

INSARAG

Americas Reginal Chairmanship Group

Regional Chair – Argentina: Ambassador Alejandro Daneri, President of the White Helmets Commission

I Regional Vice-chair – Dominican Republic: Brigadier General Lawyer Dr. Juan Manuel Méndez García

II Regional Vice-chair – Colombia: Mr. Eduardo José González Angulo

Newsletter 15/08/2019



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

It is an honor for me to represent the Region of the Americas as Chair of the INSARAG Regional Group.

During the last few years, we have experienced great achievements in the development of our system worldwide. The national accreditation systems for Urban Search and Rescue Teams, and the INSARAG External Support and Recognition Process (IESRP or PAREI in Spanish) represent significant advances in our work to strengthen national capacities in a region that still has the lowest number of internationally classified teams and one of the largest recurrences of seismic events in the world.

There are still great challenges for the second semester of 2019 during which the Region will organise the annual global meeting of USAR team leaders in Chile and the regional earthquake response exercise - SIMEX in Cuba. Also, we will take advantage of the meeting in Chile to evaluate the results of the IESRP processes (PAREI) that have already taken place in the region in order to continue strengthening the system. I consider that "Integration, commitment and cooperation" are the key concepts for the success of this experience.

REGIONAL CALENDAR

AUGUST

20 Regional Board Coordination Teleconference

SEPTEMBER

16-20 SIMEX regional, Cuba

OCTOBER

6-8 INSARAG Working Group Meetings, Chile
PAREI Technical Support Group Meeting
9-11 INSARAG Annual Team Leaders Meeting, Chile

NOVEMBER

12-14 INSARAG Regional Group Meeting and UNDAC Regional Consultation, Buenos Aires, Argentina

First semester activities



INSARAG meeting in Buenos Aires at the IX (MIAH):

A dedicated meeting on INSARAG was held on June 11 at the San Martín Palace of the Argentine Foreign Ministry, with the participation of 6 countries in addition to IFRC, PAHO and OCHA. The meeting took place just prior to the IX regional Meeting on International Humanitarian Assistance Mechanisms (MIAH in Spanish) and allowed to enrich the discussions significantly achieving the incorporation of a specific paragraph about INSARAG in the final Buenos Aires Declaration, which was adopted by consensus. Discussions were focused on INSARAG's approach to the coordination of international humanitarian assistance in search and rescue operations based on quality standards and an agreed methodology in order to promote it as a good practice in the other coordination processes and response mechanisms. See a link to the declaration: https://www.cancilleria.gob.ar/userfiles/ut/declaracion_de_buenos_aires.pdf

Regional work plan 2019: The regional chairmanship group summarized the main objectives and proposed activities for 2019 in the regional work plan 2019. We look forward to the active collaboration of all countries, teams and organizations to achieve our objectives. The work plan is available on the following website: <http://www.insarag.org/regional-groups/americas/americas-actividades> [para la versión en español, utilicen el enlace siguiente: <http://www.insarag.org/grupos-regionales/americas/actividades>]

Global Meeting 2020 and the Role of the Regional Group: The regional chairmanship put forward the proposal to expand the thematic priority led by the Americas to cover "strengthening quality standards and coordination through local adaptation of international guidelines". The chairmanship group proposes the creation of an informal task team at the regional level to develop the discussion paper which is to be presented at the Team Leader's meeting in Chile, the Regional Meeting in Buenos Aires and next year at the global meeting.

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First semester activities



INSARAG and the Foreign Ministries: During the week of the HNPW (Humanitarian Network and Partnership Week) in Geneva, led by Argentina, a meeting of International Representations was held, in which the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the Region participated in order to familiarize themselves with the INSARAG mechanisms for the international coordination of humanitarian assistance. These will be included in the next SIMEX regional exercise in CUBA.

SIMEX preparatory workshop: the second preparatory workshop for the regional earthquake response exercise took place from 6-9 August in Cuba, coordinated by the national civil protection and the OCHA/INSARAG Secretariat. The exercise planning group, composed of representatives from the different national institutions involved in the exercise (civil defense, MOH, Min of Interior, firefighters, customs, etc.) with experts from the INSARAG Regional Group (Chile, Argentina, Ecuador, Costa Rica, Colombia) as well as PAHO and OCHA has achieved significant progress in reviewing tasks and injects related to the learning and preparedness objectives and in identifying key coordination moments that need to be practiced during the exercise. We expect several teams from the region to actively participate in the SIMEX.

OBA-INSARAG collaboration: On 1 August 2019, the INSARAG Secretariat participated in the 2nd annual meeting of the Board of Directors of the Organization of American Firefighters (OBA in Spanish: <https://www.bomberosamericanos.org>) to discuss the next steps in the implementation of the letter of understanding signed between the OBA and the INSARAG Secretariat in February 2019. The strategic partnership between INSARAG and OBA will focus on promoting the implementation of the INSARAG methodology across countries in the Americas region and in particular with OBA member institutions.

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