



IIHR in the Americas
Bi-weekly newsletter of the Inter-American Institute of Human Rights
No. 169 – May 1-15, 2010

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IIHR/CAPEL in Uruguayan municipal and departmental elections

Montevideo, Uruguay. The Electoral Court of Uruguay asked the IIHR, through its Center for Electoral Promotion and Assistance (IIHR/CAPEL) to coordinate an observer mission to monitor municipal and departmental elections held on May 9. Citizens elected 19 mayors and departmental boards, as well as 89 municipalities, which were elected for the first time. Through Law No. 18 567, of September 13, 2009, municipalities were created, a third level of government and administration led by a Mayor and five Councilors. Voting was very peaceful and without irregularities, despite the addition of the municipal electoral process. The observation mission was composed of judges and officials from UNIORE member electoral bodies and by IIHR/CAPEL officials, including José Thompson, IIHR Deputy Director and CAPEL Director, and Soledad García Muñoz, Coordinator of the IIHR Regional Office for South America.

[IIHR to participate in next OAS General Assembly](#)

San José, Costa Rica. Thanks to an invitation from the OAS Secretary General, an IIHR delegation will attend the 40th regular session of the OAS General Assembly, to be held from June 6-8, 2010 in Lima, Peru. This year's theme is "Peace, Security and Cooperation in the Americas."

The General Assembly will consider the "Human rights education in formal education in the Americas" resolution, put forward by El Salvador and Uruguay. In one of its paragraphs the Resolution reads "education is progress, culture and social development. Human rights education, according to the Protocol of San Salvador, is key to prosperity and tolerance, peace, security and cooperation among OAS States." The text also mentions the Inter-American Agreement on the Right to Human Rights Education in the Americas.

State delegations will also be provided with several IIHR publications in print or digital format. Among these publications from 2008-2010 were: texts of the *Inter-American Agreement on Human Rights Education*; the *8th Report on Human Rights Education*; the *Curricular and methodological proposal for incorporating human rights education into the formal education of children between 10 and 14 years*; the corporate strategy based on *human rights from the perspective of poverty*; and the *interactive tool for incorporating human rights education in the classroom*. Brochures on the Inter-American Institute and the Virtual Inter-American Classroom will also be available.

[AUSJAL- IIHR Diploma in Human Rights underway](#)

Montevideo, Uruguay. Mariela Saettone, from Dámaso Larrañaga University, reported that work has already begun on the Human Rights Diploma program co-sponsored by the Association of Latin American Universities Trusting in the Company of Jesus (*Asociación de Universidades Confiadas a la Compañía de Jesús en América Latina-AUSJAL*) and IIHR. The 2010 class, which is the seventh cohort of the course, consists of 176 students enrolled in the six participating universities and the Bono Institute of Santo Domingo, bringing the total of virtual classrooms to seven. The interdisciplinary program is taught at the Javeriana Pontificate University of Bogotá, the Rafael Landívar University (Quetzaltenango campus) in Guatemala, Ibero-American University in Mexico City; Dámaso Larrañaga Catholic University in Montevideo, Andrés Bello Catholic University in Caracas; and the Pedro Francisco Bono Philosophical Institute/Jesuit Refugee Service in the Dominican Republic. The Human Rights Diploma has three topics of focus: access to justice, participation, citizenship and human rights; and human rights education.

This system is unique in the world of human rights. Only Latin America and the Caribbean have network for university training that includes a unified curriculum and consistent implementation across the region. Dámaso Larrañaga University, based in Montevideo, coordinates the Human Rights Diploma with support from the IIHR Regional Office for South America.

[Human rights education activities](#)

San José and Limón, Costa Rica and Quetzaltenango, Guatemala. During the first half of May, several activities took place in connection to the IIHR's work on human rights

education. A seminar-training workshop for national consultants and advisors to the Ministry of Education of Costa Rica was held on May 4. On May 5, a videoconference was organized for students following the Human Rights Diploma sponsored by the IIHR and the Association of Latin American Universities Trusting in the Company of Jesus (*Asociación de Universidades Confiadas a la Compañía de Jesús en América Latina-AUSJAL*). This activity was led by IIHR program officer Randall Brenes and consultant Ana Maria Rodino, as well as Claudia Knight, from Rafael Landivar University in Quetzaltenango, Guatemala. On May 10, a virtual tutored course began on “techniques, resources and materials for human rights education,” which will be delivered through the Inter-American Virtual Classroom on the IIHR website. This course is aimed at staff and officials within the Ministry of Education of El Salvador.

Another seminar was offered on March 13 and May 14 on the topic of “Human rights and human rights education” at the Limón campus of the University of Costa Rica, located on the Caribbean coast. University and high school students, community leaders, teachers and officials from municipalities and the hospital located in the province attended the event. Finally, on May 14, the registration period ended for the XXVIII Interdisciplinary Course on Human Rights, which will focus on “Human Rights Education” this year. During the three-month registration period, the IIHR received more than 1,500 applications.

[Culture of peace event](#)

San José, Costa Rica. Program Officer Vitorio Corasaniti represented the IIHR on a panel discussion entitled “From intra-collegial violence towards a culture of peace.” This activity was organized by the “The Country We Need” Chair, based at the School for Educational Sciences, State Distance Learning University (UNED).

The panel took place on May 5 at UNED headquarters. In addition to the IIHR, participating organizations included: the Paniamor Foundation; the Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies on Childhood and Adolescence; the Department for the Promotion of Rights and Student Engagement; the Ministry of Education; as well as a young student from the Liceo of Costa Rica. The Director of the School of Educational Sciences moderated the event.

[Activities of IIHR Regional Office for South America](#)

Montevideo, Uruguay. During the first half of May, the IIHR Regional Office for South America undertook several activities. On May 6, Yvahanna Larrosa, Executive Director of the Uruguay Section of Amnesty International, met with the Coordinator of the IIHR Office, Soledad García Muñoz, to exchange information on their respective agendas and work plans, as well as to identify opportunities for collaboration on human rights education. On May 7, the Coordinator attended *Europe Day* celebrations at the invitation of Ambassador Geoffrey Barker.

From May 7-9, the Office contributed to preparatory activities for the observation mission for upcoming municipal and departmental elections, in close collaboration with the IIHR/CAPEL. Its coordinator was joined by consultant Horacio Cánepa and intern Oberbuehler Nina. On May 10, García Muñoz attended the presentation of the “Implementation of measures for the development of public policy on the trafficking and smuggling of women, children and adolescents for commercial sexual exploitation”, a

project managed by the National Institute for Women within the Ministry for Social Development and funded by the European Union.

On May 14, Soledad García gave a lecture on “Education in and for human rights from the perspective of the public service: IIHR contributions over the 30 years since its foundation.” The Human Rights Directorate within the Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC) organized the activity. Those present were staff of the MEC, as well as the Ministries of Economy and Finance, Tourism and Sport, Labor, Health, Industry, Defense, Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, Housing and the Environment, Transport and Public Works, Social Development, INJU and the Port Administration.

Finally, Nina Oberbuehler, a Swiss graduate in Political Science, International Law and Japanese, joined the Office as an intern in early May.

[Series of videoconferences on international labor law](#)

San José, Costa Rica. On May 7, Juan Navarrete, IIHR Director for Central America, participated in a videoconference entitled *The application and interpretation of human rights instruments in the analysis of labor disputes: the Costa Rican case*. This event also included presentations by Olga Carrillo Bianchi, litigation lawyer, and Hermes González, Director of the Foundation for the Defense of Human Rights in Central America.

The “Lic. Edgar Cervantes Villalta” Law School, the Labor Law Commission of the Supreme Court, the Specialization Program for Labor Judges and the Bar Association of Costa Rica organized these sessions, which are broadcast to different parts of the country and target judicial officials, litigators, law students and officials from governmental and non-governmental organizations that are interested in the subject.

[IIHR at 1st Regional Meeting on Poverty](#)

San Miguel de Tucumán, Argentina. On May 7, Griselda Alfaro, an outstanding student of the IIHR’s Interdisciplinary and Civil Society courses, represented the Institute during a lecture on the right to food, with emphasis on policy and justice. She sat on a panel on poverty and human rights developed in the context of policy development during the Regional Meeting on Poverty, organized by the Extension Department within the National University of Tucumán (NUT). In her speech, Alfaro mentioned the IIHR corporate strategy, *Human rights from the dimension of poverty. A path for building the inter-American system*. She also used the occasion to present the report from the 6th Inter-American Course on Civil Society and Human Rights, which focused on *The Protection of economic, social and cultural rights, from norm to reality*.

The purpose of this meeting was to discuss poverty from a current interdisciplinary perspective through various activities. Those in attendance included NUT teaching staff, alumni and students, representatives from NGOs and government agencies, promoters and social leaders. The activity was supported by the United Nations.

Read more on the Internet:

Institutional Strategy, <http://www.iidh.ed.cr/multic/WebServices/Files.ashx?fileID=3355>

Archive of the VI Course on Civil Society and Human Rights,

http://www.iidh.ed.cr/BibliotecaWeb/Varios/Documentos/BD_125911109/memoria_vi_sc_ddhh.pdf

[Final phase of developing indicators on violence against women in Central America begins](#)

San José, Costa Rica. The last stage in the development of indicators to monitor the Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women (Convention of Belem do Pará, 1994) began on May 10. It will be led by a team of consultants coordinated by the IIHR's Women's Rights Program, headed by Mary Rose Madden Arias with support from Alberto Sánchez Mora. Consultants include: Ana Carcedo Cabañas, regional consultant, and local consultants Adriana Rodríguez Fernández (Costa Rica), Anna Michelle Binford Sáenz de Tejada (Guatemala), Doris Montenegro de Aragón (El Salvador), Nidia Martínez Cruz (Panama), Mirta Kennedy Arbiza (Honduras) and Violeta Delgado Sarmiento (Nicaragua).

This system of indicators will enable women to demand that States Parties pursue the effective implementation of the Convention. Initial phases included the collection of specific information on violence against women, the development of a first draft of the system, and the evaluation of this document in Central America and by the women's and feminist movements. Actions are being coordinated with the IIHR consultant on indigenous peoples so that they can address violence against indigenous women.

[Preparatory Conference for implementation of Inter-American Agreement on Human Rights Education](#)

San José, Costa Rica. On May 11, Roberto Cuéllar M., IIHR Director, and Victoria Napky, Deputy Director, held met with Vice President of the Republic and Minister of Education of El Salvador, Salvador Sánchez Cerén; Minister of Education and Culture of Uruguay, Ricardo Ehrlich; and Javier Miranda, Director of Human Rights within the same ministry. Soledad García Muñoz and María Noel Rodríguez, Coordinator and consultant, respectively, joined this virtual meeting on behalf of the IIHR Regional Office for South America.

During the meeting, they agreed on several actions related to the presentation of the Inter-American Agreement on Human Rights Education as part of celebrations for the IIHR's 30th anniversary. The active support of Salvadoran and Uruguayan dignitaries in relation to this IIHR initiative will be embodied in an inter-ministerial collaboration agreement, which reflects their belief that this instrument should influence the direction and strengthening of democracy in Latin America.

[For 30th anniversary, IIHR launches new website](#)

San José, Costa Rica. On May 13, the IIHR launched its new website in English and Spanish; it features numerous sources of information and resources for teachers and academics, which are systematized and periodically updated. The website also includes information on Institute activities directed toward fulfilling its mandate to promote education and research in human rights and to support the inter-American protection system.

Through this effort, the IIHR is providing quick access to: 1) general information on the IIHR, its [norms](#), [structure](#) and [current strategy](#); 2) the Institute's work, through various information sources, such as the [IIHR in the Americas](#), [press releases](#), [Messages from the Director](#), [photo gallery](#); 3) the [Interdisciplinary Course on Human Rights](#) and other

educational processes and applied research; 4) technical assistance and election observation missions through [CAPEL](#); 5) actions impacting the ratification of new treaties; and 6) the IIHR's presence at high-level forums, in the context of processes aimed at strengthening democracy and human rights.

The website also offers a wide variety of services such as training opportunities in the [Virtual Inter-American Classroom](#), [IIHR publications](#) (full text), networks ([Electoral Network of the Americas](#) and [Ombudsnet](#)), specialized sections ([women's rights](#) and [indigenous peoples and Afro-descendants](#)) and the [Documentation Center](#).

Visit IIHR website: <http://www.iidh.ed.cr>

Send comments and suggestions to: webmaster@iidh.ed.cr

[IIHR at CENIDH 20th anniversary](#)

Managua, Nicaragua. On May 15, Victoria Napky, IIHR Deputy Director in charge of South America, attended a ceremony to mark the 20th anniversary of the Nicaraguan Center for Human Rights (CENIDH). Members of the "Father César Jerez Network of Human Rights Promoters" from across Nicaragua were invited, along with the IIHR and representatives from international agencies, such as the International Federation of Human Rights (IFHR), World Organization Against Torture (OMCT) and the Center for Justice and International Law (CEJIL).

In her speech, Vilma Núñez de Escorcía, Founder and President of the organization, thanked the IIHR for its support in strengthening human rights organizations in the Americas, which was reflected by a plaque presented to Napky.

More information on the Internet:

Television report: <http://www.canal15.com.ni/videos/16149>

CENIDH celebrates 20th Anniversary...Address by its President Dr. Vilma Núñez de Escorcía: <http://www.cenidh.org/index.php>

Image of the recognition plaque at <http://www.iidh.ed.cr> in the photo gallery.

[Second phase begins for research on sexual and reproductive health of women and young migrants](#)

San José, Costa Rica. The Special program on women's rights, in coordination with UNFPA, will now promote research on the sexual and reproductive health of women and young migrants, as part of its second phase. Field work will be undertaken by consultants María Canchola, lead researcher in charge of the border between Mexico and Guatemala; Paola Jiménez, for Ecuador-Colombia; and Tania Álvarez, for Argentina-Bolivia.

This research will 1) highlight the impact of exclusion and discrimination on access to health services, particularly reproductive health, in migrant recipient countries, and 2) strengthen the capacity of civil society organizations to demand access. The project is part of awareness building and training on the right of migrants to sexual and reproductive health. It will be followed by further research, which, just as this program, will target local immigration officials and service staff in this area.

On May 5, Ivannia Chavarría met with Pedro Pablo Pinedo Parodi, head of the IIHR Office in Bogotá, Colombia, to coordinate actions related to this research, which involves UNFPA South America, as well as other activities of the IIHR's Women's Rights Program.

Follow-up on advocacy, training and dissemination of CEDAW and its Optional Protocol

San José, Costa Rica. During April and May 2010, the IIHR Women's Rights Program made significant advances, with the support of feminist and women's organizations in Central America, through dissemination, advocacy and training on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), its Optional Protocol and the Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women (Belem do Pará Convention).

Guatemalan partners include the Women Come Forward Association (*Asociación Mujer Vamos Adelante-AMVA*), Tierra Viva, Guatemala Foundation and Non-Violence Network. The Salvadoran partner is the "Norma Virginia Guirola de Herrera" Institute for Women's Studies. In Honduras, the IIHR works with the Center for Women's Studies in Honduras (CEM-H), CESADEH, JASS Mesoamerica, the National Autonomous University (UNAH) and participants of the Feminist movement in resistance against the coup. All these bodies are conducting workshops and sessions with judges and staff within the judiciary, the development of educational materials, lobbying decision-makers and the media, and the development of various promotional materials on both instruments (CDs, brochures).

There will be a national meeting in Honduras with female leaders of organizations, national and local networks and independent feminists. Goals include making women aware of CEDAW, analyzing and developing concrete proposals to address the crisis facing the state and the new Constitution. Research will then be conducted into the performance of this instrument and brochures developed on this Convention.

New IIHR publication

San José, Costa Rica. "Comprehensive care for torture victims in litigation processes. Impact on the inter-American system" represents an effort by the IIHR and an interdisciplinary team to research, analyze and explore the feasibility, design and implementation of a methodology for litigating cases before the inter-American human rights protection system using a psychosocial approach.

This represents a challenge in itself, not only because it requires a strategy for establishing teams of lawyers and health professionals but also due to the working methodology. It presupposes the implementation of cross-cutting themes that begin with conceptual assessments combined with practice and, above all, sensitivity in offering priority care to victims of torture and other serious human rights violations, as well as those at risk of being re-victimized through national and international litigation. The book combines theory with practice and generates useful recommendations for improving holistic integrated strategies of litigation, assistance and protection for victims.

For a printed version, contact s.especiales2@iidh.ed.cr An electronic version is available on the IIHR website at:

http://www.iidh.ed.cr/BibliotecaWeb/Varios/Documentos/BD_1375160761/Impacto.pdf

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