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Seventeenth Conference of the Association of Electoral Bodies of South America (Protocol of Quito)

Quito, Ecuador. On February 21 the Seventeenth Conference of the Association of Electoral Bodies of South America (Protocol of Quito) was held, hosted by the National Electoral Council (CNE) and the Contentious Electoral Tribunal (TCE) of Ecuador. At this meeting, Domingo Paredes Castillo, member of the CNE, was elected President *pro-tempore* of the Association, succeeding Alberto Ramirez Zambonini, President of the Superior Tribunal of Electoral Justice of Paraguay.

The agenda of the Conference included the remarks of Patricio Baca Mancheno, Vice President of the TCE; Wilma Velasco, President of the Superior Tribunal of Elections of

Bolivia, and the special invitee, Wladimir Churov, President of the Central Electoral Commission of Russia, who spoke on *Electoral Jurisdiction, Penal Jurisprudence and Electoral Crimes and Political Disqualification*. The Conference also received the report of IIHR/CAPEL, the Executive Secretariat of the Inter-American Union of Electoral Bodies, and took note of the requests for admission to the Protocol of Quito of the National Registry of Identification and Civil Status of Peru and the Electoral Chamber of the Supreme Court of Venezuela. The CAPEL delegation was comprised of José Thompson, IIHR Executive Director and Director of CAPEL, Sofía Vincenzi and Mónica Barrantes.

Visit the [Red Electoral Gallery of photographs](#)

[UNIORE in the local elections of Ecuador](#)

Quito, Ecuador. On February 23, Ecuador held elections for 5651 positions, to wit: 46 prefectures and vice-prefectures, 221 mayoralities, 867 positions on municipal councils and 438 on rural councils and 4079 members of parochial boards. The National Electoral Council (CNE) registered 11,613,270 voters (5,821,182 women and 5,792,088 men). The elections were observed by an international mission, invited by the CNE and the Contentious Electoral Tribunal (TCE) and comprised of members and staff of the members of the Association of Electoral Bodies of South America and the Inter-American Union of Electoral Bodies from Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Puerto Rico, Santa Lucía, Uruguay and Venezuela, as well as representatives of IIHR/CAPEL, the Executive Secretariat of the two organizations.

The six-day mission were apprised of the context of the elections and the progress made by the CNE with respect to the inauguration of electronic and domicile voting. The CNE also reported on the implementation of the recommendations made at the general elections of 2013, which was well received by the UNIORE mission. On February 23, the observers visited the polls from their opening until the transmittal of the results and then held an evaluation and drafted a preliminary report that included the contributions of the groups, which were divided in order to visit different provinces. The document, which was given to the electoral authorities on February 24, evaluates the efforts of the CNE to comply with its commitment to facilitate an inclusive vote, which would put it in the vanguard in Latin America. In addition, technical recommendations were made with respect to the polling places and the counting of votes. The final versión will be sent in the coming weeks.

Visit the [Red Electoral Gallery of photographs](#)

[Methodological workshop on education in human rights and the prevention of violence in schools concludes](#)

San Salvador, El Salvador. On February 17, the methodological workshop on education in human rights and the prevention of violence in schools concluded at the same time as the on-line course “Techniques and Resources of Education in Human Rights.” This activity, in

which 45 persons participated, initiated the second phase of the cycle of training for teachers and technical personnel of the Ministry of Education of El Salvador.

The workshop was facilitated by the IIHR with the support of the Coordination of Education in Human Rights of the Head of Human Rights, Values and Citizenship of the Ministry of Education and was part of the cooperation agreement between the IIHR and the Ministry. The agreement contemplates the execution of projects, methodological assistance and training plans in human rights and the prevention of violence in schools that have been on-going since 2009, including a virtual component.

[Gallery of photographs](#)

[Presence of the IIHR in South America](#)

Montevideo, Uruguay. On February 18, the IIHR representative for South America, Soledad García Muñoz, visited the Minister of Education and Culture of Uruguay, Ricardo Ehrlich, at which time the participants reviewed the institutional projects in that country and the sub-region and agreed that there both bodies should formalize the alliance created around the Inter-American Pact for Education in Human Rights and for the strengthening of the institutional representation.

The next day, Mauricio Coitiño, a member of the collective Ovejas Negras, met with the Coordinator to talk about matters of common interest. He requested that the IIHR study the possibility of backing the inter-American convention on sexual and reproductive rights, an initiative promoted by many organizations of the region. Ovejas Negras is one of the principal organizations dealing with the rights of sexual diversity of Uruguayan civil society and whose work was key for the passing of the Law of Equal Marriage.

Photographs of the activity:

https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=522473327869340&set=a.446373492145991.1073741828.446366135480060&type=1&relevant_count=1

Links of interest: <http://www.ovejasnegras.org/> y <http://www.convencion.org.uy/>

[Workshop on economic, social and cultural rights and the right to health of women](#)

Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. On February 19 and 20, a workshop was held on economic, social and cultural rights with emphasis on the right to health in the different international instruments that recognize it and its impact in four major aspects: the social production of health (access to potable water, food, dignified housing, education, a life free of violence, vacation time, etc.); access to the public health services (equality, quality and opportunity of access to information, freedom to take decisions with medical advice – informed consent- and a public epidemiological profile, accessible to women, that contains the diseases most likely to affect them according to their age, sexual orientation, educational level, migratory status, ethnic/racial origin; and health in a healthy environment, free of contamination, clean air, etc.

The workshop, which was held jointly with the Woman and Health Collective and in which Rose Mary Madden Arias, staff member of the IIHR program Human Rights of Women participated, is part of the institutional effort to collect data in order to monitor compliance of this right as part of the public institutions.

[The course *Dynamics of Post-conflict towards the Peace* begins](#)

Bogotá, Colombia. On February 22, the Universidad Libre, with the technical assistance of the IIHR, began the *Dynamics of Post-conflict towards the Peace* course as part of its Gerardo Molina Chair. The purpose of this initiative is to “call the attention of the country, its citizens and its active forces to the new national realities for a true construction of peace” in the context of the negotiations that have been held since October 2012. The program includes the study of the post-conflict period in successful processes toward peace, transitional justice and the bases of a new State and a peaceful society.

The course, which will continue throughout the year, has been organized by the National Office of the Office of Inter-Institutional Relations of the university with the academic support of the IIHR under the agreement between the two institutions. More information, [here](#).

[Workshop on the rights of the LGBT populations](#)

Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. On February 21 and 22, the Human Rights of Women program, headed by Rose Mary Madden Arias, in alliance with the Women and Health Collective, held a workshop on the rights of the LGBT population. The purpose of the workshop was to promote the inter-American system of human rights; make known the situations of disadvantage, discrimination and exclusion that affect their daily life and that makes it impossible for them to live their sexuality in a safe, informed and free manner as well as their personal and professional development; and to study the progress of human rights set out in the regional human rights instruments.

Different activities were designed to strengthen in the participants the idea that they have rights. There were discussions of analysis and reflection on the eradication of violations of human rights based on the identity of gender and sexual orientation from the study of the American Convention on Human Rights and the judgment in the *Atala Riffo vs. Chile* case with respect to the State’s obligations to guarantee equality and non-discrimination in the access to justice and opportunities in all social, economic, political and cultural aspects.

[Belela Herrera honored](#)

Montevideo, Uruguay. On February 24, a ceremony was held to honor Belela Herrera, a well-known human rights activist whose name graces the IIHR offices in the country. The ceremony was led by representatives of the organizing bodies: Luis Almagro, the Foreign Minister; Beatriz Ramirez, Director of the National Institute of Women, John Biehl, Director of the OAS office; Juan Raúl Ferreira, President of the National Institution of Human Rights, and Soledad García Muñoz, Coordinator of the IIHR Regional Office for South America.

The ceremony was held during the second meeting of experts of the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM) on the rights of women in public policies and indicators of the exercise of those rights. A large audience filled the auditorium of the Foreign Ministry and included individuals from the political, diplomatic, cultural and social worlds. The book “The Citizenship of Women in the Democracy of the Americas,” by Carmen Moreno

and Lilian Celiberti and published by the CIM was presented at the ceremony. Read the complete note [here](#).

Gallery of photographs

<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.524974137619259.1073741838.446366135480060&type=1>

Links of interest:

http://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Belela_Herrera

<http://ladiaria.com.uy/articulo/2014/2/una-maestra/>

<http://www.republica.com.uy/belela-suma-y-sigue/>

<http://www.presidencia.gub.uy/comunicacion/comunicacionnoticias/tributo-a-belela-herrera>

<http://www.mrree.gub.uy/frontend/page?1.inicio.ampliacion-ppal2.O.es.0.PAG;CONC:1961;11;D:tributo-a-belela-herrera;2;PAG;>

Read the book published by the CIM, [here](#)

**We thank the media that allowed us to use their news items.*

[First Regional Forum “Victims and Peace”](#)

Santa Marta, Magdalena, Colombia. On February 25, the First Regional Forum “Victims and Peace” of the Departmental Group of Victims of the Magdalena was held. Discussed at the meeting was the participation of women victims of the armed conflict, the role of disabled persons, indigenous peoples, reparations after the peace accords, transitional justice, the right to truth and the largest and most troublesome issues, reconciliation and the historic truth of the victims of the armed conflict in Colombia. On the other hand, the Action Plan drafted in 2013 was discussed and adjusted and its activities were reprogrammed.

Drawing on the conclusions of the debate, the 53 representatives of the National Groups proposed a series of challenges to the national and local governments and the Office of the Ombudsman. They requested that they be given the resources necessary for an effective participation that would lead to a strengthening of leadership, the creation of proposals of productive projects at the local level as well as new plans of development and territorial action that would benefit the more than 188,000 victims already enrolled in the Registry of Victims of that jurisdiction. The Unit for the Attention and Integral Reparation of Victims and the IIHR were represented by Gabriel Bustamante, member of the Sub-direction of Participation of the UARIV, and Juan Navarrete, respectively, together with their technical and academic teams.

Read more on the Internet, [here](#)

[IIHR sponsors the second meeting of the group of experts of the CIM](#)

Montevideo, Uruguay. February 25 saw the opening of the Second Meeting of the Group of Regional Experts on Indicators of the Exercise of the Rights of Women of the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM-OAS) presided over by the CIM Executive Secretary, Carmen Moreno, with the participation of John Biehl, of the OAS Office, Soledad García Muñoz, Coordinator of the IIHR Regional Office for South America, Claire Poulin, Ambassador of Canada, and Beatriz Ramirez, Director of the National Institute of Women. The Group of Experts, formed in 2013, is comprised of Jurema Werneck, Elba Núñez, Susana Chiarotti, Teresa Valdés, Gilda Pacheco, Belkys Mones, Luz Patricia Mejía, Carmen Moreno, Mónica Orozco and our representative, Soledad García Muñoz.

Through the lectures of the experts and working in groups, the participants studied the system of indicators on the political, sexual and reproductive, economic, educational, health, work and social security rights as well as their protection. Also on February 27 there was a “Dialogue and Exchange on the Indicators of the Exercise of the Human Rights of Women with Public Employees of Uruguay,” with the participations of the sponsors of the meeting: the AECID and the Uruguayan Agency of International Cooperation.

María Elena Martínez, a member of the IIHR Steering Committee, the consultant Ana Laura Piñeyro and the assistants Victoria Faroppa and Sonia Ampuero, who were in charge of the logistical aspects of the meeting, represented the IIHR.

The IIHR has developed indicators of the rights of women, the results of which may be found in two publications: [Sistema de indicadores para evaluar desde la sociedad civil el cumplimiento estatal de la Convención Interamericana para Prevenir, Sancionar y Erradicar la Violencia contra la Mujer - Belém do Pará \(SIBdP\)](#) and as a result of its first application [Primera medición del sistema de indicadores para evaluar desde la sociedad civil el cumplimiento estatal de la Convención de Belém do Pará \(SIBdP\)](#).

Photographs of the activities:

<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.525414430908563.1073741839.446366135480060&type=1>

Interview on TV Hispan of the experts: <http://www.hispantv.com/detail/2014/02/28/262084/derechos-mujeres-siguen-siendo-violados-latinoamerica>

Preparatory activity for the anniversary of the “Convention of Belém do Pará”

San José, Costa Rica. On February 26, in the installations of the IIHR, a preparatory meeting for the commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women took place. Known as the Convention of Belém do Pará, it was adopted on June 9, 1994 at the Twenty-fourth Regular Session of the OAS General Assembly, held in that Brazilian city.

Attending were representative of the judiciary, public universities, the National Institute of Women (INAMU), the United Nations, the Women’s Forum, the Feminist Network against Violence against Women, among others. The meeting was convoked by the INAMU. Rose Mary Madden Arias, staff member of the Human Rights of Women program, represented the IIHR.

[Gallery of photographs](#)

Seminar on Gender and Access to Justice

San José, Costa Rica. On February 26-27, the IIHR participated in the seminar “Gender and Access to Justice,” organized by the Inter-American Program of Judicial Facilitators (PIJF) of the OAS Secretariat of Legal Affairs. On the first day, the IIHR Executive Director, José Thompson, moderated the panel on “Prevention, the judicial response for women” in which participated Elsa Dueñas, justice of the Supreme Court of El Salvador, the principal speaker, and the commentators Katrien Witteman, Juana Méndez and María Elena Gómez Cortés.

As part of the preparatives of the event, held as part of the International Woman’s Day, Mr. Thompson met with Pedro Vuskovic, Coordinator of the PIFJ, and Silvia Porras, of the Costa Rican judiciary, which backed the initiative.

Fourth Meeting of the National Group of Victims of the Armed Conflict

Santa Marta, Magdalena, Colombia. On February 27-28, the Fourth Meeting of the National Group of Victims took place. It was moderated by its coordinator, Jorge Eliécer Vásquez Lamilla. The meeting was a success inasmuch as it proposed how the process of peace in Colombia should be conducted. According to Mr. Vásquez, “the data that we are going to collect during several months will be presented to the negotiators in Havana to show them the position of the true victims in the framework of Law 1448.”

The Unit for the Attention and Integral Reparation of Victims and the IIHR were represented, respectively, by Gabriel Bustamante, Sub-director of Participation of the UARIV, and Juan Navarrete, together with their technical and academic staff. In the implementation of Law 1448 of 2011, conducted by the Sub-direction of Participation, on the basis of Agreement 1021 the IIHR assumed an operative and facilitating role in the design and formulation of the territorial action plan of the municipal and departmental groups, as well as the support to the national group with the goal of guaranteeing the effective participation of the victims in the restitution of their rights.

Read more on the Internet, [here](#)

Invitation to form part of *Red Incidiendo*

San José, Costa Rica. *Red Incidiendo* is an initiative of the IIHR directed to establish links with organizations, groups and communities that work with the poor. This network, open and of easy access electronically, promotes the exchange, systematization and dissemination of information on this population and the situations of risk, potential or developing, that affect or may affect their human rights. In addition, it is expected that the network will develop different tools and useful actions for the organizations, such as indicators to measure progress in effectively protecting the human rights of this population, in accordance with the standards of the inter-American system; an early warning system; the compilation, systematization and exchange of good practices to prevent situations of risk; and training in actions of impact in public policies with a focus on rights.

Organizations that work with these populations or whose work is related with them through academic analysis, activism or impact in the formulation of public policies with a focus on rights are invited to join the network. They should be located in Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras or Nicaragua, maintain an active contact with the population with which they are working, have the capacity to gather and share basic data on the problem, carry out a conscientious follow up of the actions undertaken by the community and have access to the Internet.

If your organization is interested in joining *Red Incidiendo* and meet the requirements, please contact Mónica Barrantes at redincidiendo@iidh.ed.cr

Argentina: essay competition on human rights

La Plata, Argentina. The Human Rights Institute of the National University of La Plata and the IIHR invite university students, teachers and researchers in Argentina to participate in the Seventeenth National Essay Competition on Human Rights - Scholarship UNLP/IIHR. The first prize is a full scholarship to attend the Thirty-second

Interdisciplinary Course on Human Rights, which will be held in San José, Costa Rica from October 13 to 24.

Registration will conclude on July 4 and the last day to receive the essays is July 10. The conditions and an entry form may be found at <http://www.derechoshumanos.unlp.edu.ar/es/calendario/evento/concurso-nacional-de-monografias-sobre-derechos-humanos-2/>



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