Dear Clubs Leadership and Members,

On January 7, 2021, the SIA board of directors adopted a temporary pause for face-to-face meetings and other activities to protect the safety and health of our members and our stakeholders throughout the federation during the COVID worldwide pandemic and manage the legal and financial risk associated with our face-to-face meetings and activities.

Since we met, we have consulted with our general counsel and our insurance broker to develop a risk assessment plan. That plan has guided us on our assessment of our current conditions. It is important to provide you with this update as soon as possible.

As promised, your SIA board has been evaluating the ever-changing COVID–19 conditions and held a special meeting on April 8, 2021 to review the temporary pause order. I am pleased to update you with the results of our discussion and decisions.

As members, we recognize that Soroptimists accomplish our work through interaction which is also important for the health, safety and success of our members and organization. As stated previously, the SIA board understands the cost of energy, morale and money that not holding face-to-face meetings or events is likely to cause. We also recognize conditions vary throughout our 20 countries and territories and appreciate your cooperation as we continue to assess the situation and make informed decisions to protect our health and safety and manage our risk.

During our meeting on April 8, 2021, **the SIA board of directors approved a modified temporary pause.**

If your club/region agrees to follow the Official COVID-19 guidelines defined below, the club/region may choose to **resume its face-to-face regularly scheduled club/region meetings effective May 1, 2021**. While your members may choose to attend meetings in person, we encourage the clubs/regions to accommodate members who choose to join the

regularly scheduled meetings virtually. For the modified temporary pause club meetings are defined as board, business, program, and committee meetings. Region meetings are defined as board and committee meetings. If you choose to have outside guests, who are not Soroptimist members, at one of these meetings, the guests must attend virtually. Due to frequency of regularly scheduled club/region meetings, this risk mitigation strategy is meant to contain the risk to the membership rather than risk expanding it to the public. It also allows the regularly scheduled meetings to be held without a written declaration.

Official COVID-19 guidelines are defined as the country's health agency guidelines e.g., CDC and/or local and regional safety and health protocols, requirements and mandates for social gatherings (masks, distancing, size of gathering, etc.), whichever is more rigorous.

The SIA board of directors also agreed **effective May 1, 2021, a club/region may choose to hold a face-to-face activity that includes persons (non-members) outside your club or region board.** To hold an activity requires clubs and regions to file a written declaration with SIAHQ at least 45 days in advance of the activity. The written declaration identifies and confirms the Official COVID-19 guidelines they will follow and indicates who the designated COVID-19 compliance coordinator will be for the Activity/Non-Meeting Event. The written declaration must be completed for each activity and sent electronically to declaration@soroptimist.org. The declaration form can be found here. This reporting requirement will continue until further notice.

In the US, in addition to filing the written declaration, holding an activity still requires the obligation of completing a Certificate of Insurance ideally 45 days before the activity.

The following meetings, activities and travel still remain under a temporary pause:

1. face to face 2021 region conferences and associated travel.

2. face to face federation meetings, board meetings, activities and associated travel.

The SIA Board will continue to evaluate conditions and keep the organization informed as we move through the pandemic to a time when larger gatherings are prudent.

As a result of these board decisions, the face-to-face components of SIA Procedures B. 3. a. and b. and F. 4. b. related to regularly scheduled club/region meetings are no longer suspended. You may also refer to the following Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for additional clarification.

Should you have any questions about the board's decision, please direct them to me and Executive Director & CEO Liz.

Thank you for your continued adaptation during this difficult time in our worldwide history. Your ability to seize these challenges and create new and effective ways to achieve our mission is truly an inspiration.

Very truly yours,



Penny Babb
SIA President