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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Skål International Atlanta Club forges partnership with Turkish chapter to enhance community, commercial opportunities between the two countries

ATLANTA, GA - Jan. 20, 2014. [Skål International](#), the only inclusive international hospitality association for travel and tourism industry professionals, has a long history of "twinning" chapters to encourage economic and cultural exchanges. But until recently, [SI Istanbul](#) had only one American sister city, Los Angeles. That all changed late last year, when [SI Atlanta](#)'s board approved a motion to twin with the Istanbul club to develop greater friendship and trade interests between their members. The official twinning ceremony was celebrated last month in Istanbul, which several SI Atlanta members attended. The partnership will be further celebrated at the upcoming Skål Club of Atlanta Presidents' Ball at the Four Seasons Hotel on Saturday, Jan. 25, during which past Atlanta club presidents will be honored and new officers installed.

Miami Head Consul for Turkey Volkan Karagoz will be in attendance to commemorate this landmark partnership as well as to honor Turkish-born incoming SI Atlanta President Burcin Turkkan. Turkkan not only will become the first Turk to assume leadership of an American Skål club, she also will become the youngest woman to hold that office in SI Atlanta history. Other distinguished guests attending the gala will include current Vice President of Skål International Salih Cene, one of the most important tourism consultants in Turkey; past SI Atlanta presidents Manny Beauregard — a Travel + Leisure A-list travel agent — and William Torresala, the chief operating officer of United Arab Emirates-based HMAS-Trading; and former mayor of Atlanta Sam Massell, who is an honorary Skål member.

The basis for the Atlanta-Istanbul twinning came from a business relationship forged many years ago between SI Istanbul President Patrice Lepkovski and SI Atlanta member Marylou Foley. "During the 2013 Skål International Congress, Patrice shared with Marylou and me an interest to twin our two clubs to develop economic and trade interests between members,"

Turkkan says. SI Istanbul is the largest Skål club in the world with 300 members comprising Turkey's travel and tourism industry leaders. SI Atlanta membership includes senior-level airline, hotel, cruise ship, destination management, visitors bureau and tourism executives; as well as travel agents, tour operators, university faculty, meeting planners and travel media.

"We believe this twinning will create opportunities for SI Atlanta members to establish new business contacts in Istanbul and elsewhere in Turkey and help develop additional international connections and business activities. I thank our board for supporting this important project and opening the door to stronger international opportunities for our club members to do business among friends through better understanding, cooperation and friendship in the international arena."

QUICK LINKS FOR MORE INFORMATION:

About Skål International: <http://skal.org>

About SI twinned clubs: http://skal.org/a_english/twinning.html

About SI Istanbul: <http://www.skalistanbul.com>

About SI Atlanta: <http://www.skalatlanta.org/>

Skål International membership benefits: http://skal.org/a_english/benefits/benefits.html

How to apply for membership in SI Atlanta: <http://www.skalatlanta.org/membership.html>

ABOUT SKAL INTERNATIONAL

Skål International is a professional organization of tourism industry leaders devoted to promoting global tourism and friendship. It is the only international group uniting all branches of the travel and tourism industry. The first club was founded in 1932 by Parisian travel managers. The idea of international goodwill and friendship grew and, in 1934, Skål International was formed. [Membership is open](#) to all managers or executives directly involved in tourism management, sales and promotion in several categories. Junior executives and tourism students join Young Skål. Member benefits include special travel discounts, a worldwide network of more than 20,000 professionals in 450 cities in 85 nations, and access to the Florimond Volckaert Fund, which assists any Skål member in times of financial need or crisis. Skål members are welcome at all local, regional, national and international meetings held around the world.

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