and economies.

I began writing to Servas members since May to ask if they could host me during October and November. I was really pleased that many of them not only answered, but they were also very kind and polite. It was really nice to exchange some letters before we could meet.

I visited Hiroshima, Kyoto, Nara, and Tokyo. Thanks to the extraordinary hosts and day hosts who guided me through their cities, I learned a lot about their history, traditions, their delicate cuisine, as well as their celebrations.



Servas Japan hosts Takao and Kiyomi Asakura together with writer Lilly Kerekes. Takao and Kiyomi Asakura are volunteers who teach and share their knowledge with immigrants and neighbors.

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Mr. Fujii and Mayumi

Nevertheless, I have to admit that the West-East encounter was a little difficult. For example, it was very hard for me to eat and sleep on the floor. And, sure, it must be really healthy, but I didn't find anything sugary anywhere. Not even traditional candies are sweet, at least not for a chocolate maniac like me. But in the end, I enjoyed everything, part of the learning and adventure.

You can feel the spiritual atmosphere in every street, where Shintoists and Buddhists share their faith.

I feel absolutely free and safe on my journeys on subways, trains and on the powerful Shinkansen, in a city that wrapped me up completely in an environment of respect,

elegance, and delicacy.

I also had many surprises on the way, like a Japanese class, some dancing groups on the street and a lovely, magic and intimate ceremony of matcha tea.

Takao and Kiyomi Asakura are volunteers who teach and share their knowledge with immigrants and neighbors. Kiyomi is also a great cook and I enjoyed their meals very much.

Norimasa and Yasuko Takamoto are a lovely couple that likes playing golf and riding bikes. We had great chats about political and social problems in Japan and Mexico. They spoiled me.



Norimasa and Yasuko



Mr. Endo and Mr. Kasugaya

Yorie Kurata guided me through Kiyomizu-dera and we shared a spectacular and quiet onsen (Japanese traditional bath) in the middle of the woods.

Mr. Kasugaya, Mr. Endo and Mr. Aki walked me around some temples and museums, we shared some history, culture, celebrations, and traditions about our countries and also had a pretty interesting chat during a very elegant farewell dinner.

Mr. Aki and his wife Mayumi shared with Mr. Endo and me the very unique and magic matcha tea ceremony and gave me some leaves that I carry on my trip with much affection.

Now I have an extended family in Asia and I can't wait to see them and share more magic moments again. I feel so blessed for having encountered all those lovely and very well organized Servas members.

GLOBAL SERVAS COMMUNITY AT INDIA GANESH FESTIVAL

To mark Servas Week 2018 and Ganeshotsav (the Ganesh Festival honouring the Hindu elephant-headed god) Servas India invited guests from other countries for the first time in Servas India history. From September 13 to 18 Servas India organised group and individual programmes in and around Pune. The visitors stayed with host families for ten to twelve days.

So much happened, making connections before, during and after the Ganesh Festival. We shared fun, dancing and hospitality, and people made friends. Two girls, Mahsa from Iran and Michale from Israel, became friends for life.

We spent time with Jain monks, and on meditation, and went on a heritage walk and a walk for peace. One early morning at the Pune Ganesh Festival, 25 000 woman made the atharvashirsha prayer. Visits followed to a food and a jewelry factory with 400 workers, and the Daily Sakal, one of the Maharashtra region's best-selling newspapers, and two hours appearing on a live news channel.

During an outreach programme at the Initiatives of Change (IofC) centre in Panchgani hill station on September 19 and 20, the group visited Jirewadi, meeting local farmers and villagers to share the values of peace and a quiet time together. Sitting under a 500-year-old banyan tree, everyone ate lunch together the Indian way.

From September 21 to 23, many Servas visitors took the opportunity to stay with Servas families in other cities near Pune: Baramati, Nashik and Mumbai. Others went sightseeing in Goa, Delhi, Ajantha and other places.

After the event Servas India received feedback from the travellers.

Mahsa from Iran: "This trip is unforgettable to me. All guests of Servas, I was very lucky to find good and special friends like you."

Shosh from Israel: "I just arrived in Tel Aviv. This trip taught me a lot about India. I hope to visit India again and again".

Maria Teresa from Poland: "I miss India, now it is cold in Poland".

Servas India and the Pune organising team for the Ganesh Festival 2018 wish to thank all the SI Exco, national secretaries and other Servas key people worldwide who sent out the invitation to the Festival. There were 23 guests from eight different countries: Italy, France, Poland, Turkey, Iran, Israel, Mexico and Britain. Hosts from Pune, Mumbai, Nashik, Baramati, Delhi, Jalna and other parts of India helped make this an unforgettable event.

By Abbay Shaba, National Secretary, Servas India



Welcoming the guests at Ganeshotsav celebration



Visiting Grampari Centre for Rural Development and Technology



Under a 500-year-old banyan tree



Enjoying Indian food and hospitality



Celebrating the 70th anniversary of Servas and Servas India's 67th anniversary

The Servas International Executive Committee (SI Exco) for 2019-2021



(L-R:) Andreas Becker, Membership & Technology Secretary; Carla Kristensen, Vice President; Radha B. Radhakrishna, SI Treasurer; Kiat Yun Tan, General Secretary; Jonny Sägänger, SI President; Paige LaCombe, SI Peace Secretary. Photo: A L

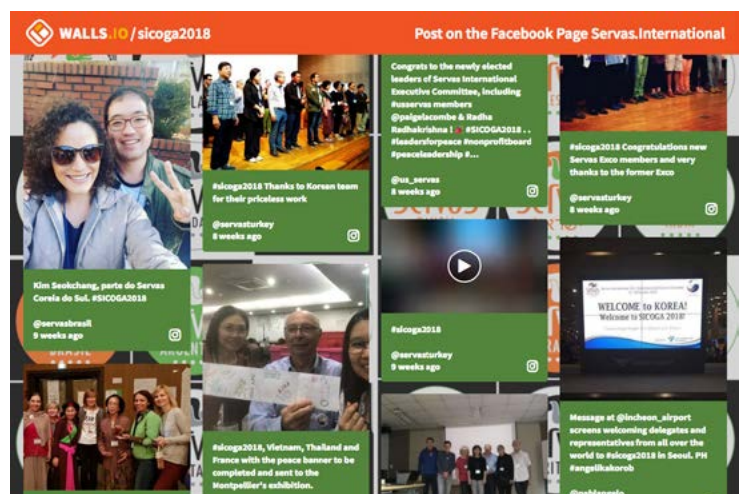
SICOGA ON A SOCIALWALL

There's one place on the web where you can see a collection of photos, videos and stories made during the 2018 Servas International Conference and General Assembly (2018 SICOGA).

This place is the SICOGA 2018 SocialWall for sharing content in one platform. You find it here: <https://walls.io/sicoga2018>

What is a SocialWall? A SocialWall is a database that gathers information from several Social Media platforms, like Facebook, Instagram, Youtube, etc. where it's displayed on the SocialWall.

The Servas SICOGA SocialWall is also embedded in Servas International's Facebook page as well as on servas.org. On these sites you can see all the gathered information together. SocialWalls have been used at global conferences by other non-governmental organisations, for example Children's International Summer Villages, CISV.



SERVAS INTERNATIONAL ON THE INTERNET

Servas International website: servas.org/index.php

Servas on Twitter: twitter.com/ServasI?lang=en

Servas on Facebook:

Servas Travelling for Peace www.facebook.com/groups/servas/

- This public discussion group is for people who are interested in learning more about Servas International. Membership in a recognized Servas Group is not required. Membership in this Facebook group does not make you a member of Servas.
- Administrators: Alan Stone, Stefan Fagerström, Pablo Colangelo, Jonny Sågänger.
- Moderators: Carla Kristensen, Jae Kwoang Park.

Servas International www.facebook.com/groups/117649068294944/

- This closed discussion group is for people who are members of Servas. Your membership will be verified.
- Administrators: Pablo Colangelo, Arnoud Philipppo.

SERVAS NEWS BULLETIN AVAILABLE IN SPANISH

You can also read the SI News Bulletin in Spanish on the Servas International website.

Join the Servas Translators Team. Email Lilly Kerekes, the coordinator: spanishcoordinator@servas.org

ABOUT SERVAS INTERNATIONAL NEWS BULLETIN

The Servas International News Bulletin (SI News Bulletin) is a newsletter from Servas International Executive Committee (SI Exco), which is the organization's global board. The SI News Bulletin contains a brief report about current issues and decisions.

Editors & Newsletter Coordinators:

Jonny Sågänger, SI President president@servas.org

Picot Cassidy, Servas Britain

Itzcóatl (Jorge) Rendon, Mexico

Graphic Design/Layout: Alan Stone, Servas Greece

What would you like to read about in the SI News Bulletin? Let us know.

Email: president@servas.org

We encourage Servas key people around the world to forward this bulletin to individual members. Feel free to quote this bulletin but please remember to mention Servas International News Bulletin as the source.

SI EXCO 2016-2018

PRESIDENT:

Jonny Sågänger president@servas.org

VICE-PRESIDENT:

Carla Kristensen vicepresident@servas.org

TREASURER:

Radha B. Radhakrishna treasurer@servas.org

GENERAL SECRETARY:

Kiat Yun Tan generalsecretary@servas.org

MEMBERSHIP & TECHNOLOGY SECRETARY:

Andreas Becker mts@servas.org

PEACE SECRETARY:

Paige LaCombe peacesecretary@servas.org



ABOUT SERVAS INTERNATIONAL

Servas International is an international, non-profit, non-governmental federation of national Servas groups, supporting an international network of hosts and travellers.

Our network aims to help build world peace, goodwill and understanding by offering opportunities for personal contacts between people of different cultures, backgrounds and nationalities.