

INSARAG

The Americas Regional Chairmanship Group

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

SIMEX AMERICAS 2016: AN EXERCISE FOR SAVING LIVES



Photo: INSARAG Regional Chair. SIMEX opening.
Sept.26th 2016, Bogotá, @UNGRD - Colombia



By: Carlos Iván Márquez Pérez,
General Director
National Unit for Disaster Risk Management

The SIMEX AMERICAS 2016 was held in Bogotá, Colombia from 26 to 30 September. During **5 days, 25 countries** from around the world were represented, **45 workshops** were held in its preparatory stage, **748 participants** gathered including USAR teams, EMTs and an UNDAC team, observers, the National System for Disaster Risk Management of Colombia, the private sector, representatives from the community, the EXCON and coordination team. A total of **27 Urban Search and Rescue teams-USAR, 21 Emergency Medical Teams-EMT, and 20 hours of simulation** on an earthquake scenario were successfully carried out in Bogotá. This was the outcome of the **SIMEX COLOMBIA 2016**.

The SIMEX 2016 has been a very important exercise for the region; it was not Colombia's SIMEX; it was the SIMEX of the AMERICAS region, to prepare ourselves, evaluate ourselves, and to review how we should act in a real-case scenario. It was also to verify how this theoretic scheme that we designed helps to **SAVE LIVES!** For me, implementing plans, procedures, protocols and coordination methodologies between national and international stakeholder is a commitment as INSARAG Regional Chair.

This exercise has been a significant step, but not the only thing that we can do. We must continue working to achieve appropriate coordination between national and international stakeholders in case of a natural disaster in the Americas Region.

PHOTOS

VIDEO

MEMORIES



KEY ANNOUNCEMENTS

All Focal Points are kindly requested to support the completion of the **QUESTIONNAIRE** on the **Regional Assessment of National USAR capacities**. Colombia is leading the process in 2016.

The newly created **Twitter** account **@Insarag** already has **278 followers**. We hope you will promote the account and increase the number of followers to keep them informed about INSARAG news around the world.

INSARAG REGIONAL CALENDAR Confirmed Dates



- ✓ **15 November**, Bogotá- Colombia.
Meeting on the proposal on the external support and validation process of national USAR team accreditation processes.
- ✓ **16-18 November**, Bogotá, Colombia.
XV INSARAG Americas Regional Group Annual Meeting & III Regional UNDAC consultation meeting.

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RELEVANCE OF REGIONAL ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL USAR TEAM CAPACITIES

In 2015, the Regional Group decided to carry out an update of the regional assessment of national USAR team capacities. It was part of the regional work plan last year but it was not possible to finalize the process, so the Regional Chairmanship Group led by Colombia, decided to turn the regional assessment, one of its priorities.

The regional assessment is an essential tool designed to help countries of the region identify the level of capacity of their USAR teams and determine what type of capacity they can count on in case of a catastrophic event in their territories. It also helps identify those who have real capabilities.

The main purpose for updating the regional assessment is to identify the tendencies in capacity strengthening of USAR teams in the Americas region in order to have an updated baseline for the planning of Regional Group activities. It also pretends to gather information for the elaboration of the proposal for design the external support and validation process of national USAR team accreditation processes, and to be able to provide updated information to the INSARAG Steering Group.

For ongoing support and analysis you can reach, Arch. William Tovar INSARAG Operational Focal point of Colombia

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ECUADOR'S IMPRESSION ABOUT THE SIMEX AS I VICE-CHAIR OF REGIONAL INSARAG GROUP



The Regional Earthquake Response Exercise – INSARAG – SIMEX 2016 represented for Ecuador, as I Vice-Chair of the INSARAG Regional Group, an important space to share with the international community the issues to strengthen and to improve in both the national and international response during a disaster.

Additionally, during the simulation, the importance to work on the national accreditation processes of emergency response teams was highlighted, as a fundamental component in the local response process and a key factor for being able to save more lives. Likewise, the SIMEX 2016 allowed both international and national stakeholders to implement established response protocols and procedures at all levels (from local to international level). It became very evident that the international methodologies are flexible, and adapting to the reality of the country,

and so that the international response be in support of or complementing the national efforts when a disaster happens.



Photo: In 2015 the XIV Annual Meeting of INSARAG Americas' Regional was held in the frame of INSARAG global meeting in Abu Dhabi.

INVITATION

XV Annual Meeting of INSARAG Americas Regional Group & III Regional UNDAC Consultation Meeting 16-18 November 2016

In the INSARAG Americas regional work plan, one of the strategic objectives for 2016 were defined as, to **improve the management and leadership of regional group**. In this context, one of the activities established is the holding of the XV Annual Meeting of INSARAG Americas' Regional Group and the UNDAC Consultation Meeting.

The version XV of the meeting will be held from 16 to 18 November in Bogota, Colombia, and the General Director of the National Unit for Disaster Risk Management (UNGRD) of Colombia invites to this event in his capacity of Chairman of International Search and Rescue Advisory Group-INSARAG in the Americas. The meeting its organized jointly with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), in its capacity as INSARAG Secretariat and UNDAC system administrator.

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