

## Meeting with the Right Honourable Lord Mayor of London



**January 27**—Mayor Annise Parker met with The Right Honourable Lord Mayor of London Nick Anstee at the home of the United Kingdom Consul General Paul Lynch. Both mayors discussed ways to strengthen economic ties between Houston and the United Kingdom. This was his first trip to Houston.

## Meeting with the Korean Consul in Houston



**January 21**—Representatives from the City of Houston departments of Health and Human Services as well as the Housing and Community Development met with Mr. Young-ho Son, the Consul of the Republic of Korea in Houston along with representatives of the Houston Korean-American Community to discuss cooperation opportunities for the establishment of a Korean Community Center in Houston. The Center is slated to open in the latter half of 2010.

## Annual Gala of the Global Federation of Chinese Business Women



**January 24**—City of Houston Council Member Al Hoang met with representatives of the Global Federation of Chinese Business Women, a Taiwan-based business organization comprised of successful business women, and presented a proclamation from Mayor Annise Parker, which recognized the day as the “Global Federation of Chinese Business Women Day.” The GFCBW, which has 34 chapters worldwide, promotes international economic ties and understanding of global economic trends.

## 61st India Republic Day Celebration



**January 26**—The Consulate General of India in Houston hosted a festivity to celebrate the 61<sup>st</sup> anniversary of India’s Republic Day. City of Houston Council Members Jolanda Jones, Al Hoang and Oliver Pennington joined the hundreds of celebrants from Houston’s thriving Indian-American community along with other local leaders and community members. In recognition of the date and its significance to many Houstonians, Mayor Annise D. Parker proclaimed the day ‘India Republic Day’ in the city of Houston.

## Celebrating the Spirit of the Winter Games in Houston



**January 30**—Business and community leaders from Houston’s estimated fifteen thousand Canadian-American community were in attendance for an event celebrating the forthcoming opening of the 2010 Winter Olympics Games in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. Houston City Council Member Jolanda Jones congratulated the community on promoting ties between Houston and Canada, and read a proclamation from Mayor Parker proclaiming the day “Spirit of the Winter Games Day’ in the city of Houston. The winter games will open on February 12, 2010 and will close on February 28<sup>th</sup>. *Photo provided by Tracy Chadwick.*

# **Congratulations and Words of Support for the 5th Anniversary of the Mayor's International Newsletter**

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## **His Worship Dave Bronconnier, Mayor, Calgary, Canada**

“Calgary and Houston share a special kinship well beyond our common bonds in business. Our bilateral partnership agreement first signed in 2006 confirms synergies in trade and establishes a framework for further cooperation. Mayor's International Newsletter is a great reference and keeps us updated as to the international activities undertaken in Houston.”

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## **The Honorable Carlos Gonzalez Magallon, Consul General of Mexico**

“The Mexican Consulate General in Houston joins in the celebration of the 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Mayor's International Newsletter. We believe that this newsletter has reflected faithfully the fact that Houston is an international city that embraces cultural diversity. We will continue to support the efforts made by the Mayor's International Newsletter to foster the knowledge of the international links of this great city.”

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## **Duaine A. Priestley, Director, Houston U.S. Export Assistance Center**

“The Mayor's International Newsletter is indispensable reading. It's the only source for keeping up with the myriad of international activities that are held in Houston. There is nothing like it here.”

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## **Dr. Richard Wainerdi, President, Texas Medical Center**

“On behalf of Texas Medical Center and our member institutions, we appreciate the collaboration and cooperation with the Mayor's Office of International Affairs & Development to assist our visitors as we seek to improve the health status of the world. We are excited about working together in 2010 and ways we can help contribute groundbreaking medical news to your international newsletter.”

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## **Aida Araissi, Founder and Managing Director, Bilateral U.S.-Arab Chamber of Commerce**

“The Mayor's International Newsletter is one of the city's best resource for keeping up with Houston's international business scene. If there are delegations coming through Houston, I know that Helen Chang's team can guide us on where we can send our members to interact with their business counterparts.”

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## **Ellen Goldberg, President, Sister Cities of Houston**

“Congratulations on the fifth anniversary of the Mayor's International Newsletter. I look forward to receiving it each month. It's attractive and, more important, it's informative. Keep up the good work!”

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## **Dr. Laura G. Murillo, President & CEO, Houston Hispanic Chamber of Commerce**

“The Houston Hispanic Chamber of Commerce is proud to partner with the Mayor's Office of International Affairs & Development Department. The Mayor's International Newsletter highlights important international initiatives and opportunities which have a significant impact on business opportunities.”

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## **Ricardo Peduzzi, Executive Director, Brazil-Texas Chamber of Commerce**

“We wanted to offer our enthusiastic congratulations on the anniversary of Houston's International Newsletter. As our city expands business horizons abroad, the Mayor's International Newsletter is the binding force that brings our community to one agenda and one focus. Congratulations on a job well done, thank you for the informative service you provide our city.”

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## **Luciano Topi, President, Italy-America Chamber of Commerce of Texas**

“Sometimes we forget how international Houston is. The Mayor's Newsletter is a strong reminder and a powerful voice of all international activities that we all contribute to implement.”

## International Frontier

*Houston is home to many distinguished individuals who are dedicated to the promotion of Houston on the Global Stage. The featured Houstonian this month is Mr. Geert C. Visser, the Honorary Consul of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Houston.*



For many, moving to another city and country can be quite a challenging experience. For Mr. Geert Visser, the Honorary Consul of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Houston, a sudden major mechanical malfunction aboard the DC-9 airplane, which was taking him from Europe to Houston, turned into one of the scariest experiences of his life. Mr. Visser, nevertheless, rebounded quickly, and has been calling Houston home ever since.

From the start, Mr. Visser has made the promotion of bilateral ties and economic collaboration between the Netherlands and Houston the cornerstone of his daily activities.

Mr. Visser earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Hague in the Netherlands. After initially working as an engineer, he climbed the corporate ladder and served as a senior executive with several engineering as well as oil and gas companies in Europe.

In 1978, Mr. Visser was transferred to Houston by the Heerema Marine contractors (HMC) company --- a leading marine contractor in the offshore oil and gas industry --- to establish its local branch. About seven years later, Mr. Visser decided to try his luck as an independent businessman and launched his own company, which he named Global Marine Transport, Inc. The company has been providing towing/tugboat and navigational services to many local and international shipping clients.

In 2003, when faced with an economic contraction, the Dutch Government decided to close its Consulate General in Houston. Shortly thereafter, however, the Dutch Government had come to realize Houston's economic prominence and its ties to the Dutch economy, including Houston's strategic placement, its enormous economic potential and the fact that the U.S. subsidiary of Royal Dutch Shell --- one of the world's largest oil companies --- was located in Houston. As a result, during the same year, the Dutch Queen HRH Beatrix appointed Mr. Visser to the post of Honorary Consul of the Kingdom of the Netherlands responsible for the states of Texas, Oklahoma and Arkansas. In December of 2009, his appointment has been renewed

for another 5-year term.

"There exists great investment potential between Houston and the Netherlands," states Mr. Visser; both he and his team have been trying to convince the Dutch Government to open an official Dutch Economic Office in Houston.

Mr. Visser points out that the Netherlands is a great business partner for Houston companies due, among others, to the ease of conducting bilateral business transactions. First and foremost, 80% of the Dutch population speak English. In fact, most high school students speak up to 4 languages upon graduation. Similarly, Houston has a highly skilled work force that addresses the needs of Dutch companies operating in Houston. "Most importantly," notes Mr. Visser, "if you are honest and do your job well, Texans will give you all the opportunities you need to succeed." Mr. Visser is also quick to indicate that the business climate in Houston is becoming more and more attractive to international companies.

In 2007, Houston Mayor Bill White had led an Economic Development Mission to Europe, which included a visit to the city and port of Rotterdam in the Netherlands where a Memorandum of Cooperation between the Port of Houston Authority and the Port of Rotterdam was signed. Mr. Visser, whose vast connections and indefatigable enthusiasm helped make the visit a resounding success, is quick to point out the immediate business benefits to Houston companies: "During that visit, an opportunity had been identified, which culminated in a billion-dollar contract between a Dutch oil company and a Houston-based Nigerian operator."

Mr. Visser is a member of the Holland Club, which was founded 50 years ago. It is a social organization aiming at promoting fellowship among its members and at furthering interest in the Netherlands and in Dutch customs and traditions, such as the Herring and Bread Party and the Dutch Heritage Day. Mr. Visser is also a member of the Netherlands Texas Business Association, whose purpose is to encourage and facilitate the growth of bilateral business and cultural relationships between the Netherlands and the state of Texas.

— Giorgi Gelovani

## International Event Calendar -- February 2010

Date	Time	Event	Venue	Contact
Early Feb.	—	Korean Chamber of Commerce and the Korean School of Houston: Delegation from Gumi, South Korea	Korean School of Houston	hunysim@msn.com
2/1	6:00 PM	World Affairs Council of Houston: Contested Boundaries— An Examination of the Syria-Lebanon-Israel Tri-Border Region	Westin Oaks Hotel	info@wachouston.org
2/2	7:30 AM	Alief Community Association: Alief Networking Breakfast	International Trade Center	marie-lee@sbcglobal.net
	11:30 AM	Asia Society: Prospects for Democracy in China, North Korea and Afghanistan	Houston Club Center	(713) 439-0051
2/3	9:30 AM	Houston Minority Supplier Development Council: Position Your Business for Success	Hilton Americas Hotel	www.hmbc.org
	3:00 PM	World Affairs Council of Houston: Student Energy Summit	Boy Scouts of America	(713) 522-7811
2/5	11:30 AM	Houston World Affairs Council: General John R. Allen, U.S. Central Command	Hilton Americas Hotel	info@wachouston.org
2/8	11:00 AM	Asia Institute: Three Cups of Tea with Greg Mortenson	Intercontinental Hotel	(713) 599-1271
	6:00 PM	World Affairs Council of Houston: Haiti—The Ghosts of Port-au-Prince	Westin Oaks Hotel	www.wachouston.net
	—	City of Houston: Delegation from Beijing, China (through 2/24)	City of Houston	(832) 393-0851
2/10	6:00 PM	World Affairs Council of Houston: Obama's Foreign Policy Challenges	Junior League Center	info@wachouston.org
2/11	11:30 AM	Greater Houston Partnership: State of the County Address	Hilton Americas Hotel	(713) 844-3692
	11:30 AM	Asia Society Texas Center: Will China Democratize	Houston Club Center	(713) 439-0051
2/15	6:00 PM	Houston World Affairs Council: Ukraine After the Elections	Westin Galleria Hotel	info@wachouston.org
	8:00 AM	Bilateral US-Arab chamber of Commerce: Update Iraq	Bracewell and Giuliani	www.bilateralchamber.org
2/17	11:30 AM	Greater Houston Partnership: State Fiscal/Tax Policy	Vinson and Elkins	(713) 844-3683
2/18	10:30 AM	Houston Independent School District: State of the Schools Luncheon	Hilton Americas Hotel	(713) 556-7217

2/18	11:30 AM	Greater Houston Partnership: Quarterly Networking Luncheon	Hyatt Regency Hotel	amacfarland@houston.org
2/22	—	International Trade Center: Texas Business Africa Summit (through 2/24)	International Trade Center	(832) 448-0523
2/23	11:00 AM	Rotary Club of Houston: 48th Annual Rotary Club of Houston Distinguished Citizen Award	Intercontinental Hotel	(713) 515-1660
	7:30 PM	Society for the Performing Arts: Band of the Irish Guards	Jones Hall	karen@spahouston.org
2/24	6:00 PM	Houston World Affairs Council: The Century Ahead	Junior League Center	info@wachouston.org
2/26	11:15 AM	Brazil-Texas Chamber of Commerce: PETROBRAS Update	Westin Galleria Hotel	www.braziltexas.org
2/27	3:00 PM	Asian-American Bar Association, Houston Volunteer Lawyers Program and VN Teamwork: Wills Clinic	TBD	www.aabahouston.com

International Cultural Events in Houston:

2/1	7:30 PM	University of Houston, Moore's Opera Center: The Cunning Little Vixen	University of Houston Moore's Opera Center	Czech@czechcenter.org
2/2	7:00 PM	Asia Society Texas Center: One Amazing Thing—Reading, Interview and Book Signing	United Way of Houston	(713) 439-0051
2/3	5:30 PM	Asia Pacific American Heritage Association: Membership Meet and Greet Mixer	Gigi's Asian Bistro and Dumpling Bar	www.apaha.org
2/4	9:00 PM	Rendez-Vous Houston: Gypsy Night—A look into the Ancestral Traditions of Gypsies	Mercer Lounge	katia.condette@yahoo.com
2/5	7:30 PM	Russian Cultural Center: Evening of Mikhail Glinka	Russian Cultural Center	(713) 395-3301
2/10	7:30 PM	Center for Irish Studies: Whisperings of Ireland—Storyteller Batt Burns from the West of Ireland	University of St. Thomas	www.stthomas.edu/irishstudies
2/11	6:30 PM	Interfaith Ministries: Annual Interfaith Youth Dinner Dialogue	St. Agnes Academy	www.imggh.org
2/12	8:00 PM	Da Camera of Houston: The Spirit of England	Wortham Center	www.dacamera.com
2/13	10:00 AM	Southern Chinese News: 2010 Chinese Lunar New Year Festival—The Year of the Tiger	U.S. International Center	(281) 983-8160
	10:00 AM	Chinese Community Center: 2010 Lunar New Year Festival	Chinese Community Center	(713) 271-6100, ext. 122
2/14	12:00 PM	Russian School of Houston and Kindness without Limits: Winter Farewell 7th Annual Russian-style Traditional Maslenitsa	Burnett Bayland Park	(281) 370-1464
2/18	9:30 AM	PROMOCER and International Trade Center: Learn about Costa Rica and its Processed Foods Industry	International Trade Center	internationaltradecenter-wealee@gmail.com

2/20	—	Chinese Civic Center: Annual Gala	Chinese Civic Center	(713) 772-1133
2/21	2:00 PM	Asian-American Heritage Association and Theatre Under the Stars: Miss Saigon	Hobby Center for the Performing Arts	www.tuts.com
	3:00 PM	Museum of Fine Arts Houston: A thousand Years of "Feast and Lore"	Museum of Fine Arts	www.mfah.org
2/23	7:30 PM	Museum of Fine Arts: Ruptures and Continuities	Museum of Fine Arts	aliyas@asiasociety.org
2/27	3:00 PM	TexAsia: Lunar New Year Houston 2010	Viet Hoa Center	www.lunarnewyearhouston.com

Events hosted by International Partner Cities of Houston:

2/1-2	Investment Forum of Turkmenistan in UAE	Abu Dhabi, UAE	www.turkmeninvest.om
2/1-4	U.S. Department of Commerce: Aerospace Executive Service Trade Mission	Singapore	www.buyusa.gov
2/2	Bilateral U.S.-Arab Chamber of Commerce: Market Focus—Algeria	Las Vegas, Nevada	(713) 880-8168
2/2-4	U.S. Commercial Services: Expo Manufactura 2010	Monterrey, Mexico	www.buyusa.gov
2/8-9	10th Annual e-Services Global Sourcing Conference and Exhibition	Manila, Philippines	www.e-servicesphils.com
2/9	Texas-Israel Chamber of Commerce: Israel Innovation and Collaboration—Cleanovation Conference 2010	Austin Convention Center	1-800-445-8667
2/12-16	U.S.-Saudi Arabian Business Council: Business Development Mission to Jeddah, Makkah and Madinah	Saudi Arabia	(703) 962-9300
2/14-19	U.S. Department of Commerce: Solar Trade Mission II to India	New Delhi, Chennai, and Mumbai, India	www.buyusa.gov/pacificsouth/642.html
2/17-22	U.S. Department of Commerce: Executive Trade Mission to Algeria and Libya	Algeria and Libya	northafricanmission@mail.doc.gov
2/24-26	U.S.-Panama Business Council: Trade Mission to Panama	Panama City, Panama	panamerica@msn.com
2/25-28	Philippine Food Processors and Exporters Organization, Inc.: 9th Philippine Food Expo 2010	Mandaluyong City, Philippines	ptic-la@earthlink.net
3/4	U.S.-Saudi Arabia Business Council: The Economic Boom in Saudi Arabia	New Brunswick, New Jersey	www.us-sabc.org
3/7-12	U.S. Department of Commerce: Trade Mission to Senegal and South Africa	Senegal and South Africa	karen.dublin@mail.doc.gov
3/8-13	U.S. Department of Commerce: Medical Trade Mission to India	India	jetta.dened@mail.doc.gov

3/13-20	Texas Women's Empowerment Foundation: Sourcing Mission to China	Beijing and Shanghai, China	vthompson@houstontrade.org
3/17-21	U.S. Commercial Services: Display Your Product Literature at Worldbex '10	Manila, Philippines	www.buyusa.gov
3/18-20	Asia Society: 20th Asian Corporate Conference	New Delhi, India	www.asiasociety.org
3/22-24	2010 China International Petroleum & Petrochemical Technology and Equipment Exhibition	Beijing, China	www.cippe.com.cn
4/19-20	Asia Pacific Business Outlook	University of Southern California	www.apbo2010.com
4/19-25	U.S. Department of Commerce: Bauma 2010 International Trade Fair	Munich, Germany	www.buyusa.gov
4/25-28	U.S. Department of Commerce: Trade Winds—The Americas Business Forum	Sao Paulo, Brazil	www.buyusa.gov/northcarolina/tradewindsbrazil.html
4/28-29	U.S.-Saudi Arabia Business Council: U.S.-Saudi Business Opportunities Forum	Chicago, Illinois	www.us-sabc.org
5/14-15	Powerful Women International: Breakthrough Summit	Paris, France	(415) 503-1184

## Opportunities and Resources

### Employment

- City of Baytown—Seeking Director of Engineering  
Contact: [www.asianchamber-hou.jobing.com](http://www.asianchamber-hou.jobing.com)
- City of Spring Valley—Seeking an Accounts Payable/Payroll Clerk  
Contact: [www.asianchamber-hou.jobing.com](http://www.asianchamber-hou.jobing.com)

### Continuing Education

- Training and Orientation Session for those interested in providing legal services to AABA  
Contact: [www.aabahouston.com](http://www.aabahouston.com)

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Please submit event information to: [moiad@cityofhouston.net](mailto:moiad@cityofhouston.net) or by fax to: (832) 393-0859  
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