

**From:** [Bill Boeurum](#)  
**To:** [Bill Boeurum](#)  
**Subject:** Russia Round Table - Yesterday March 22 & Video & Materials  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 23, 2022 3:34:35 PM  
**Attachments:** [SCI Political Suspension Policy.pdf](#)  
[SCI CEO Statement on Russia Relationships.pdf](#)

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Colleagues – as many of you know, in reaction to the tragedy of war in Ukraine, a number of jurisdictions (cities and states) decided to reconsider their official relationships with cities in Russia. Yesterday, we conducted a round table to share these experiences: terminations; suspensions; and keeping (most of them) the relationships. We appreciate the frank participation of more than 40 attendees from across the U.S.

Via either of the links below, please view the recording of the session for general knowledge as well as guidance on ideas to effectively manage these situations.

<https://youtu.be/3r80ILk6Ldo>

<https://www.facebook.com/US-Russia-Sister-Cities-Roundtable-101710871766547> (you'll have to scroll down our Facebook page).

Attached are PDF's which may be useful:

- SCI Policy Statement on Political Issues
- SCI CEO Leroy Allala's Statement on Russian Partnerships

We look forward to maintaining the many relationships developed over the years with colleagues in Russia at our partnerships and with personal friends and acquaintances at various institutions.

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**SisterCities**  
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Connect globally. Thrive locally.

## **Political Suspension/Cancellation Policy for Sister Cities**

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Sister Cities International recognizes that U.S. communities may have differing views of laws, policies, practices or historical events in other countries which they believe may run against moral, ethical, or legal codes to which they ascribe. While every citizen should feel free to express their own opinions in keeping with his or her own conscience, the suspension of a sister city relationship due to disagreement over a government policy or practice or historical events can be counterproductive and contrary to the stated mission of sister city relationships promoting “peace through mutual respect, understanding, and cooperation—one individual, one community at a time.” Suspending sister city relationships closes a channel of communication through which meaningful dialogue may be held. Our policy is to encourage our members and U.S. communities to keep their sister city relationships active, especially when political issues threaten to disrupt the positive, constructive relationships that have been made.



March 1, 2022

Dear Fellow Citizen Diplomats,

Witnessing the horrific events of the past week in Ukraine, leaders in our communities – instinctively and understandably – want to say something, to do something, and to act towards a collective disapproval of this assault on humankind; endeavoring to make a positive difference at this critical juncture in our global discourse.

**Yet, suspending or ending a sister city relationship with a Russian city partner should not be one such action.**

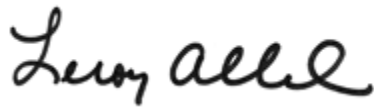
As citizen diplomats, we must be alert to counsel and remind our elected officials as well as our local municipal leaders of the critical role that Sister Cities International and each local sister city relationship offers, especially in times of conflict. We applaud those sister cities programs and citizens around the globe, including in Russia, who have voiced their support of an independent Ukraine and reaffirmed their belief in peace through mutual respect, understanding, and cooperation.

While suspending or ending a sister city relationship to register disapproval of a foreign government's actions may seem, on the surface, like a positive policy protest action, it has the complete opposite effect – closing a vital and, oftentimes, last channel of communication with vulnerable or isolated populations.

As a result, we reemphasize and underscore that our policy remains to encourage our members and U.S. communities to keep their sister city relationship active, especially now when the political issues and actions of the day threaten to disrupt the positive, constructive relationships that have been made, over many years, at the people-to-people and community-to-community levels. We ask each of you to reaffirm this policy in all your interactions within your communities.

Should you have any questions or need any assistance, please contact our SCI National Headquarters. Thank you for your continued support of Sister Cities International and our mission to "Promote Peace through Mutual Respect, Understanding, and Cooperation – one individual, one community at a time."

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Leroy Allala". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Leroy" and last name "Allala" clearly distinguishable.

**Leroy R. Allala** | President and CEO

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