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CHICAGO EXPANDS BUSINESS AND CULTURAL RELATIONSHIPS IN RUSSIA

Joint Delegation From World Business Chicago and Chicago Sister Cities International Travels to Moscow to Strengthen International Business Development Efforts and Cultural Ties

A delegation representing World Business Chicago (WBC) and Chicago Sister Cities International (CSCI) is traveling to Moscow April 14-19 to establish relationships with Russian companies and spur new business development opportunities, in conjunction with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra's (CSO) performance at the Moscow Conservatory April 18-19.

"Promoting Chicago outside the United States is a key focus of my administration," said Mayor Emanuel. "This effort and others like it will show everyone else what we already know – that Chicago is the most American of American cities and a jewel for the world to enjoy."

The delegation's partnership with the CSO for this trip marks the first time that WBC has partnered with a cultural institution to explore international business opportunities. Building upon the increased cultural awareness of Chicago that the CSO's performances will facilitate, WBC and CSCI will promote Chicago as a desirable location for Russian businesses and strengthen Chicago's sister city ties with Moscow. The group will discuss Chicago's business advantages with area companies, in addition to promoting the Moscow Sister City Committee's upcoming Green Building Business Forum that will take place June 13-14 in Chicago.

Delegation members include: Samuel C. Scott III, chairman, Chicago Sister Cities International and board member, World Business Chicago; Leroy R. Allala, executive director, Chicago Sister Cities International; Dennis Vicchiarelli, managing director, World Business Chicago; Tom Bartkoski, director of international business development, World Business Chicago; Aleksandra Efimova, president, Aleksandra Enterprises, Inc. and chair, Moscow Committee of Chicago Sister Cities International; and Arthur George, partner, Baker & McKenzie and business co-chair, Moscow Committee of Chicago Sister Cities International.

The joint delegation is the result of the formal collaboration between WBC and CSCI announced earlier this year by Mayor Emanuel, as part of a new focus for World Business Chicago. The trip is an example of how this new partnership advances each organization's mission, expanding Chicago's global footprint, while facilitating business connections.

"We are pleased to have the opportunity to work together to promote Chicago as a global business hub and establish new relationships with Moscow businesses, while deepening our cultural ties and relationship with our sister city," said Scott. "This business mission is a great example of the valuable role each of our organizations play in fostering new international business and cultural opportunities for the City of Chicago."

While in Moscow, the delegation plans to meet with companies and business organizations, including IBS Group, the Russian Green Building Council, Delovaya Russia, the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs, OPORA Russia and the Moscow AmCham (American Chamber of Commerce).

In addition to the meetings, the delegation will host a dinner and presentation on Chicago's business advantages to Moscow business leaders, including 50 green building companies, at the residence of the U.S. Minister Counselor for Commercial Affairs, John McCaslin. Guests will then join the delegation to attend the Chicago Symphony Orchestra's performance at the Moscow Conservatory that evening.

Approximately 50 Chicago-area companies have a presence in Russia, and there are a number of Russian steel companies with operations in Chicagoland. The Chicago Customs District reported \$273 million in goods exported to Russia in 2011, primarily in machinery/computers, medical/instruments, and electronics (a 144.3% increase in 2010-11). Chicago imported \$99 million in goods from Russia in 2011, primarily in iron and steel, rubber, and machinery/computers (a 37.6% increase in 2010-11). Total trade between Chicago and Russia accounted for \$373 million last year.

Chicago has shared a Sister City relationship with Moscow since 1997. The Moscow Committee of CSCI has been at the forefront of cultural, educational and business exchanges between Chicago and Moscow.

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About World Business Chicago

World Business Chicago (WBC) is the city's public-private economic development office, coordinating business retention, attraction and expansion efforts in order to spur and accelerate economic growth. Chaired by Mayor Rahm Emanuel, WBC strives to raise Chicago's position as a premier global business destination. For more information, visit WorldBusinessChicago.com.

About Chicago Sister Cities International

Chicago Sister Cities International (CSCI) provides leadership to develop, manage, and coordinate comprehensive programs and projects with Chicago's 28 sister cities. Under the leadership of Chairman Samuel Scott III and Honorary Chairman, Mayor Rahm Emanuel, CSCI is committed to promoting Chicago as a global city, developing international partnerships and networks, and sharing best practices on a city-to-city basis. For more information, visit ChicagoSisterCities.com.

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