

Reports from the National/Area Secretaries

The following articles from the Scientific Committees are here.

NS Combined

NS North Macedonia, Republic of

NS Peru

ICOH National Secretaries from the 'Global South' collaborate to host a webinar on 'OHS in Mining'

Diana Cuervo, NS for Colombia

Adolfo Hernández, NS for Argentina

Norvil Mera Chú, NS for Peru

Claudina Nogueira, NS for South Africa

The ICOH National Secretary (NS) for Colombia, Diana Cuervo, organised and hosted a webinar titled 'Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) in Mining: An overview of management, legislation, and current challenges in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs)', with the collaboration and support from the following ICOH NSs-Adolfo Hernández (current NS) and Claudio Taboada (past NS) from Argentina; Norvil Mera Chú from Peru; and Claudina Nogueira from South Africa.

The free webinar was held on Saturday 21 September 2024 as an ICOH collaboration from the 'Global South', with two presentations in English and two in Spanish. Approximately 70 participants attended the full webinar and the links to the recordings of the individual presentations are indicated below in the programme. The opening and closing messages of the webinar, as well as the introduction to the presenters, are captured in one recording.

The webinar programme is indicated below:

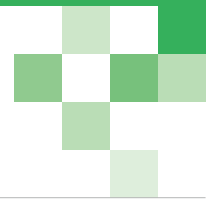
- Diana Cuervo - Welcome in English and Spanish and

introduction to the webinar and the NSs collaborating on the webinar

<https://youtu.be/TAkzQMk3t3Q>

- Adolfo Hernández - Brief introduction of each speaker, in English and Spanish
<https://youtu.be/TAkzQMk3t3Q>
- Speaker 1 - Claudina Nogueira-ICOH Scientific Committees in a nutshell, with a special focus on SC on Mining Occupational Safety and Health (SC MinOSH)
https://youtu.be/HIN24cl_Uws?si=rpuI3j5SsCHypAPR
- Speaker 2-Yolanda Beltrán (Colombia-Secretary of the National OHS Commission of the Mining Sector, Occupational Risk Directorate) - Advances in the mining sector in Colombia
<https://youtu.be/THgaj64PdIU?si=2yHwgBK5g8x59iRf>
- Speaker 3 - Thuthula Balfour (South Africa-public health and occupational medicine specialist working in mining)
- Prevention culture in the mining industry: A female

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perspective from the African region

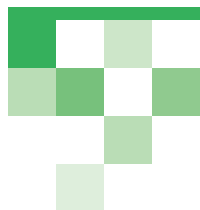
<https://youtu.be/dPphyH9gfFU?si=zNno-mJq-limF2f2>

- Speaker 4 - Mirella Bernal (Peru-lawyer and OHS expert in mining) - Mining in Latin America: Comparison between selected countries in the region, including informal mining
<https://youtu.be/K2pfKvGw6Vg?si=XwIDx5SFaPnfTfJx>
- Norvil Mera Chú - Wrap-up with closing remarks, and vote of thanks
<https://youtu.be/TAkzQMk3t3Q>

The main take-home messages from the webinar are listed below:

- ILO Convention 176 has garnered positive impact on Latin American legislation. Despite recent improvements, current OHS legislation in Latin America still has challenges, especially in underground mining, such as defining working time, shift-work and resting time for workers, changing the safety culture, and eliminating restrictions on women working in mining.
- In Colombia, there is a National Committee of Safety and Health at Work for Mining which works towards developing new policies and national programmes in OHS along five strategic thrusts. Job accidents in underground mining are still a challenge and are mainly caused by the polluted atmosphere and geo-mechanical failures. Working in education and training has contributed to improving accident prevention and OHS management systems.
- In Peru, the main challenges in mining are the definition (medical and legal) of 'occupational disease', under-reporting of job accidents, gender (in)equality, informal sector workers, and OHS management in contracting companies and providers. The Ministry of Health is currently working on identifying carcinogenic agents in the work environment.
- In South Africa, mining is a significant contributor to the African GDP with big reserves of platinum, phosphate and manganese, among other resources. Rates of accidents are 6-7 times higher in small-scale mines when compared with formal mining. In artisanal mining, exposure to mercury, silica dust and cyanide poisoning have a strong impact on the development of occupational diseases. Prevention culture is a crucial aspect of OHS with a focus on critical controls for hazards and applying 'bow-tie' analysis (a simple but powerful risk management tool) in industries. With modernization, more women are entering the mining sector. They still have to deal with discrimination, violence, and other unfavourable working conditions and challenges, just like in Latin America, so ongoing changes in OHS policies and education programmes are needed.
- The ICOH SC MinOSH has made valuable contributions to global mining by organizing conferences, webinars, business meetings, and drafting regular newsletters to update their members on new information and publications in OHS in mining. In 2017, SC MinOSH





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members co-authored a comprehensive article titled 'Safety and Health in Mining' which was published in three parts in the Occupational Health Southern Africa journal. The publications are available from:

https://www.occhealth.co.za/_assets/articles/256/1787.pdf

https://www.occhealth.co.za/_assets/articles/257/1793.pdf

https://www.occhealth.co.za/_assets/articles/258/1807.pdf

Acknowledgement: The collaborators of this webinar would like to thank Diana Cuervo, NS for Colombia, for covering the costs associated with the recordings and translation transcripts of the presentations, from her personal funds.