

Participants Information

***2nd Meeting of the Signatories (MOS2) Sharks
MOU***

15-19 February, 2016

***Park Inn Hotel
San José, Costa Rica***



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ABOUT COSTA RICA AND SAN JOSE

With shores washed by the waters of the Pacific and Atlantic oceans, rolling hills, mountains, valleys and volcanoes, Costa Rica is part of the youngest stretch of land in the American continent, as a result of volcanic sedimentation, completing the geographical connection of North and South America.

The territory covered by Costa Rica today has been inhabited by various indigenous groups for more than 12,000 years. In the early sixteenth century, these groups were organized into chiefdoms, settled in small "city-states," with paths of communication and trade between them and out to the pre-Hispanic civilizations to the north and south. On 18 September, 1502 Christopher Columbus arrived in Costa Rica, on his fourth voyage to the Americas. Columbus arrived at the village called Cariari, which is believed to be located near what is now known as Puerto Limón.

Costa Rica covers 510,100 square kilometres of land and the rest is marine territory, Costa Rica's territorial sub-division consists of seven provinces: San José, Alajuela, Heredia, Cartago, Guanacaste, Puntarenas and Limón. Each province has a capital city with the same name except Guanacaste; its capital is Liberia.

The nation's capital is San José, is located on a plateau in the Central Valley at 1,130 meters elevation, in a tectonic depression of 3,000 square kilometres that includes San José, as well as the capital cities of the provinces of Alajuela, Heredia and Cartago. As a consequence, there is a trend towards urban concentration, and much of the Central Valley is now the Greater Metropolitan Area (GAM), home to approximately 60% of the national population. Costa Rica's total population according to the last National Census conducted in 2011, amounts to 4.3 million people. Costa Ricans are called "ticos," apparently for their habit of adding the diminutive "-tico" or "-tica" at the end of some adjectives and nouns.

Costa Rica stands out for seeking the preservation of its green territory; as a result, it has a system of national parks that reflects the strong national sentiment for nature conservation. Approximately 34 percent of the national territory is under some form of protection. These areas are classified as forest reserves, protected areas, national parks, biological reserves, wildlife refuges (state-owned, private or mixed), wetlands, natural monuments, marine areas, and marine management areas. These parks and refuges are home to about 12,000 different varieties of plants, 237 species of mammals, 848 species of birds and 361 different species of reptiles and amphibians.

VENUE

The Sharks MOS2 will be held at Park Inn Hotel in San José, Costa Rica from 15 to 19 February 2016. The hotel is located at a 15-minute drive from the Juan Santamaria International Airport (SJO) and 10 minutes from the financial district.

Park Inn San José

Address: Calle 28, San José, Costa Rica

Telephone: +506 2257 1011

E-mail: reservas@parkinncostarica.com

Website: <http://www.parkinn.com/sanjose>

REGISTRATION

Registration will begin Sunday 14 February 2016 from 14.00 to 17.00 and Monday 15 February 2016 from 07.30 onwards at the meeting venue.

ACCOMMODATION AND TRAVEL

Hotel rooms for funded and non-funded delegates:

The delegates will make their own reservation by guaranteeing their reservation with their own credit card and paying directly to the hotel. Kindly refer to the cancellation conditions.

Hotels in the vicinity:

Park Inn (venue)

Address: Calle 28, San José, Costa Rica

Tel.: +506 2257 1011

Email: reservas@parkinncostarica.com

Web: <http://www.parkinn.com/sanjose>

Rate per night from \$90.

This hotel will also be the venue for our meetings.

Aldea Hostel

Address: Calle 28 y Avenida 2, San José, Costa Rica

Tel.: +506 2233 6365

Email: hola@aldeahostelcostarica.com

Web: <http://www.aldeahostelcostarica.com/en/>

Rate per night from \$35.

The hostel is a 3-minute walk from the venue.

Casa Colon Hostel

Address: Paseo Colon, Calle 24 Norte | Contiguo a Torre Mercedes, San José 1255-1200, Costa Rica

Tel.: +506 2256-0276

Email: info@hostelcasacolon.com

Web: <http://www.hostelcasacolon.com/>

Rate per night from \$58-68.

This hotel is an 8-minute walk from the venue.

Hotel Tryp Sabana San José

Address: Avenue 3, calles 38 y 40, Calle 38, San José, Costa Rica

Tel.: +50625472323

Email: info@trysabana.com

Web: <http://www.tryphotels.com/de/tryp-san-jose-sabana-hotel-costa-rica.html>

Rate per night from \$86.

This hotel is a 12-minute walk from the venue.

Hotel Cacts

Address: Avenida 3 B, San José, Costa Rica

Tel. +50622216546

Email: hcaacts@racsa.co.cr

Web: <http://www.hotelcacts.com/>

Rate per night from \$66.

This hotel is a 10-minute walk from the venue.

Hotel El Sesteo

Address: Calle 42, San José, Costa Rica

Tel.: +506 22961805

Email: sesteo@racsa.co.cr

Web: <http://www.sesteo.com/index.html>

Rate per night from \$75.

This hotel is a 13-minute walk from the venue.

Parque del lago Hotel

Address: 50 meters East of the Parque La Sabana, Paseo Colón, San José, Costa Rica

Tel. +506 25472000

Email: reservas@parquedellago.com

Web: <http://www.parquedellago.com/index.html>

Rate per night from \$75

This hotel is a 10-minute walk from the venue.

DEPARTURE AIRPORT TAX

There is a USD \$29 departure airport tax which **might not be included in the air ticket cost** and must be paid before leaving the country. Payment can be made at the BANCREDITO cashiers located in the *counters* area at the International Juan Santamaría Airport. Most Hotels also offer the service to pay airport tax in advanced.

The departure tax can be paid in US dollars or its equivalent in Costa Rican colones.

PASSPORT AND VISA REQUIREMENTS

Delegates from the following countries travelling with an ordinary passport need a consular visa to enter Costa Rica:

Albania	Democratic Republic of the Congo (Kinshasa)	Liberia	Rwanda
Algeria	Djibouti	Libya	Saudi Arabia
Angola	Dominican Republic	Macedonia	Senegal
Armenia	Ecuador	Madagascar	Sierra Leone
Azerbaijan	Egypt	Malawi	South Sudan
Bahrain	Equatorial Guinea	Malaysia	Sudan
Belarus	Gabon	Mali	Swaziland
Benin	Gambia	Mauritania	Tajikistan
Bosnia Herzegovina	Georgia	Mongolia	Thailand
Botswana	Ghana	Morocco	Timor-Leste
Brunei Darussalam	Guinea	Mozambique	Togo
Burkina Faso	Guinea-Bissau	Namibia	Tunisia
Burundi	India	Nepal	Turkmenistan
Bhutan	Indonesia	Nicaragua	Uganda
Cabo Verde	Jordan	Niger	Ukraine
Cambodia	Kazakhstan	Nigeria	United Arab Emirates

Cameroon	Kenya	Oman	United Republic of Tanzania
Central African Republic	Kosovo	Pakistan	Uzbekistan
Chad	Kuwait	Papua New Guinea	Viet Nam
Colombia	Kyrgyzstan	Peru	Yemen
Comoros	Lao People's Democratic Republic	Qatar	Zambia
Congo (Brazzaville)	Lebanon	Republic of Moldova	Zimbabwe
Côte d'Ivoire	Lesotho		

Delegates from the following countries traveling with an ordinary passport need a restricted visa to enter Costa Rica:

Afghanistan	Democratic People's Republic of Korea	Iran	Palestine
Bangladesh	Eritrea	Iraq	Somalia
China	Ethiopia	Jamaica	Sri Lanka
Cuba	Haiti	Myanmar	Syria

Those nationals who require a consular/restricted visa are exempt of the Costa Rican entry visa if they meet one of the following situations:

- a) The nationals of the countries that have already a B1-B2 or D type visa to enter the United States of America, Canada, the countries of the European Union and /or Schengen visa, stamped in their passport, valid during the stay in Costa Rica, will be able to enter Costa Rica without a consular/restricted visa. The stay granted will be a maximum of 30 days. The passport must be valid for at least six months.
- b) Nationals with a tourism visa to enter Japan and valid for six months (since the entry to Costa Rica), stamped in their passport, will be able to enter Costa Rica without a consular/restricted visa.
- c) Nationals with permanent residence (not as a refugee), a student visa, a work visa in the United States and/or any country of the European Union and Canada, do not need a visa to enter Costa Rica. This type of visa must be stamped in the passport, and must be valid for at least six months, counting from the day of arrival in Costa Rica. The stay granted will be a maximum of 30 days. The passport must be valid for at least six months.

There are some exceptions for visa requirement for diplomatic/service passports. Please inquire with the closest Costa Rica Consulate.

For further inquiries regarding visas please contact the closest Costa Rican Consulate (<http://www.rree.go.cr/index.php?sec=relaciones%20bilaterales&cat=representaciones%20de%200cr%20en%20extranjero>). You may call the Consular Office at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Costa Rica phone number: (00 505) 2276 0314

VACCINATION AGAINST YELLOW FEVER

By means of Executive Decree No. 33934-S-SP-RE, the Government of Costa Rica has declared compulsory vaccination against yellow fever, before entry into national territory, for persons coming from the geographical areas considered at risk for transmission of the disease.

By provision of said Decree, the zones and countries considered at risk are:

- Sub-Saharan Africa: Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Sudan.
- South America: Bolivia, Venezuela, Brazil, Peru, Ecuador and Colombia.
- Caribbean: French Guiana.

The compliance with the immunization requirement must be verified before the relevant authorities (ports, airports and border posts), through the "International Certificate of Vaccination against Yellow Fever", which will be valid ten (10) days after the date of the application of the vaccine. This document must be presented in its original form and must be valid.

However, the aforementioned Decree has established exemptions and exceptions to the requirement of vaccination against yellow fever:

Exempts persons that:

- On their way to Costa Rica, have been in transit through airports, ports and international border posts of the countries considered at risk (article 6, paragraph 1).
- Having been in a country considered at risk before entering national territory, have remained at least six (6) days in a country considered not at risk and have not developed the disease in this lapse (article 7).

Exempts the following contraindications from this vaccination (article 10):

- Absolute contraindications: persons younger than nine (9) months; severe egg allergy; immunosuppression; and current or history of having suffered from thymus disease.
- Relative contraindications, in which there must be a medical evaluation of the pros and cons of the vaccination: persons older than sixty (60) years; pregnancy; lactation; family history of adverse events associated with the vaccine against yellow fever; hypersensitivity to gelatin; and asymptomatic infection with HIV, with laboratory verification of adequate immune system function.

In all exceptional conditions, a medical certificate must be presented.

TRAVEL AND MEDICAL INSURANCE

All participants traveling are recommended to have valid travel and medical insurance covering the period of stay in Costa Rica.

The full cost of medical attention at any of these public or private institutions is the responsibility of the patient.

WEATHER

The month of February is characterized by constant daily high temperatures, with daily highs around 26°C throughout the month, exceeding 29°C or dropping below 24°C only one day in ten. Daily low temperatures are around 19°C, falling below 18°C or exceeding 21°C only one day in ten.

CURRENCY

The national currency of Costa Rica is the colón (plural: colones) (CRC) with the symbol ₡. In some cases, it is used in parallel with the US dollar (USD) to define the prices of certain products and services. The exchange rate as of November 2015 is 540 colones per dollar.

Upon arrival in the country, visitors may exchange currency at the Juan Santamaría International Airport, which has an international currency exchange centre.

Visitors may also make use of the wide network of ATMs to withdraw cash with their credit and debit cards throughout the country.

WORKING LANGUAGE OF THE MEETING

The meeting will be conducted in English, French and Spanish, with interpretation during plenary sessions.

IDENTIFICATION BADGES

All delegates will receive an identification badge to access the venue. You are requested to wear this badge during your stay at the meeting venue.

ELECTRICAL CURRENT

Electronic equipment must be compatible with the country's voltage, which is 110 volts to 60 Hertz alternative voltage. Common electrical outlets used in the country:

NEMA 1-15



NEMA 5-15



These are the standard two prong plugs used in United States of America and most Central American countries. Participants are responsible for bringing any specific adapter needed to meet their equipment requirements. Most outlets offer very little surge protection. If you will be using your computer, consider bringing a surge protector.

TIME ZONE

Costa Rica is in the Central Standard Time zone. CST

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Dial 911 for immediate assistance.

Hotel Security:

Hotels for delegates have been carefully selected. However, delegates are advised:

- Never give out your room number or invite strangers to your room.
- Never leave valuable property unattended in your rooms, meeting rooms, restaurants, swimming pool area, etc.
- Always use safety lock on the door, even during the daytime.
- Always use room safe for valuables, or use lockable storage for valuables at the front desk, but make sure they issue a receipt for your items.

General Security Advice

San Jose is a lively city and Josefinos, as the residents are known, are friendly and helpful to visitors. Crime is low by regional standards, but petty crime, particularly mugging, is not uncommon. Most streets are generally safe during the day but delegates should stick to well-lit streets at night and travel in groups if possible.

- Use only accredited taxi services with radio communication.
- Take precautions if walking after dark from the venue to nearby hotels and shopping centers.
- Be aware of the city's geography and do not go to risk areas.