Commemoration of the 62nd Anniversary of the signing of the Antarctic Treaty by the APAL countries

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**Summary**

The commemoration of the sixty-second anniversary of the signing of the Antarctic Treaty by the Administrators of Latin American Antarctic Programmes (APAL) was held in virtual mode on 1 December 2021 with live streaming on the YouTube channel by the Colombian Commission of the Ocean. The event was organised by the National Antarctic Directorate of Argentina and the Colombian Antarctic Programme and included the participation of the Antarctic Treaty Secretariat, the Council of Managers of National Antarctic Programmes (COMNAP), the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR), and the Administrators of Latin American Antarctic Programmes (APAL).

This activity was aimed at the national and international scientific community, universities, personnel from different national Antarctic programmes, and members of the general public interested in Antarctic issues. The main purpose of the event, in addition to commemorating the anniversary of the signing of the Antarctic Treaty, was to reinforce the dissemination of the existing spirit of cooperation at the regional level around the importance of promoting knowledge of the White Continent and the protection of its environment by generating Antarctic awareness.

**Development**

The commemoration of the signing of the Antarctic Treaty was held on 1 December, between 1:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. (UTC), and consisted of opening remarks followed by the panel “Antarctic International Cooperation Forums” and presentations under the title “Vision of the Administrators of Latin American Antarctic Programmes in their Antarctic work”. Finally, some closing speeches were made.

The first item was the participation by the Executive Secretary of the Antarctic Treaty Secretariat, Mr Albert Lluberas, who opened the proceedings with a presentation in which he briefly explained the history of the Antarctic Treaty System, its relevance over its history and in the present, and the challenges and aspirations that the countries administering Antarctic programmes must address in the future.

Next, the panel on the “Antarctic Forums of international cooperation” was held. The two guests who spoke were Dr Jefferson Cardia Simões, Vice-Chair of the SCAR, and Dr Antonio Quesada, President of COMNAP. Both interventions focused on disseminating the respective histories of these institutions, their importance and work, in addition to the current challenges and main issues to be addressed in a post-pandemic and climate change context. Dr Jefferson, for his part, commented on the importance of continuing to promote joint work in Antarctic scientific research, while Dr Quesada focused on the considerations and precautions to be taken with respect to the continued sustained development of Antarctic expeditions in the near future, in addition to promoting cohesion between international preventive measures against COVID-19.

Subsequently, the second panel was held on the “Vision of Administrators of Latin American Antarctic Programmes in their Antarctic work”. The managers and delegates of the national Antarctic programmes of Argentina, Brazil, Peru, Colombia and Venezuela participated in it, focusing mainly on the objectives to be met in terms of international cooperation in the coming years.

Finally, the closing words of the event were given by Uruguay and Ecuador, as presidents of the thirty-second and thirty-third RAPAL (meeting of APAL), respectively. They highlighted the work and achievements achieved this year in the region in individual terms and in international cooperation, what remains to be done, and urged to continue cooperating and collaborating in order to carry out increasingly forceful and impactful scientific research.

**Conclusion**

Through the commemoration of the sixty-second anniversary of the signing of the Antarctic Treaty, a space was created that was conducive to the dissemination of knowledge concerning the Antarctic Treaty System, the most relevant institutions, and the work, context and immediate objectives of the countries of the Latin American region. Likewise, the importance of this continent at a regional and global level was disseminated to academia, the general public and those involved in national Antarctic programmes.

It should be noted that this event, since it was held virtually and was open to the public, made it possible to reach and impact a greater number of people, thus increasing knowledge about the relevance of protecting and conserving the Southern Continent. In turn, the transmission was left online on the YouTube platform, at the link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0SwOWBtDsd8&t=1s>. This event was disseminated through the social networks of the national Antarctic programmes that collaborated in its execution.

**Promotional spots**

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