



**Message from Rick Zelman  
Chair of the ITC  
Budget and Finance  
Committee**

The Budget and Finance Committee is already busy at work planning the ITC budget for fiscal year 2008-2009. It is charged with advising the ITC Board and staff with what the Committee believes are the most efficient ways of implementing the strategic goals of the ITC. That includes reviewing the specifics of each proposed budget item and asking questions of the staff as on what are the most productive ways to use our limited resources. Finally, the Committee makes recommendations to the ITC Board of Directors after long deliberations. And ultimately the Board of County Commissioners will allocate our funds to operate our program in FY 08-09. That is why we take our role very seriously.

The primary goal for the next fiscal year will continue to be to promote trade, internationally as well as locally. It is one of the issues we discussed at the strategic planning retreat in December. Miami-Dade is a Global Gateway. And we need to get that word out around the world. It is very important to invest some of our limited resources to the bringing our message to the people in positions of power, be it in the Congress, or federal government agencies. We should put public money and energy into those programs and policies that would help Miami-Dade increase its growing share of international trade.

## Sister Cities Goodwill Mission to Tenerife Marked By Warm Reception and Intense Interest in Expanding Ties

Returning members of the Miami-Dade Sister Cities Goodwill Mission that traveled to its Sister City, the island of Tenerife, in the Canary Islands, Spain, last January 19 came back truly impressed by the warm reception and high level of cooperation they found. Moreover, the interest by Canarian authorities and business executives in growing ties - both cultural and economic - to Miami-Dade was substantial, mission members said.

Commissioner Rebeca Sosa led the mission. She said: "I was touched by the warmth, friendship and hospitality that the people of Tenerife showed our delegation and with their desire to work with us in developing new ways to develop new links in the areas of culture, economic activity, trade and travel with Miami-Dade County."

*(Read more on page 2)*



*Members of the Sister Cities Goodwill Mission to Tenerife with Ricardo Melchior, the president of the Tenerife Cabildo at the center. To his right is Commissioner Rebeca Sosa, who led the mission.*

## ITC Study Shows That Local Economy Is Fueled by Global Trade

The ITC recently released Economic Impact Study of International Merchandise Trade is the most comprehensive report on the subject and sheds new light on the importance of trade to Miami-Dade County.

According to the report, international merchandise trade accounts for approximately 7.5 per cent of all the jobs in Miami-Dade County and that number is projected to grow steadily at least for the next ten years, as global trade continues to expand locally.

Those are but two of the main findings. Among other key findings in the study:

- At least 105,459 local jobs are supported by international trade;
- Each billion dollars in international trade supports 2061 local jobs;
- International trade supports higher than average paying jobs - \$54,147 per year, which is 31 per cent higher than average earnings for Miami-Dade workers;
- \$2.1 billion a year flows to residents not directly involved in international trade occupations;
- Total state and local taxes generated by international trade represent about 10.7 per cent of the total;

*(Read more on page 3)*

## BCC Chairman Bruno Barreiro Welcomes Vice President of Colombia



*Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners Chairman Bruno Barreiro hosted the Vice President of Colombia, Francisco Santos, at a ceremony followed by a press conference on January 28, 2007. Vice President Santos was in Miami for a conference where he said he was in the United States to promote the passage of the proposed Free Trade Agreement between the U.S. and Colombia. After his Miami stop he traveled on to Washington D.C. In the picture above are, from left to right: Denis Morales, Chief of Staff of Mayor Carlos Alvarez; BCC Chairman Commissioner Barreiro; Vice President Santos; Commissioner Rebeca Sosa; Commissioner Jose "Pepe" Diaz, and State Representative Juan Carlos Zapata.*



## Miami-Dade County's Sister Cities

Asti, Italy

Asuncion, Paraguay

Commonwealth of the Bahamas

Cayman Islands, B.W.I.

Iquique, Chile

Kingston, Jamaica

Lamentin, Guadeloupe

Maldonado, Uruguay

Mendoza, Argentina

Monagas, Venezuela

Pereira, Colombia

Petit Goave, Haiti

Pucallpa, Peru

St. Kitts & Nevis Islands

San Jose, Costa Rica

Santa Cruz, Bolivia

Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic

São Paulo, Brazil

Stockholm, Sweden

Tenerife, Canary Islands, Spain

Taipei, Taiwan

Turks & Caicos Islands

Veracruz, Mexico

## Tenerife Authorities Are Very Eager to See Direct Flights to MIA



*(Continued from page 1)*

Among the most significant developments to come out of the trip was the commitment of Canary authorities to establish a direct air link between Tenerife and Miami International Airport.

Ricardo Melchior, the president of the Tenerife Cabildo (Council), said, "We are doing everything that can be done so that soon we can have direct flights and the only thing we are missing is an agreement among the airlines to sort out the business end of it."

Melchior received the delegation at the Cabildo and was the official host to the Miami-Dade delegation. He and Commissioner Sosa reaffirmed the commitment to continue to strengthen the 15-year relationship between the two Sister Cities. The delegation was received by the mayors of all the important cities in Tenerife. And in addition to the meetings with important government officials, the delegation had ample opportunity to tour important educational, historical and commercial sites.

Tony Ojeda, executive director of the ITC said: "I was so pleased to see that the cultural relations that have existed between our two communities were enormously strengthened by our visit. The people of Tenerife went out of their way to make us feel at home by giving us the opportunity to participate in activities that will enhance the cultural and economic links between them and Miami-Dade County."

As an autonomous region of Spain, the Canary Islands largely depend on tourism from Northern Europe, and need to develop a more efficient way to connect to the Americas. Presently the only way to fly into Tenerife is to fly to Madrid and make another three and a half hour flight to Santa Cruz.

Another significant highlight was that Port of Miami



*Upper left: Ricardo Melchior, president of the Cabildo of Tenerife, welcomes Commissioner Rebeca Sosa and ITC Executive Director Tony Ojeda to the Cabildo; lower left: a television crew interviews Commissioner Sosa at Punta Teno; upper right: members of the Sister Cities delegation stand in front of the plaque at Punta Teno that marks the closest distance between Tenerife and a sister plaque in Crandon Park, Miami-Dade County.*

Director Bill Johnson was able to visit the Port of Santa Cruz of Tenerife, with which his port has a Sister Port agreement. Johnson met with the Santa Cruz port director to explore further ways to expand traffic between them. Ernesto Rodriguez, of the Miami-Dade Aviation Department and Larissa Valero of the Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau were also able to meet their counterparts and explore further ties. ITC, the Port and the GMCVB made presentations to all economic development agencies in Tenerife.

Of the 18 members of the delegation, 10 were private sector citizens, affirming one of the main missions of the Sister Cities program of citizen diplomacy. A fact that contributed significantly to the success and high level of enthusiasm by both the mission members as well as the Tenerife hosts was that a large number of the mission members were descendants of Canarians who had immigrated to Cuba or to Venezuela.

The business executives traveling with the mission had ample opportunity to meet members of their respective industries at business-to-business match-making sessions.

## Amendments to ITC Ordinance Approved by BCC

The Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners voted at its meeting on January 10, 2008 to ratify the amendments to the ITC Ordinance recommended by the ITC Board of Directors on November 13, 2007. The amendments initially were discussed by the ITC Board's Internal Management Committee on Tuesday, Sept. 27, 2007.

The amendments streamline operations, simplify the reimbursement process for outgoing missions, and modify the composition of the ITC Board of Directors.

## Mission to Prague, Warsaw and Istanbul Accepting Reservations

With leading global economic indicators pointing to Eastern Europe as one of the top growth regions for 2008 and into the future, the ITC has opened the registration period for a 10-day mission to the Czech Republic, Poland and Turkey next May 20th. The registration is available online at the ITC website, [www.miamidade.gov/itc](http://www.miamidade.gov/itc). You may also call trade developer Maria Dreyfus-Ulvert at 305-375-3885 or email her at [Dreyfus@miamidade.gov](mailto:Dreyfus@miamidade.gov).

Participating delegates will meet high-level government officials in each country, as Miami-Dade officials and representatives from leading economic development agencies will highlight the advantages of trading with

Miami-Dade County. The "Business Development Mission to Emerging Economies: Prague, Warsaw and Istanbul", will also provide opportunities for Miami-Dade companies involved in merchandise trade to transact business with companies based in Warsaw, Prague, and Istanbul. Business matchmaking sessions will be arranged, as well as networking opportunities.

Said ITC Chair, Commissioner Natacha Seijas, who will lead the mission: "The objectives of the mission are to explore ways to increase bilateral trade between countries in Europe and the Middle East and Miami-Dade County, as well as, to promote Miami as the 'Gateway of the Americas' and a platform for

international trade."

At a recent briefing of the World Bank's report, *Doing Business for 2008*, Dr. Simeon Djankov, Chief Economist of the World Bank highlighted: "This year Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union surpassed East Asia in the ease of doing business".

Tony Ojeda, Executive Director of the ITC, said: "We are delighted to continue to set the pace with our groundbreaking missions to the most thriving emerging economies as we carry the Miami-Dade flag to brand our county as a Global Gateway. Last year's missions to South Africa and India proved we are on the cutting edge of selecting the right countries at the right time."

## Strategic Goals Ratified by Joint ITC Board and Sister Cities Coordinating Council

The ITC Board of Directors and the Sister Cities Coordinating Council held a first-ever joint meeting on January 17, 2008 to ratify the revisions to the Strategic Goals and Strategies for 2008-2009 proposed at the ITC-Sister Cities retreat held last January.

ITC Executive Director Tony Ojeda explained at the meeting that during the retreat, both the mission statement and the goals and strategies were reviewed. "The ITC's performance was measured against planned objectives, and new priorities were discussed," he said.

The wide-ranging discussion at the retreat focused on the mission statement and philosophy, focusing on refining the present statement and slightly broaden the mission to add to the agency's agenda some critical international issues that impact trade.

The Board of Directors and the Coordinating Council approval was unanimous. Following is the text of the approved revisions:

### Mission Statement

The Jay Malina International Trade Consortium's (ITC) mission is to promote Miami-Dade County as a Global Gateway

by enhancing international relations, cultural understanding, and trade.

### Goals and Strategies:

- First Goal - Increase international awareness of Miami-Dade County as a global gateway.
- Second Goal - Promote citizen diplomacy, and cultural and international understanding.
- Third Goal - Advocate Miami-Dade County's trade initiatives with relevant federal, state and local agencies.
- Fourth Goal - Strengthen Miami-Dade County's position as an international platform for trade.

## The Prediction Is For Continued Growth of International Merchandise Trade

*(Continued from page 1)*

- Total value of the contribution of international trade to Miami-Dade's economy has increased 20.7 per cent since 2003.

"The importance of international trade to our economy is well known, but this study clearly outlines how much of our present and our future depends on maintaining the trade that we have and in tirelessly pursuing ways to expand our footprint in international trade by promoting Miami-Dade as a global gateway," said ITC Chair Commissioner Natacha Seijas. "That is the mission of the ITC, and I am very proud that this study reaffirms the significant role this agency plays."

The study also indicated that the outlook for international trade during 2007-2017 is positive. Further globalization of production and consumption will contribute to a rising share of international trade in the world economy and similarly in Miami-Dade.

Tony Ojeda, executive director of the ITC said: "We are very proud of the fact the ITC Board of Directors supported the initiative to conduct this study. This is the most thorough look at the impact of trade in our community and further motivates us to continue to work to promote and support the growth of Miami-Dade as a platform for international trade."

And it states that the County will continue to play a leading role in the triangulation of trade between Latin America and the Caribbean and the rest of the world. Strong economic growth in Asia, particularly China and India, will boost Asia - Latin American trade and thus the movement of goods through Miami-Dade.

The study, which was conducted by StratInfo, was widely covered in local and international media when it was released to the public in January. Manuel Lasaga, the

economist who led the StratInfo research team for the study, said, "International merchandise trade is one of the more dynamic components of Miami-Dade's economy and the objective of the study was to quantify the economic impact."

The degree to which the County can optimize its opportunities to expand trade will depend on the outcome of key strategic factors such as market diversification; implementation of regional free trade agreements; competition from other trading hubs; and Miami-Dade's operational efficiencies in international trade.

The study points out that the continued success will depend on how well Miami-Dade can compete against rival trading hubs and to what extent it can enhance the efficiency of its infrastructure in order to expand its current market share.



**Carlos Alvarez**  
Mayor

**Board of County Commissioners:**

**Bruno Barreiro**  
Chairman

**Barbara J. Jordan**  
Vice Chairwoman

**Barbara J. Jordan**  
District 1

**Dorrin D. Rolle**  
District 2

**Audrey M. Edmonson**  
District 3

**Sally A. Heyman**  
District 4

**Bruno A. Barreiro**  
District 5

**Rebeca Sosa**  
District 6

**Carlos A. Gimenez**  
District 7

**Katy Sorenson**  
District 8

**Dennis C. Moss**  
District 9

**Sen. Javier D. Souto**  
District 10

**Joe A. Martinez**  
District 11

**José "Pepe" Diaz**  
District 12

**Natacha Seijas**  
District 13

**Harvey Ruvin**  
Clerk of Courts

**George M. Burgess**  
County Manager

**Robert A. Cuevas, Jr.**  
County Attorney

## Commissioner Seijas appoints Walter Loy to ITC Board

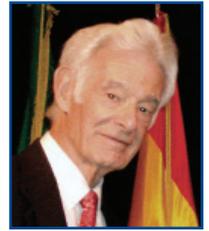
Commissioner Natacha Seijas appointed Walter Loy to a two-year term on the ITC's Board of Directors. He previously served as Chair of the Miami-Dade Sister Cities Coordinating Council and was instrumental in reinvigorating the Sister Cities program. She has also reappointed him to his former position as Chair of the European and Middle Eastern Trade Initiatives Ad Hoc Committee of ITC.

Loy is Senior Advisor of International Affairs for Esslinger-

Wooten-Maxwell Realtors. He held executive positions for Pan American Airlines in the United States and overseas, ranging from administering Latin American and Caribbean services to directing the airline's economic planning, operations, marketing and financial strategies.

Commissioner Seijas submitted an amendment to the ITC ordinance that gives the ITC Chair the authority to name a person to the ITC Board. This amendment was approved by the

County Commission at its regular meeting of January 10, 2008, and it became effective January 24, 2008.



Walter Loy

"I am delighted that we can retain Walter Loy in the ITC family, since his leadership, experience, and energy will bring a renewed spirit to the ITC Board," said Commissioner Seijas.

## Chinese Ambassador Visits Miami-Dade County



Zhou Wenzhong

The Chinese Ambassador to the United States, Zhou Wenzhong, visited Miami-Dade County on Wednesday, January 30, 2008. The theme for a conference he chaired was "China Business 2008: Expanding Opportunities for Florida Companies".

In his opening remarks Ambassador Wenzhong observed that U.S. - China trade relations are mutually beneficial and that close ties between Florida and China will only serve to bring many opportunities to both sides. He stated that "cooperation between Florida and China has great prospects" and pointed out that trade between Florida and China in 2006

topped \$1 billion. Ambassador Wenzhong underscored that, "China is Florida's 9th export market and that about 3,000 Chinese students are enrolled in Florida Schools."

Commissioner Jose "Pepe" Diaz was on hand to welcome the ambassador to Miami-Dade County. Commissioner Diaz expressed wishes for direct air services between China and Miami and for a Chinese Consular Office in Miami-Dade County. The ambassador promised that the Commissioner's requests would be given strong consideration.

Dr. Dennis Rod, ITC Board Member; Tony Ojeda, ITC Executive Director, and Desmond Alufohai, ITC Senior Trade Specialist also participated in the day-long event.

## Costa Rica Commerce Encounters To Start February 28

The trade office of Costa Rica (PROCOMER) will be having their Fifth Annual International Encounter on Information Technology and Communication. The event will take place in San Jose, Costa Rica on March 6-7.

Also from February 28 to March 1.

Costa Rica will be host to "Expo Industria 2008". This is the largest exhibition of the Costa Rican industrial sector.

Each of these events will include high level seminars, business meetings, and exhibition halls. In order to facilitate trade with South

Florida importers, PROCOMER is covering the cost of stay and food for both of these events. For more information please contact:

Paula Baldizon Campos  
Phone: 305-629-3581  
pbaldizon@procomer.com

## Events

**2/27/08 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM**  
**Sister Cities Arts Committee Meeting**  
Stephen P. Clark Center  
Mayda Rescendi: 305-375-5280  
MRESC@miamidade.gov

**2/27/08 5:00 PM - 6:00 PM**  
**Sister Cities Fundraiser Committee Meeting**  
Stephen P. Clark Center  
Mayda Rescendi: 305-375-5280  
MRESC@miamidade.gov

**3/9/08 to 3/12/08**  
**Dominican Republic Export Sales Mission**  
Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic  
Sponsored by Enterprise Florida  
Luis Cuervo: 305-808-3388  
lcuervo@eflorida.com

**3/11/08 to 3/13/08**  
**Sea Trade Cruise Shipping Convention**  
Miami Beach Convention Center  
Sponsored by CMP Princeton, Inc.  
Michael Kazakoff: 609-452-2800  
www.cruiseshipping.net

**Commissioner Natacha Seijas**  
ITC Chair

**Tony Ojeda**  
Executive Director

**The Jay Malina**  
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**Roberto Fabricio**  
Editor

Please note that dates are subject to change.  
To announce upcoming events please call 305-375-4750.

