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## Istanbul CVB partners with ICCA

Istanbul CVB is now an ICCA association relations partner as it looks to regain its standing in the market

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Pictured: Elif Balci Fisunoglu and Sekib Avdagic

Istanbul Convention Bureau (CVB) is partnering with ICCA as an association relations partner (ARP) to further promote Istanbul as a conference destination.

The president of Istanbul CVB and the Istanbul Chamber of Commerce, Sekib Avdagic and the ICCA regional director (Europe), Elif Balci Fisunoglu, signed the two-year agreement.

Avdagic said: "This is an important step for Istanbul's visibility and it will strengthen our relationship with both ICCA and international associations. I believe that it will have a positive impact on Istanbul's position as an international congress destination."

The news comes as Istanbul looks to rebuild its reputation as a major destination for international association meetings. For years, the city occupied a top 10 position in ICCA's annual city rankings, which record the number of rotating association meetings held in cities around the world.

However, ongoing conflict in neighbouring Syria, reports of mass purges, terrorist attacks, and what many see as a power grab by President Erdogan, appear to have damaged the country's credibility. In May, [Istanbul dropped 94 places](#) in the ICCA rankings to 133, having hosted just 20 international association meetings in 2017.

ICCA has been doing all it can to support Istanbul. In 2017 ICCA made [a solidarity visit](#) to Istanbul, with then-CEO Martin Sirk saying that Turkey has a "vital role" to play in the events industry. And in March this year it held a strategic board meeting in the city with ICCA president Nina Freysen-Pretorius describing the city as a 'destination not to be missed for international association meetings'.

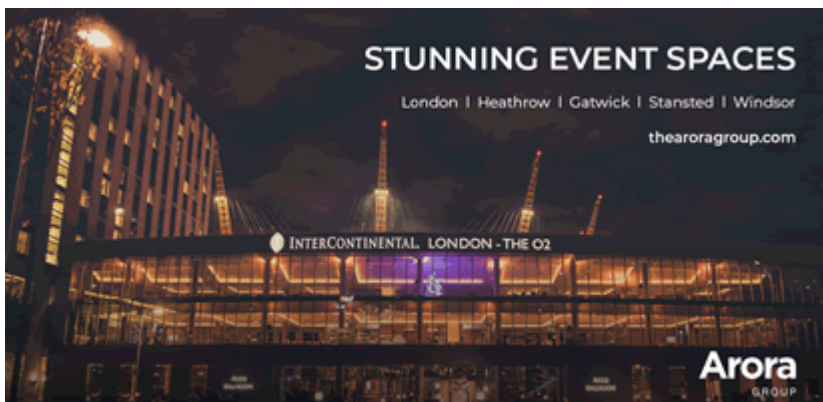
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