The Government of Chile held the XV South American Conference on Migration which annually brings together representatives of South American countries.

An agreement was signed last 14th of September by IOM and the National Direction of Migration, the General Confederation of Labor of the Argentine Republic, and UNTREF. Three workshops about migration in the Republic of Argentina and its policies, impact and perception will be carried out in the framework of this agreement.

IOM Director General William Lacy Swing met with Chilean President Michelle Bachelet and congratulated her on Chile’s intention to receive Syrian refuges in the country. The meeting was part of an official visit to open the XV South American Conference on Migration (SACM).

IOM Director General William Lacy Swing, leads an event on Migration and Cities

Ambassador William Lacy Swing, IOM Director General IOM led an event on Migration and Cities held last 9th of November in Santiago, Chile with the participation of Juan Carrasco, Mayor of Quilicura Commune, Josefa Errázuriz Guilisasti, Mayor of Providencia and Alejandro Marisio Cugat, Director General of Consular Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to exchange initiatives and experiences about the matter of migration and cities in South America.

IOM Opens Brazil Visa Application Centre in Haiti

The Brazil Visa Application Centre (BVAC) opened its doors to the public on 29 September 2015. The Centre is exclusively dedicated to Haitian citizens applying for special humanitarian permanent visas (VIPER). It aims to ensure a safe, dignified and legal migration channel to Brazil.
IOM Uruguay Participates in a Workshop on Linking Skilled Diaspora

August 12, 2015

By: IOM Uruguay

The First Workshop on Linking Skilled Diaspora in Biotechnology, Nanotechnology, Pharmaceutics and Renewable Energies, was held last Friday 7th of August in the Chamber of Commerce and Services of Uruguay.

Through the cooperation of local enterprises and institutions and the Uruguayan highly skilled diaspora, this project aims at contributing to the development of productive intensive sectors regarding knowledge, technology and economic innovations.

IOM is part of the Directive Committee and has been supporting in the design and implementation from the start.

Issues like the fact that Uruguay has a significant number of skilled nationals abroad as well as the importance of sustaining growth rates in the future, were highlighted, among others.

The Global Agreement between the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil and IOM was enacted

August 20, 2015

On 18 August, the President of the Federative Republic of Brazil Dilma Rousseff enacted Decree No. 8,503 regarding IOM’s legal position in the country, granting privileges and immunities. This decree will allow IOM to open an office in the country to carry out activities.

More information on the Decree: Presidencia da Republica Civil house Legal Subchefia to Assuntos http://legislacao.planalto.gov.br

“Our Joint Work Helped to Change the National Migration Law in Argentina”

By: Mariana Beheran

Zulema was born in 1961 in Tarabuco, state of Chuquisaca, Bolivia. She studied law and among the many jobs she had was Advocate of the poor in the Superior Court of the Judicial District of Chuquisaca, Investigating Magistrate and President of the Assembly of Human Rights, Regional Yacuiba. Accompanied by her three children, she arrived in Buenos Aires in the year 2001 to meet her husband who was studying there. Zulema remembers that the first moments “were quite hard… things here were very bad and I wasn’t used to just doing house chores”.

Then she started to meet with other migrant women and learn about the situation of migrants in Argentina. “The migrants’ reality was rather different by that time. There were many difficulties to access documentation and the existing Law of Migrant was outdated”.

So, with several associations of migrants and non governmental organizations, we began to participate in public hearings to change the law”. For Zulema, the situation changed notably after the enactment of the Migration Law N° 25.871 in the year 2003.

In the year 2006, Zulema Montero decided to create the Civil Association Yanapacuna (“Let’s help each other” in Quechua dialect) whose main purpose is to offer legal counseling to migrant men and women as well as “help them and talk about how they are and about the labor exploitation situations they must face”, in the words of Zulema.

Since 2014, IOM Argentina supports the National Encounter of Immigrant Leaders in Argentina which gathers migrant leaders from various organizations to debate the advances and challenges of the national migration policy.

Zulema was part of the Political Organizing Committee of the Second Encounter which took place in May this year in the city of Córdoba. “In the second encounter, we decided to work on a specific issue every day”, says Zulema. “Political Rights of migrant men and women, the first day; Migration Law and Citizenship, the second day; and Bilateral and Multilateral Agreements in Argentina, the last day”, she explains.

“This Second Encounter has been really successful since migrants of all the country are together to debate our problems, our rights and especially the National Migration Law N°25.871 still unknown by many migrants”, says Zulema who adds that “this type of spaces push us to keep on being together and working from our organizations”.

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IOM Signs Agreement with DNM, CGT and UNTREF in Argentina

September 15, 2015
By: Ezequiel Texidó

An agreement was signed last 14th of September by IOM and the National Direction of Migration, the General Confederation of Labor of the Argentine Republic, and UNTREF. These institutions are well-known in migration matters in Argentina for their interventions in implementing the regulations on migration, the defense of labor rights of migrant workers, the production of dissemination of knowledge and also the technical assistance in the issue of international migration, which is a valuable contribution for the strategies of training and awareness-raising on migration matters being developed in Argentina.

IOM Opens Brazil Visa Application Centre in Haiti

September 29, 2015
By: Ilaria Lanzoni

As part of its commitment to facilitate migration, IOM, on behalf of the Brazilian embassy, has inaugurated this week its first Visa Application Centre in Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

The Brazil Visa Application Centre (BVAC) opened its doors to the public on 29 September 2015. The Centre is exclusively dedicated to Haitian citizens applying for special humanitarian permanent visas (VIPER). It aims to ensure a safe, dignified and legal migration channel to Brazil.

Two categories of humanitarian visas will be processed by the BVAC – Special Permanent Visas and Family Reunification Permanent Visas.

IOM will support applicants in filing their online applications, as well as verifying supporting documentation. The applications will then be submitted to the Brazilian embassy for adjudication and actual visa issuance.

“IOM Haiti is actively involved in the migration dialogue between Brazil and Haiti, with the aim to strengthen regular migration channels, improve information flows and provide the greatest possible protection for migrants,” explains Gregoire Goodstein, IOM Chief of Mission in Haiti.

After the January 2010 earthquake in Haiti, the number of Haitians migrating to different countries on the continent increased. In addition to the traditional migration flows to the United States, Canada, and France and its Caribbean territories, Brazil emerged as a new popular destination for Haitian migrants, followed by Chile and Argentina.

As numerous Haitian migrants were falling prey to migrant smuggling networks who promised to help them reach Brazil through what is known as “the jungle route”, the Government of Brazil established mechanisms to enable migrants to obtain visas in countries of origin and transit. Since 2011, Brazil has issued humanitarian permanent visas to Haitians coming to the country, which allow them to work and enjoy the same rights of any other foreigner in a regular situation.
Training in Installation and Operation of Temporary Shelter in the Framework of Sphere Standards and CCCM

September 18, 2015

By: Adriana Arduz

In the framework of the project “Increase in the preparation and resilience in vulnerable prioritized indigenous communities and organizations, under a multisectoral approach at the local, sub-national and national levels in the basins of the rivers Beni and Mamoré”, funded by the European Commission Humanitarian Aid department’s Disaster Preparedness Programme (DIPECHO for its English acronym), IOM has been implementing actions to develop the capacities and adopt resilient strategies through processes of training and simulation in the installation and operation of temporary accommodations (shelters and camps) in the framework of Sphere Standards and the Camp Coordination/Camp Management (CCCM).

Since August this year, the activities started with the assessment of the shelter sector in each of the project’s zones of coverage in coordination with the local actors at municipal level (municipal executives and people in charge of risk management units), followed by the implementation of training workshops which methodologically included diverse topics such as forced displacement in disasters; roles and liabilities in the coordination and management of temporary accommodations, and execution of simulation exercises in the municipalities of Rurrenabaque in Beni state as well as San Buenaventura and Palos Blancos in La Paz state, which are part of the river Beni basin.

Additional activities include carrying out training workshops in 8 municipalities of both states: La Paz (Ixiamas and Guanay), and Beni (San Borja, Reyes, Santa Ana, San Ramón, San Joaquín, San Ignacio de Moxos and Riberalta) characterized by their inhabitants’ exposure and risk to increasing and frequent meteorological dangers and threats joined to a high rate of poverty, unplanned population growth and unsafe and unstable basic services.

Process of Migration Management Upgrade in Paraguay Moves Forward

September 25, 2015

By: Eduardo Carrillo

Technical IOM Staff paid a visit to Paraguay in September in order to examine data and determine infrastructure needs and technology with a view to the upcoming implementation of the Border Registration System PIRS / MIDAS at the main airports of the country: Silvio Pettirossi (Central) and Guarani (Alto Parana).

The technical visit is part of the project “Managing Migration through an interconnected system of registration and identification of persons (PIRS / MIDAS) in Paraguay”, project run since August this year and which will allow the installation of the Border Management System known as PIRS / MIDAS whose main objective is the modernization of migration management by incorporating biometric technology in the registration of persons swiftly and safely.

Antonio Meño, IOM IT Specialist from IOM Guatemala, and Niko Pepanashvili, PIRS Developer / System MIDAS in Geneva, kept a busy schedule from 22 to 25 September with Task Force members including specialized officials from the Directorate General of Migration (DGM) and IOM, in order to establish a roadmap for implementing the system, the definition of protocols and determination of computer equipment necessary for optimal system performance.

Also, the staff held an interagency meeting with representatives of the National Police and the Office of Interpol Paraguay to agree on transfer mechanisms and computerization of data relating to alerts and international arrest warrants. They also carried out surveys in situ in areas of embarkation and disembarkation of passengers in the Silvio Pettirossi International Airport.

The Personal System and Registry Information (PIRS / MIDAS), developed in over 25 countries under the auspices of IOM, is responsible for the collection, processing and storage of information of national and foreigners entering and exiting a country. It facilitates the management of movement at the borders and technifies it, thus establishing a baseline of information on flows in and out at each border enabled in the national territory.
IOM Supports the Sixth International Festival of Cinema and Training in Migrant Human Rights

September 25, 2015

By: Juliana Quintero

CineMigrante aims to promote intercultural dialogue and integration of cultures from different areas, regions and territories of Argentina, Latin America and the world, spreading films that portray the social reality of those who for various reasons had to move, migrate or inhabit other territories.

In this edition, IOM and the Program Iber - Routes joined forces to support the Festival and an grant an award in the category of Best Feature.

This year’s winner in this category was Guido Models’ film, director Julieta Sanz.

Two months of IOM Support to the Situation on the Colombian-Venezuelan Border

By: Jorge Gallo

Between August 19 and October 17, 2015, more than 22,000 Colombians living in Venezuela returned to their country of origin when the border between the two countries was closed. The Colombian Government began to implement a humanitarian operation to meet the basic needs of its citizens, who returned in vulnerable conditions.

As part of support for this governmental operation, IOM was the first international organism to join the Unified Command Post (UCP), which coordinated humanitarian attention. Over the two-month humanitarian operation, IOM supported diverse aspects of the operation.

With the support of the National Disaster Risk Management Unit (UNGRID, in Spanish), IOM facilitated the use of the information and monitoring system for temporary shelters, SIGAT. SIGAT was used during the emergency by IOM personnel, and was fundamental to carry out a unified registry of people affected. More than 22,000 Colombians who returned from Venezuela in vulnerable conditions were registered, and the system facilitated these people’s access to aid from the Colombian government.

Moreover, IOM facilitated the ground travel of about 4,000 returnees to other Colombian cities where their families or friends could help them rebuild their lives. The travel of another 2,200 people was directly supported by the Colombian government.

IOM personnel also accompanied the Colombian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to reunite 144 minors who had been separated from their families. A total of 108 families benefitted from these reunifications.

Additionally, IOM shared its global experience managing temporary shelters with the Colombian government, and provided technical support to install, operate, and close 30 shelters that temporarily housed 6,928 returnees. Furthermore, 156 staff members from different local and national entities were trained by IOM experts on appropriately managing temporary shelters.

The support provided to the humanitarian operation was recognized by the Colombian government. “IOM has always been an important partner of the Colombian government, and in this dramatic situation was constantly alongside us,” said María Angela Holguín, Minister of Foreign Affairs, speaking in a council of ministers in the city of Cúcuta, where support to the thousands of Colombians returning from Venezuela was coordinated.
The Government of Chile held the XV South American Conference on Migration which annually brings together representatives of South American countries on the migration issue in the region.

The conference, which lasted three days, began with technical sessions and was officially opened on Wednesday, September 9 at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs by the Deputy Foreign Minister, Edgardo Riveros, the Director General of Consular Affairs and Immigration Alejandro Marisio and the Director General of IOM, William Lacy Swing.

The Conference, in which representatives of South American governments, civil society and international observer organizations participate, is a process of regional consultation created in 1999 by South American governments. It arose from the need to seek consensus and harmonization of migration policies in the region through an intergovernmental space.

The Conference, whose Technical Secretariat is exercised by IOM, is aimed at creating and coordinating initiatives and programs to promote and develop policies on international migration and their relation to development and regional integration.

The meeting is annually held in one of the member countries offering to be the Pro Tempore Presidency, acting as the location, organizer and host of the event. This year, the Pro Tempore Presidency was in charge of Chile.

During the working sessions, topics like the South American Migration Plan; Migration and the South American integration; strengthening migration governance and the international projection of the South American region were discussed, among others.

At the end of the event, on Thursday September 10, the Government of Chile issued the Declaration of Santiago which includes the conclusions and agreements of the XV South American Conference on Migration.

http://csm-osumi.org/
IOM Director General William Lacy Swing met with Chilean President Michelle Bachelet and congratulated her on Chile’s intention to receive Syrian refugees in the country. The meeting was part of an official visit to open the XV South American Conference on Migration (SACM).

IOM Director General William Lacy Swing, leads an event on Migration and Cities

Ambassador William Lacy Swing, IOM Director General IOM led an event on Migration and Cities held last 9th of November in Santiago, Chile with the participation of Juan Carrasco, Mayor of Quilicura Commune, Josefa Errázuriz Guilisasti, Mayor of Providencia and Alejandro Marisio Cugat, Director General of Consular Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to exchange initiatives and experiences about the matter of migration and cities in South America.

Speaking of the growing importance of addressing the issue of migration and cities, Swing said that we must not forget the significant contribution of migrants to economic, social and cultural development in the countries of origin and destination. Swing also stressed the need for migrants to be the center of national agendas, global migration and development.

Watch the video Migrants and Cities Youtube/OIMChile
IOM, SURA Combat Human Trafficking in Peru

October 27, 2015

By: Inés Calderón

To improve awareness of human trafficking among Peruvian young people and the general public, IOM in Peru and financial services company SURA Peru, have joined forces to combat the problem. Some 2,241 victims of trafficking, mostly young women, have been identified in Peru over the past five years – 782 of them in 2014.

As part of the programme, IOM and SURA hosted an event in October: “Art – a Bridge to Prevent Human Trafficking” to present Lita’s Nightmare, a play that has already been staged in several schools in the Lima metropolitan area to alert young people to human trafficking.

“We have presented Lita’s Nightmare in six schools and other venues to over 1,800 students and the general public. Our goal is to reach 10,000 students in the course of next year,” said IOM Peru Chief of Mission José Ivan Dávalos.

Jorge Ramos, SURA Managing Director in Peru said: “We are all part of the struggle to defend human rights and dignity. We are therefore working hand in hand with IOM to fight against this crime, which is unfortunately often still unrecognized in our country.”

At the same event, Karina Calmet, a famous Peruvian actress and athlete, was appointed as IOM Peru Goodwill Ambassador for the fight against human trafficking.

IOM Argentina launches a campaign to promote the Human Rights of Migrants from a Gender Perspective

October 17, 2015

By: Mariana Beheran

IOM has launched an awareness campaign in Argentina aimed at promoting the fulfilment of the migrant population human rights, particularly those of women victims of gender-violence.

The campaign was developed in the framework of the Project “Promoting Human Rights of Migrants from a Gender Perspective”. The Project was implemented by IOM Argentina in partnership with the Under-Secretariat of Social Advance-ment (Subsecretaría de Promoción Social, SPS) from the Ministry for Social Development of the Government of the City of Buenos Aires, with the support of the IOM Development Fund.

The campaign raises awareness on migrant rights as established by the National Migration Law 25.871. The National Migration Law 25.871 inaugurated a new paradigm on migration policy in Argentina since 2004, ensuring the access to rights for any migrant regardless of their migration situation.

The Campaign is available here: http://argentina.iom.int/co/

In Brazil, Special Commission for the Reform of the Migration Law, Requests IOM Technical Concept

October 21, 2015

The Special Commission of the Chamber of Deputies, responsible for delivering an opinion on the Draft Law No. 2516 of 2015 that establishes the Migration Law, requested IOM technical concept to the project.

Known as the “Aliens Law”, the proposal of Senator Aloysio Nunes Ferreira, provides a comprehensive set of rules on the subject and replaces the 1980 Statute of Foreign Affairs.

Bruna Furlan, President of the Special Commission PL 2516/15 of the Chamber of Deputies and Matteo Mandrile, IOM Regional Project Development Officer
IOM, Arab League Host 5th Global Meeting of Regional Consultative Processes on Migration

October 23, 2015

IOM and the League of Arab States (LAS) hosted the Chairs and Secretariats of worldwide Regional Consultative Processes on Migration (RCPs) at the Fifth Global RCP Meeting on 21-22 of October 2015 in Cairo.

The meeting, at the LAS HQ, included the official launch of the Arab Regional Consultative Process (ARCP), which will bring together the 22 Arab States and will serve as a platform to enhance cooperation and a more profound understanding of migration issues in the region. The LAS will act as its secretariat.

Over 70 high level officials representing Chairs and Secretariats of 15 RCPs from around the world, together with experts from intergovernmental and regional organizations, attended the Cairo meeting, which came at a critical time for migration in the Middle East and North Africa. Arab countries are seriously affected by the complex migration crises in the region.

The Conference "Forced displacement: migrants and refugees into the European continent", was held at the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of the Republic of Uruguay on October 26. IOM Regional Director for South America Diego Beltrand was invited to the event, organized by the Faculty of Social Sciences in collaboration with the Department of Political Science and the Multidisciplinary Unit.

Beltrand was panelist along with Juan José Artola, Gerardo Caetano, Juan Jose Calvo and Jorge Luis Jure. The opening and moderation were led by Diego Pineiro, Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences.

Interventions counted with descriptions of the main routes through which migrants arrive in Europe, such as the Mediterranean and the Balkans.

Beltrand said that "the crisis is not about numbers of migrants and refugees, and that despite these numbers are high, they are manageable. Most refugees and migrant populations are in countries like Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey". Also, speaking of the Organization’s work, he said "IOM encourages the creation of more legal migration channels that meet the legitimate needs of migrants, improve their living conditions, while contributing to mitigate demographic decline problems of Europe and its need for skilled and unskilled human resources".

Conference: Forced displacement: migrants and refugees into the European continent

IOM comments at Ecuador’s National Assembly on draft Law on Human Mobility

October 29, 2015

By: Manuel Hoff

On October 28, Jorge Gurrieri and Salvador Gutiérrez, IOM regional experts appeared before the Commission of Sovereignty, Integration, International Relations and Comprehensive Security of the National Assembly of the Republic of Ecuador to give their comments on the draft of a new Law on Human Mobility in the country.

During their speeches, the experts pointed out the pioneering nature of the project of law and congratulated the Republic of Ecuador for promoting the discussion about rights-based migration law. The law creates new advanced concepts in legislation in migration, particularly as it relates to migrant returnees, which will enrich the legislative discussions at regional and international level.

The President of the Commission, Assemblyman Fernando Bustamante, thanked IOM for its support in this landmark project for Ecuador. Similarly, the President of the Parliament Group for the rights of people in human mobility, Assemblywoman Linda Machuca, reiterated the importance of IOM support and appreciated the commitment of the Organization to accompany this process.

The hearing before the Assembly was accompanied by two workshops carried out by the IOM experts with the advisers of the Assembly Members of the Committee during which the details on specific articles of the bill were discussed.
High Level Geneva Conference on Migrants and Cities

IOM brought together ministers, mayors and high level officials in Geneva on 26-27 October 2015 to debate for the first time in a global policy forum, the complex dynamics of human mobility in cities. The High-level Conference on Migrants and Cities (CMC) assessed how challenges can be managed and development opportunities maximized.

The CMC took place in the framework of the International Dialogue on Migration (IDM) – IOM’s main forum for migration policy dialogue. It follows the successful Diaspora Ministerial Conference held in June 2013 when 600 participants, including 60 ministers and high level government representatives debated the potential contribution of the diaspora to development.

Participation of South America in the High Level Conference Migrants and Cities

Juan Carrasco, Mayor of Quilicura (Metropolitan Area of Santiago de Chile) and Gustavo Baroja, Prefect of Pichincha in Ecuador, were the mayors participants from the region of South America in the Conference on Migration and Cities.

UN Includes Migration in Post-2015 Development Agenda

August 4, 2015

After more than three years of inter-governmental negotiations on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, migration has been incorporated into mainstream global development policy, rectifying the omission made 15 years earlier in the Millennium Development Goals.

The text at the centre of this historical agreement establishing a new sustainable development agenda, which includes a set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), was adopted on 2 August in New York.

The political declaration of the Summit Outcome Document, entitled “Transforming our world – the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,” recognizes the “positive contribution of migrants for inclusive growth,” while noting the “multi-dimensional reality” of migration.

The most salient reference to migration is a target on “facilitating orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies.” It appears in SDG 10 on reducing inequality within and among countries. This target will create greater impetus for governments to adopt “high road” migration policies to promote dignified, orderly and safe migration for the benefit of all – a key priority of IOM.

Other migration-related targets call for eradicating forced labour and human trafficking; securing a safe working environment, including for migrant workers; reducing the cost of migrant remittances; and significantly reducing the number of people affected by disasters.

World Migration Report 2015

IOM launched its flagship World Migration Report 2015 – Migrants and Cities: New Partnerships to Manage Mobility, during the second day of the two-day high-level Conference on Migrants and Cities in Geneva. The report, the eighth in IOM’s World Migration Report series, focuses on how migration and migrants are shaping cities and how the life of migrants is shaped by cities, their people, organizations and rules. Acceda al Informe: www.iom.int