# GLOBAL HORIZONS

A communications platform from MIA's Protocol and International Affairs Division

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## About Us

The core mission of MIA's Protocol and International Affairs Division is *to facilitate the movement of official guests, delegations, dignitaries, and VIPs through MIA and support the airport's international programs and initiatives.*


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**Type of Government**: Federal Democratic Parliamentary Republic
**Head of State**: President Frank-Walter Steinmeier
**Capital:** Berlin
**Population:** approximately 84 million (2025 estimate)
**National Day,** celebrated annually on October 3, commemorates German Unity Day, marking the 1990 reunification of East and West Germany.
**Currency:** Euro (€)

## Federal Republic of Germany "Land of Poets and Thinkers"

Germany stands at the heart of Europe, geographically, politically, and culturally. As Europe's largest economy and one of its most influential democratic states, Germany blends deep historical roots with cutting-edge innovation. It shares borders with nine countries, giving it a central role in European trade, diplomacy, and cultural exchange.

Germany's history stretches from ancient Germanic tribes to the rise and fall of powerful kingdoms and empires. The unification of Germany in 1871 created a modern nation-state that would go on to play a defining, sometimes turbulent, role in global events. After World War II, Germany was divided into East and West for more than four decades. The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 paved the way for reunification and marked a new chapter centered on democratic values, economic stability, and international cooperation.

Today, Germany is widely recognized for its strong institutions, engineering excellence, environmental leadership, and commitment to the European Union. Its landscapes are remarkably diverse. The northern plains lead to the North Sea and Baltic Sea coasts, while central Germany is dotted with rolling hills, vineyards, and historic castles. In the south, the Bavarian Alps rise dramatically, home to Germany's highest peak, the Zugspitze. Major rivers, including the Rhine, Danube, and Elbe, shape the country's geography and have served as vital cultural and economic corridors for centuries.

Germany's population reflects centuries of regional identities and cross-cultural influences. Most citizens identify with their German heritage. The country is also home to vibrant immigrant communities from Turkey, Poland, Italy, the Middle East, and beyond.

**German** is the national language, though regional dialects, from Bavarian to Swabian to Low German, remain strong and culturally significant. Religion has shaped German history profoundly. Christianity, both Protestant and Catholic, remains the most widely practiced, with notable Lutheran influence in the north and Catholic traditions in the south. Germany also hosts one of Europe's largest Muslim communities, along with Jewish, Buddhist, and secular populations.

**Fun Facts About Germany**

**Germany is the birthplace** of iconic composers like Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms, and its philosophical tradition includes figures such as Kant, Hegel, and Nietzsche. With over 25,000 castles and palaces, it is among the world's highest concentrations of historic fortifications.

**German cuisine** varies widely by region, from Bavarian pretzels and more than 1,000 types of sausages (including currywurst and bratwurst) to the Rhineland's hearty stews. Its bread culture alone includes over 300 varieties, recognized by UNESCO as part of the country's intangible cultural heritage.

**Beer and the Reinheitsgebot:** Famous for its 1516 beer purity laws, thousands of local breweries, and a rich beer culture - Oktoberfest, the world's largest Volksfest, is held annually in Munich and attracts millions of visitors.

**Christmas Markets** (Weihnachtsmärkte) showcase traditional crafts, festive foods, and mulled wine, and Berlin has more than 1,700 bridges, more than Venice, which cross its urban rivers and canals.

**Football (soccer):** Its men's national team has won the FIFA World Cup four times, and its women's team is also among the world's strongest competitors.

We thank the Consulate General of Germany in Miami for its valued contributions to this article.



**U. Desmond Alufohai**
Division Director II
Protocol & International Affairs Division

October, one of the distinguished ember months, ushers in a season of reflection, renewed purpose, and preparation for the year's culminating events. In Miami-Dade County, this spirit is especially meaningful as our international partnerships deepen, and our global responsibilities expand.

We are pleased to welcome the new Consul General of Honduras, the new Consul General of Panama, and the new Director of the Miami Passport Agency to our vibrant diplomatic community. Their arrival strengthens Miami's role as a hemispheric gateway for diplomacy, commerce, and cultural exchange, and we look forward to productive collaboration in service to our residents and international partners.

October also offers a moment to salute all nations celebrating their Independence Days and National Days this month. These observances honor the heritage, resilience, and aspirations of countries around the world, and Miami-Dade County proudly joins in recognizing their significance.

As the ember months advance, our county continues its comprehensive preparations to host two historic global gatherings: the G20 Sherpa IV Meeting from December 10–12, 2026, and the G20 Heads of State Summit from December 14–15, 2026. These landmark events will place Miami-Dade County at the center of international dialogue and cooperation, reinforcing our standing as one of the world's most internationally engaged regions.

# Diplomatic & Consular Relations

## Meet the new Consul General of Honduras in Miami, Florida




**The Honorable Miguel Omar Fajardo** assumed his duties as Consul General of Honduras in Miami in May 2026, committed to representing Honduras's interests, strengthening institutional ties, and providing responsive, effective consular services to the Honduran community within his jurisdiction. A graduate in International Studies from Wichita State University in Kansas, United States, his academic background has provided him with a comprehensive understanding of international relations, trade, and mechanisms of cooperation, bringing a global perspective to his professional and institutional responsibilities. Consul General Fajardo brings more than two decades of experience in the private sector, having held senior management and executive leadership positions. Throughout his career, he has gained extensive experience in strategic planning, organizational management, operational optimization, and developing growth- and results-focused initiatives. His professional experience has been distinguished by negotiation, institutional representation, and the development of strategic relationships that foster dialogue and collaboration across sectors. This background supports his consular work by strengthening economic, institutional, and cooperative ties between Honduras and the United States.

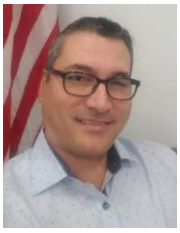
His fluency in Spanish and English, combined with his experience in multicultural environments, enhances his ability to carry out representational and institutional communication responsibilities. As Consul General, his work focuses on providing efficient, accessible, and respectful consular services; strengthening ties with the Honduran community; and properly representing the Government of the Republic of Honduras before authorities, institutions, and organizations within its jurisdiction.

## Meet the new Consul General of Panama in Miami, Florida



**The Honorable Mónica Viggiano** is a Panamanian national. She assumed the role of Consul General of Panama in Miami in June 2026. Ms. Viggiano studied Interior Design at the International Fine Arts College in Miami and founded *Trilogía Arquitectónica*. She has over 40 years of business management experience. Her consular work focuses on strengthening services for the Panamanian community, building institutional relationships, and promoting business opportunities between Panama and the U.S., with particular interest in the maritime sector and the merchant marine.

## Rudy Rodriguez is the new Director for the Miami Passport Agency



**Mr. Rudy Rodriguez** began his career with the U.S. Department of State as a student Passport Specialist trainee at the Houston Passport Agency while attending the University of Houston. After earning his B.S. in Criminal Justice, he advanced to Senior Passport Specialist. In 2005, he was promoted to Supervisory Passport Specialist at the Miami Passport Agency, and in 2007, he was selected as Adjudication Manager, overseeing the adjudication, production, and issuance of U.S. passports while leading a team of five supervisors and 35 Passport Specialists.

Throughout his tenure with the Department, Mr. Rodriguez has taken on a range of assignments supporting U.S. interests both domestically and abroad. In 2003, he served as a departmental recruiter, traveling to universities across Texas to promote Foreign Service and consular careers. In 2004, he completed a temporary duty (TDY) assignment as a Consular Officer at the U.S. Special Interests Section in Havana, Cuba. Mr. Rodriguez has also played a key role in crisis response efforts throughout his career as a member of the Department's Fly-Away Team. In 2010, he deployed to Haiti to help evacuate U.S. citizens following the devastating earthquake, and in 2014, he supported similar evacuation efforts in Mexico after an earthquake there. In 2017, he joined a team that secured and transported blank passport stock from San Juan, Puerto Rico, after Hurricane Maria. In 2024, he again served on the Fly-Away Team, helping evacuate American citizens from Haiti.

In 2020, during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, Mr. Rodriguez served as the senior mission-critical manager for the Miami Passport Agency, acting as Assistant Director. In this role, he oversaw daily agency operations and ensured hundreds of medical personnel and airline crew members received emergency passport services necessary for international travel. In 2023, he was selected as Assistant Director of the Miami Passport Agency, where he continued serving the traveling public and supporting agency operations. In 2025, Mr. Rodriguez was temporarily promoted to Director of the Miami Passport Agency, followed by an assignment in 2026 as Acting Assistant Director of the El Paso Passport Agency. He has since accepted the permanent position of Director of the Miami Passport Agency, a role in which he continues to serve today.

# Aviation, Etiquette, Lifestyles and Culture

## International Coffee Day: A Global Toast to Culture, Diplomacy, and Connection

Observed worldwide every October 1, International Coffee Day was established by the International Coffee Organization in 2014 and first celebrated globally in 2015. Later recognized by the United Nations, the day honors coffee's diversity, quality, and cultural significance while spotlighting the millions of farmers whose livelihoods depend on this remarkable crop.

Coffee is more than a beverage. It is a global connector, an agricultural powerhouse supporting over 100 million livelihoods, a daily ritual enjoyed through 2 billion cups, and an economic engine generating between $485–$521 billion in worldwide market value. Nations such as Brazil, Vietnam, and Colombia anchor the industry's production, while European countries, led by Luxembourg, Finland, and Norway, top global per-capita consumption.

Beyond its economic footprint, coffee has long shaped international relations. From the political ferment of 17th-century European coffeehouses to modern diplomatic lounges, the coffee cup has quietly influenced statecraft. In protocol, sharing a beverage symbolizes hospitality and trust; coffee deepens that symbolism. Informal breakthroughs at multilateral summits often occur not in plenary halls but over a simple cup shared between delegates. For coffee-producing nations, the crop is also a strategic diplomatic asset, central to trade negotiations, fair-trade frameworks, and cultural branding initiatives.

Coffee's journey began in Ethiopia's highlands, traveled through Yemen's Sufi communities, and ignited a social revolution across Europe. Monarchs once attempted to ban coffeehouses for fear of free political discourse, only to see them flourish as hubs of intellectual exchange.

Today, global traditions continue to reflect coffee's diplomatic character. Ethiopia's ceremonial preparation conveys respect and friendship; Turkish coffee remains a symbol of hospitality and cultural identity; Italy's espresso culture embodies efficiency and social rhythm; and Sweden's beloved *fika* ritual reinforces workplace harmony and consensus-building.

As we raise a cup on International Coffee Day, we celebrate more than a drink. We honor a global tradition that transcends borders, fuels diplomacy, strengthens cultural ties, and brings people together, one sip at a time.

## Thanksgiving Etiquette: Grace, Gratitude & Gathering Well

Thanksgiving is more than a holiday; it is a meaningful opportunity to connect, share, and express gratitude. Thoughtful etiquette helps ensure the day feels warm, harmonious, and memorable for everyone involved.

**1. Hosting with Warmth**
When hosting, creating a welcoming environment sets the tone for the celebration. Preparing the menu, organizing seating, and planning the timing helps guests feel cared for from the start. Greeting each guest personally shows genuine hospitality, and being mindful of dietary restrictions or preferences demonstrates attentiveness and respect.

**2. Arriving as a Guest**
Guests also play an important role in the flow of the day. Arriving on time honors the host's preparations, and bringing a small token of appreciation adds a gracious touch. Offering to help, whether setting the table or assisting with cleanup, shows gratitude and strengthens the sense of community around the gathering.

**3. Table Manners**
The Thanksgiving table is often the heart of the celebration. Waiting for the host's cue before beginning the meal, using utensils properly, and passing dishes politely all help maintain a pleasant and comfortable dining atmosphere. Small gestures of courtesy contribute greatly to the overall experience.

**4.Gratitude Rituals**
Gratitude remains at the center of this holiday. Many families take a moment to share what they are thankful for, offering reflections that are sincere and concise. Acknowledging the efforts of the host and those who prepared the meal helps everyone feel valued, and including guests of all ages ensures the moment is shared and meaningful.

**5. Conversation Etiquette**
Conversation plays a major part in creating a warm, enjoyable atmosphere. Keeping discussions light and avoiding divisive topics helps everyone relax. Listening actively and encouraging quieter guests to join in fosters inclusiveness and deepens connection.

**6. Handling Food Preferences**
Food preferences and differing tastes are natural at any large gathering, and approaching them with sensitivity is essential. Avoiding criticism of dishes, taking reasonable portions, and offering genuine compliments to the cook help maintain a positive and appreciative spirit at the table.

**7. Helping After the Meal**
Helping after the meal is one of the simplest yet most appreciated gestures. Whether stacking plates, clearing the table, or assisting with leftovers, small efforts make a significant difference. Expressing appreciation again before departing, and following up with a brief message afterward, leaves a warm and lasting impression.

Ultimately, Thanksgiving etiquette is not about rigid rules but about kindness, mindfulness, and gratitude. Whether hosting or attending, your actions can help create a day filled with warmth, connection, and full hearts.

# Briefs and Notes

## Beyond the Pink Ribbon: A Global Perspective on Breast Cancer Awareness Month




Every October, the United States experiences a familiar and powerful transformation. From the pink ribbons pinned to our lapels to the pink cleats worn by professional athletes, Breast Cancer Awareness Month is deeply ingrained in American culture.

Founded in the United States in October 1985 by the American Cancer Society and Imperial Chemical Industries Pharmaceuticals, this campaign has successfully brought a once-taboo topic into the public spotlight. In the decades since, domestic fundraising walks, charity auctions, and widespread education have driven billions of dollars into research and early detection.

However, while the pink ribbon is a powerful symbol in our local communities, breast cancer is a borderless disease. To truly understand the scale of this health challenge, we must look beyond our own backyards and examine the fight against breast cancer through a global lens.

**Global Reality: Numbers Don't Lie**

Globally, breast cancer is the most common cancer among women, affecting populations in almost every country. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), an estimated 2.4 million women were diagnosed with breast cancer worldwide in 2024 alone. In that same year, 694,000 women tragically lost their lives to the disease, leaving roughly 8.2 million women around the globe living with a breast cancer diagnosis. These staggering statistics remind us that while our local community walks in the USA are vital, we are participating in a massive, worldwide struggle. Every 50 seconds, somewhere in the world, a woman dies from this disease.

**The Stark Survival Gap**

The most heartbreaking aspect of the global breast cancer landscape is the disparity in survival rates based on geography and economics. In the United States and other high-income nations, decades of medical advancements, accessible mammography, and widespread awareness have led to remarkable outcomes. Since the 1980s, breast cancer mortality has dropped by 40% in high-income nations, and the five-year survival rate now exceeds 90%.

Unfortunately, where a person lives heavily dictates whether they will survive. In low- and middle-income countries, the five-year survival rates drop precipitously. For instance, the survival rate is roughly 66% in India and falls to just 40% in South Africa. The WHO reports that approximately 70% of all breast cancer deaths occur in these lower-resource settings. This devastating gap is largely due to a lack of access to early screening, delays in timely diagnoses, and limited availability of comprehensive treatments like radiation and targeted therapies.

**International Innovations and Goals**

To combat these disparities, international health coalitions are setting aggressive targets. The WHO's Global Breast Cancer Initiative has established a mission to reduce global breast cancer mortality by 2.5% per year. If successful, this coordinated effort could avert 2.5 million breast cancer deaths by the year 2040. Their strategy focuses on three pillars: diagnosing 60% of invasive cancers at early stages (Stage I or II), ensuring a diagnosis is delivered within 60 days of symptom presentation, and guaranteeing that 80% of patients receive complete, recommended treatments.

At the grassroots level, advocates around the world are developing incredibly creative ways to bypass unique cultural barriers. A striking example comes from Lebanon, where cultural taboos surrounding women's bodies historically made it difficult to openly discuss breast self-examinations. To overcome this stigma, health advocates launched "The Bread Exam." This innovative campaign utilized a traditional bread recipe and a baking video to implicitly teach women the physical kneading and pressing motions required for a proper breast self-check. It is a powerful reminder that global awareness requires culturally tailored solutions.

**Prevention and Action at Home**

As we observe Breast Cancer Awareness Month in the United States, we can honor the global fight by taking proactive steps in our own lives. Experts note that approximately 25% of breast cancer cases are linked to modifiable risk factors. Taking steps such as maintaining a healthy weight, staying physically active, limiting alcohol intake, and quitting smoking can significantly reduce your risk. Furthermore, for women in the US, adhering to screening guidelines—such as yearly mammograms starting at age 45, remains one of the most effective ways to catch the disease early.

**Supporting the Cause**

This October, let the pink ribbon serve as a reminder of both our local triumphs and our shared global responsibilities. Whether you are seeking information for a loved one, hoping to reduce your own risk, or looking to support organizations that advance research and provide care for underserved communities, your engagement truly makes a difference. It is through awareness that we strengthen early detection, and through collective action that we help drive meaningful progress. Together, we can continue fostering a culture of support, education, and hope.

**Give Miami Day Turns 15. You're Invited to the Celebration.**

Give Miami Day has become one of Miami-Dade County's most inspiring civic traditions, a moment each year when thousands of residents come together to support the nonprofits that sustain our community. Hosted by The Miami Foundation, it is the nation's largest single-city giving day. This November, it celebrates its 15th year, and everyone is invited.

**How You Can Get Involved:** Giving starts November 14. Visit GiveMiamiDay.org to support any of more than 1,000 local nonprofits. Gifts start at just $25. Not sure where to begin? Choose a nonprofit or use the site's discovery tool to find organizations doing work you care about.

Join the Give Miami 5K Race + Festival on November 15. Run, walk, or cheer at Maurice A. Ferré Park in Downtown Miami from 7:30 to 11:00 a.m. 100% of your registration fee goes to the nonprofit of your choice, so every step you take is a gift. Stick around afterward for a free festival featuring a performance by Grammy-nominated Miami native Flo Rida. Celebrate Give Miami Day on November 19. Join neighbors across the county in showing just how generous Miami can be. Spread the word. Share Give Miami Day with your colleagues, friends, and family, and invite them to give alongside you.

**From an Idea to a Movement:** Fifteen years ago, research showed Miami was one of the least civically engaged communities in the nation. Give Miami Day started as an idea to flip that script. Last year, more than 60,000 donors made over 120,000 donations, raising $43.8 million for over 1,000 nonprofits that make Miami stronger.

**Why It Matters:** Miami's nonprofit sector is a powerful part of our community:

- 2,541 active nonprofits generate $20.5 billion in annual revenue.
- The sector employs 77,000 people, 5.5% of the county's workforce.
- Leading mission areas include Education & Youth (33%), Arts & Culture (17%), and Health & Wellness (14%).
- But many of these organizations are operating on thin margins:
- 53% of nonprofits operate on budgets under $250,000, which makes community giving essential.
- Half of small nonprofits have less than one month of cash reserves, leaving them in a very fragile position.
- Only 4% of funding to many community-based organizations is unrestricted, limiting their ability to adjust to the changing needs of the communities they serve.

These figures reveal a vibrant but financially fragile sector that depends on people like us showing up.

**The Miami Foundation's Year-Round Work**

Give Miami Day is part of The Miami Foundation's broader mission to create a greater Miami where everyone can thrive. That work is anchored in five pillars:

- Develop Leaders: Investing in emerging and established changemakers who strengthen Miami's civic fabric.
- Exchange Knowledge: Providing research, data, and insights that help donors, nonprofits, and partners make informed decisions.
- Accelerate Generosity: Inspiring residents to give boldly and consistently to causes that uplift Miami-Dade County.
- Support Nonprofits: Offering grants, training, and resources that help organizations grow and thrive.
- Collaborate on Solutions: Bringing partners together across sectors to address Miami's most pressing challenges.

**A Community United in Purpose**

Give Miami Day is more than a fundraising event. It reflects who we are as a community. When we invest in our nonprofits, we invest in our shared future. Mark your calendar, pick your cause, and help make Miami-Dade County a more resilient, compassionate, and connected place to call home.

As Give Miami Day continues to grow, its influence extends beyond fundraising. It has become a unifying moment that highlights the diversity of Miami-Dade County and the shared commitment of residents to invest in the well-being of their neighbors. Each year, the event brings renewed visibility to nonprofits working in areas such as environmental resilience, housing stability, youth empowerment, and cultural preservation, reminding us that philanthropy is not only about giving money, but about strengthening the community we collectively call home.

Beyond the financial contributions, Give Miami Day also inspires long-term civic engagement. Many donors go on to volunteer, attend community events, or build ongoing relationships with organizations whose missions resonate with them. This ripple effect ensures that Give Miami Day's impact extends far past its 24-hour window, cultivating a culture of generosity and partnership that continues throughout the year.

## Independence and National Days (October 2026)

**October 1, 1949 – China**: The People's Republic of China (PRC) was founded on October 1, 1949.

**October 1, 1960 – Cyprus**: Based on the London-Zürich Agreements, Cyprus was proclaimed an independent state, and it gained independence from the U.K. on August 16, 1960. October 1 is the national holiday marking it.

**October 1, 1960 – Nigeria**: The Federal Republic of Nigeria gained independence from the United Kingdom.

**October 1, 1978 – Tuvalu:** In 1819, the atoll of Funafuti was named the Ellice Islands. In 1892, the United Kingdom declared a protectorate over the Ellice Islands and the Micronesian Gilbert Islands. This Protectorate became a colony in 1916. In 1974, Tuvaluans voted to secede from the colony, and on October 1, 1978, the Ellice Islands became the independent nation of Tuvalu.

**October 2, 1958 – Guinea**: After being a French colony since 1893, Guinea declared its independence on October 2, 1958. It was the only French West African colony to opt for complete independence, rather than membership in the French Community.

**October 3, 1990** – **Germany:** Day of German Unity, commemorates the reunification of the two German states on October 3, 1990.

**October 3, 1932** – **Iraq:** Commemorates its independence from British Mandate rule and admission to the League of Nations.

**October 4, 1966** – **Lesotho:** In 1868, Basutoland became a British protectorate, and after 1884, a crown colony. On October 4, 1966, the country achieved independence and was renamed the Kingdom of Lesotho.

**October 8, 1991** – **Croatia:** The Croatian parliament severed constitutional relations with Yugoslavia. Since 2002, October 8 has been celebrated as Independence Day, while June 25, the day the parliament voted for independence, is recognized as Statehood Day.

**October 9, 1962** – **Uganda:** Uganda was a British Protectorate from 1894 until it achieved independence on October 9, 1962.

**October 10, 1970** – **Fiji:** After being a British Crown Colony since October 10, 1874, Fiji gained its independence on October 10, 1970.

**October 10, 1911** – **Taiwan:** Republic Day, Taiwan's National Day, also known as "Double Ten Day," commemorates the 1911 Wuchang Uprising, which led to the collapse of the Qing dynasty and the birth of the Republic of China (Taiwan).

**October 12, 1968** – **Equatorial Guinea:** Equatorial Guinea achieved independence after 190 years of Spanish rule.

**October 12, 1987** – **Spain:** Spain's National Day, also known as Día de la Hispanidad, commemorates Christopher Columbus's arrival in the Americas on October 12, 1492. The 1987 law that declared October 12 the Fiesta Nacional states that the day commemorates "the linguistic and cultural projection of Spain outside of its European limits."

**October 22, 1953** – **Laos:** Although Laos gained independence from France on July 19, 1949, full independence was not recognized until the Franco-Lao Treaty of Amity and Association was signed on October 22, 1953.

**October 23, 1956** – **Hungary:** The day commemorates the 1956 Hungarian Revolution, a nationwide revolt against the Stalinist government of the People's Republic of Hungary and its Soviet-imposed policies.

**October 26, 1955** – **Austria:** The law of permanent neutrality was adopted by the National Council. In 1965, October 26 was declared Austria's National Holiday.

**October 27, 1979** – **Saint Vincent and the Grenadines:** Saint Vincent and the Grenadines gained independence from Great Britain.

**October 27, 1991** – **Turkmenistan:** Gained independence from the Soviet Union.

**October 28, 1918** – **Czech Republic:** Although the Czech Republic came into being on January 1, 1993, Czechs commemorate October 28 as their Independence Day.

**October 29, 1923** – **Türkiye:** Republic Day commemorates the proclamation of the Turkish Republic on October 29, 1923. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk became its first president that day.