

INSARAG

The Americas Regional Chairmanship Group

Newsletter, 2016 / 04

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

“THE WORK IN THE AMERICAS REGION MUST GO ON”



Photo: Carlos Iván Márquez Pérez receiving INSARAG recognition as 2016 Regional Chair. Bogotá, credit @UNGRD - Colombia

This year we have had the honor, as Colombia, to Chair the Americas Regional Group, and with this XV Annual Meeting, we close, with excellent results, a year of significant work of the Regional Chairmanship and the countries of the Americas by implementing projects with significant importance for all. The meeting allowed us to assess what we have done, demonstrate important results and above all to plan what we should do during the next years.

At the beginning of our Chairmanship, we established an ambitious Work Plan, of which all objectives have been met and we were able to show significant progress in each of the goals. This is why I would like to thank you all for your commitment and support in achieving not only the objectives but also all goals we gave ourselves as Regional Group for 2016.

I would like to congratulate Ecuador for their role as Chair for 2017, and México and Argentina as new members of the Americas Regional Chairmanship as I and II Vice-chairs, respectively. There are very interesting challenges that have been identified, and framed in the INSARAG Strategy 2017-2020, and it is important that we work together to make them happen. I am certain your work will bring excellent results for the region.



I want to say that for Colombia, this has been a very valuable experience to learn from all of you, but also to strengthen our own National USAR processes and to advance in the INSARAG External Classification of our USAR COL team. I confirm our complete availability to keep supporting the INSARAG processes in the region in line with the priorities of the Regional Chairmanship and the Secretariat. You can count on us!

Always remember: Colombia is your second home, and we will keep waiting for you to work together to respond to the **mandate of INSARAG: Saving lives!**

Carlos Iván Márquez Pérez, Director UNGRD Colombia

KEY ANNOUNCEMENTS

At the XV Regional Meeting in November, the participants agreed to keep working on the project of the **Regional Assessment of National USAR Capacities**. Therefore, focal points are encouraged to send the completed **QUESTIONNAIRES** before March 31st, 2017. Colombia will keep leading the process.

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INSARAG REGIONAL CALENDAR

Confirmed Dates

- ✓ During November and December 2016, Colombia printed and distributed more than **2.000 INSARAG Guidelines** to the region.
- ✓ **February 6th-10th 2017**. Genève- Switzerland Humanitarian Networks and Partnership Week (HNPW)
- ✓ **May 22nd- 26th 2017**. Cancún-México. Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction.

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THE XV AMERICAS ANNUAL MEETING 2016 WAS HELD SUCCESSFULLY



The XV version of the meeting was held in Bogotá, Colombia from the 16-18 November. It was hosted by the General Director of the National Unit for Disaster Risk Management (UNGRD) as INSARAG Americas Regional Chair, and organized jointly with the United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), in its role of INSARAG Secretariat and manager of the UNDAC System. The meeting had more than 50 participants from 15 countries of the region and other regions, as well as national and regional organizations.

The INSARAG Americas Regional Work plan had determined as one of its strategic objectives for 2016, to improve the management and leadership of the Regional Group. In this context, one of the activities planned was this Meeting, jointly with Consultation meeting on the cooperation and coordination mechanisms for emergency response, the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) mechanism in the Americas.



The Regional Chair, Carlos Iván Márquez Pérez, in representation of the Regional Chairmanship, presented the detailed report of the achievements in 2016.

The agenda included issues such as: results of the SIMEX, lessons learned from the Ecuador's earthquake response, national accreditation processes for USAR teams, and the progress on the Regional Assessment of National USAR Team Capacities. The draft INSARAG 2017-2020 Strategy was discussed; the Regional Group provided inputs to the work plan for 2017, and the I Vice Chair for 2017 was designated. Besides, in an effort to link more closely the INSARAG Regional Group and the UNDAC mechanism, the III UNDAC Regional consultation meeting was held, in which UNDAC team experiences in Ecuador and Jamaica were shared, as well as motivations and challenges for UNDAC members and countries, and the expectations on the UNDAC system for 2017.

This regional meeting was also led by Christophe Schmachtel, INSARAG Focal Point for the Americas, and Darío Álvarez, OCHA ROLAC representative. At the same time, the meeting counted with the participation of Jorge Martínez, Deputy Secretariat for Response in the National Secretariat of Risk Management, and I Vice Chair of the INSARAG Americas Chairmanship group. The meeting report is published, along with all the documentation, on the [INSARAG webpage www.insarag.org](http://www.insarag.org) and can also be found in the Virtual OSOCC and the UNGRD virtual library in the following link <http://repositorio.gestiondelriesgo.gov.co/handle/20.500.11762/20671>

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THE INSARAG AMERICAS REGIONAL CHAIRMANSHIP GROUP IS CONFIRMED FOR 2017

During 2016, the Americas Regional Chairmanship was composed as follows:

Chair COLOMBIA: Dr. Carlos Iván Márquez Pérez, General Director, National Unit for Disaster Risk Management

I Vice chair ECUADOR: Major Jorge Martínez, Response Deputy Secretariat

II Vice Chair EL SALVADOR: Lic. Walter Osmar Mejía Navarrete, Disaster Risk Management Advisor, Ministry of Governance.
Having accomplished the objectives of the Regional Work Plan established for 2016 for the Americas, Congratulations! and special thanks for the commitment of the countries representing this regional challenge.

On November 17th, in the frame of the XV INSARAG Americas Regional Meeting, the Regional Chairmanship Group for 2017 was designated. Considering the withdrawal of El Salvador of its role within the Chairmanship group, Mexico was designated as I Vice Chair of the Regional Group. After a new consultation process, Argentina was designated as II Regional Vice Chair.

As of January 2017, the INSARAG Americas Chairmanship group will be conformed as follows:

Chair ECUADOR: Major Jorge Martinez, Response Deputy Secretariat, National Secretariat for Risk Management in Ecuador

I Vice Chair MEXICO: Lic. Ricardo de la Cruz Musalem, Civil Protection General Director, Governance Secretariat, Mexico

II Vice Chair ARGENTINA: Mr. Alejandro Daneri, Chair of White Helmets Commission, Ministry of Foreign Relations and Cult, Argentina



Photo: Christophe Schmachtel, INSARAG Focal Point for the Americas and Major Jorge Martínez, Response Deputy Secretariat National Secretariat for Risk Management in Ecuador. Bogotá, crédito @UNGRD - Colombia



Photo: Christophe Schmachtel, INSARAG Focal Point for the Americas and Lic. Ricardo de la Cruz, General Director of México Civil Protection Bogotá, crédito @UNGRD - Colombia



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The National SIMEX was held in the Province of San Juan, Argentina

By: **Martin Gómez Lissarrague, INSARAG operational focal point, Argentina**

On November 21-23, the National SIMEX exercise in the Province of San Juan, Argentina, was carried out with the purpose of putting to practice the Seismic Response Plan of the province, as well as the coordination tools and methodologies. The National SIMEX used the INSARAG Regional SIMEX methodology. It counted with the participation of municipal and provincial entities, as well as the National Ministries of Security, Defense, Health, Social Action and Foreign Affairs, as well with national USAR teams and the special participation of Colombia supporting this process of national capacities strengthening.

On November 23rd, Argentina celebrates the Civil Defense Day, commemorating the earthquake in San Juan that caused the death of more than 10,000 people.



Photo: Teamwork. San Juan-Argentina, credit: Argentina



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PROGRESS OF THE WORKING GROUP: EXTERNAL SUPPORT AND RECOGNITION PROCESS TO NATIONAL USAR ACREDITATION PROCESSES

On Tuesday, November 15th, 2016, the Working Group met to follow up on the commitments defined in the Regional Workshop held in Colombia on May 7-9 2016. This meeting responded to an initiative of the Regional Chairmanship Group and the Secretariat, with the purpose of advancing with the proposal, incorporating the comments received throughout the year from the INSARAG community, and preparing an updated and more complete proposal for the XV Americas Regional Meeting.

The initial proposal had been presented in the Asian-Pacific Regional Meeting, in the USAR team leaders meeting, and in the AEME Regional Group meeting. It had also been communicated to the INSARAG network electronically and through a WebEx presentation, receiving several comments. The participants of the meeting reviewed the proposal, which was still as a draft, that will be presented to the INSARAG Steering Group in February 2017.

Before February, the working group will share the finalized proposal, and there are already several countries of the regional interested in implementing it as a pilot.



Photo: Team Work. Bogotá, crédito @UNGRD - Colombia

2016 WORKPLAN RESULTS: Presented by Carlos Iván Márquez Pérez

GOAL 1: To promote and support more effective National USAR capacities development and national response preparedness.

GOAL 2: To improve the efficiency of the USAR international preparedness and response to emergencies that exceeds national capacities.

GOAL 3: Improve management and leadership of the Regional Group.

14 OBJECTIVES

MOST RELEVANT ACHIEVEMENTS:

- **SIMEX COLOMBIA** September 26-30, 748 participants, 25 countries
- Colombia printed **3,000 INSARAG GUIDELINES 2015**.
- The Regional Chairmanship Group re-edited and implemented the **Regional Assessment of National USAR Team Capacities**.
- **Two Regional Workshops** held in Colombia to keep building the proposal of: Support and external recognition process of USAR National Accreditation processes.
- **SIMEX Guidelines** Spanish Translation
- Start IEC (INSARAG External Classification) processes **with two USAR teams** in the region: BOMBEROS CHILE and USAR COL SNGRD (Colombia)
- **XV Americas Annual Meeting**, Colombia, 16-18 de November 2016

On behalf of the Americas
Regional Chairmanship
Group, we wish you a Merry
Christmas and a Happy and
prosperous year 2017, full of
new challenges for INSARAG!
Thanks



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