

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN THE
GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF AUSTRIA
AND THE
GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF COSTA RICA
FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A
STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP**

On the basis of their excellent and longstanding bilateral relations, grounded in shared values, principles, and commitment to democracy, rule of law and respect for human rights, guided by their determination to contribute to peace, stability and the wellbeing of their peoples, to enhance sustainable development, effective multilateralism and a rules-based international order, the Government of the Republic of Austria and the Government of the Republic of Costa Rica, hereinafter referred to as "the Participants",

RECOGNIZING the desire to strengthen the existing bonds of friendship among the Participants,

EMPHASIZING the importance of enhancing their relations in a practical and effective manner on matters of mutual interest and benefit,

CONVINCED of the benefit of implementing cooperation programs that have a positive impact on the economic, social and environmental development of their respective countries,

Have reached the following understanding:

Section 1 – Objectives

The Participants, in accordance with the terms of this Memorandum and the national laws, rules, regulations and policies in force in each country, intend to strengthen, promote and develop joint activities based on equality and mutual benefit.

Section 2 - Areas of Cooperation

The Participants will develop joint activities according to their scientific, technical and financial possibilities, in the following priority areas, as well as any other area jointly decided by the Participants:

Environment and climate action

Bearing in mind the utmost need for the protection of the environment and combatting the climate crisis, the Participants will explore targeted cooperation in the field of energy efficiency and renewable energy. Furthermore, considering the crucial importance of tourism for both Participants, an exchange of best practices for beneficial and sustainable tourism will be envisaged.

Education and Science

The Participants will explore joint projects, also in connection with the Austrian research station "La Gamba" in Costa Rica, a field office of the Department of Botany and Biodiversity Research of the University of Vienna. Envisaged fields of cooperation, as well as of best practise exchange, might include agro-environmental management, environmental protection, energy and water resources, sustainable management of protected wildlife areas and wildlife, regularization of the State's natural heritage in the national territory, conservation of watersheds and water resources, mitigation of climate change and adaptation of biodiversity, sustainable forestry and knowledge management. The Participants will also put an emphasis on fostering contacts between youth, inter alia by exploring ways of establishing and promoting youth exchanges.

Digitalization

Ways of cooperation in the field of e-government are already being explored by the Participants. Besides the digitalization of identity documents the participants will, according to capacities, identify further fields of common interest and cooperation, such as public health information systems, computerized disease registries, applications for interactions with patients, systems for electronic prescriptions or tools for telehealth. At the international level,

the Participants will continue to promote universal access to digital resources, in order to close the digital divide.

Cyber-security

The increasing threat to institutions and individuals alike highlights the need for effectively and decisively combating cybercrime by intensified international as well as bilateral cooperation. The Participants will thus identify ways and means of cooperation on issues of mutual concern.

Disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation

Based on the leadership shown so far by the Republic of Austria and the Republic of Costa Rica and in view of the mounting international challenges when it comes to disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation, the Participants will seek to deepen the already excellent cooperation in international fora, and, wherever possible, jointly work on the respective initiatives.

Section 3 - Forms of cooperation

For the purpose of this Memorandum, the Participants will enhance spaces for the exchange of best practices and promote cooperation in the areas defined in Section 2 of this Memorandum, through the following modalities of action, as well as any other modality jointly decided by the Participants:

- Joint research and development programs,
- Exchange of experts, researchers, professionals, technicians, among others,
- Transfer of institutional experiences and capabilities (institutional best practices),
- Internship programs, particularly in priority areas for both countries,
- Organization of seminars, conferences and workshops,
- Exchange of professionals in the form of volunteer work,
- Cooperation in multilateral fora.

The exchange of scientific and technical information generated by the cooperation projects will abide by the laws and procedures in force in both States.

The jointly decided and developed projects will comply with the legislation on intellectual property and with the policies and regulations in force in each of the States for the approval and processing of international cooperation projects.

Section 4 - Project management and cooperation activities

In the process of management of joint activities, such as the elaboration, negotiation and approval of the terms of reference, the Participants will define the times and mechanisms to carry it out and may meet for this purpose, including by making use of virtual tools.

In the implementation of joint activities, the participation of public and private sector agencies and entities of both Participants, universities, research organizations and non-governmental organizations may be considered. The Participants should take into consideration the importance of their respective national priorities in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals of the Agenda 2030.

For the implementation of this Memorandum, the Participants may benefit from the participation of regional, multilateral or third country entities, if deemed necessary and appropriate.

The Participants will facilitate the work of public and private sector entities when required for the development and proper execution of joint activities.

Section 5 - Dispute resolution

The Participants will resolve any differences arising from the interpretation or application of this Memorandum by mutual understanding through diplomatic channels.

Section 6 - Status of this Memorandum

This Memorandum is not binding under national or international law and will not create any financial or legal rights or obligations for its Participants.

Section 7 - Final dispositions

This Memorandum takes effect from the date of signature and will remain effective for an initial period of seven years. Its effectiveness will be prolonged automatically for equal periods unless objected to by one of the Participants in written form.

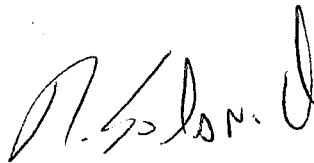
Any future modification to this Memorandum will be effected by mutual understanding of both sides and require written form.

Either Participant may, at any time, cancel this Memorandum by written notice addressed to the other Participant through diplomatic channels. Such cancellation will take effect six months after its receipt by the other Participant.

Signed in Vienna, Austria, on the third day of the month of November, two thousand and twenty-one, in English, in two alternates.



FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE
REPUBLIC OF AUSTRIA



FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE
REPUBLIC OF COSTA RICA