

BARBADOS DECLARATION

We, the participants of the Latin American Seminar of the International Association of Corrections and Prisons, who met in the city of Bridgetown, Barbados from October 22nd to October 14th, after intense debate, have agreed on the following points, which we recognize as the Barbados Declaration.

1. We reiterate our concern regarding the increasing imprisonment rates in the region, which have led to overpopulation of prisons in many countries, with the consequent deterioration of the physical infrastructure and a reduction in the quantity and quality of the services offered to inmates.
2. We note with disappointment that in many Latin American countries there has been a lengthening of sentences, an increase of prisoners on remand, the removal of benefits for prisoners, harsh treatment of recidivists, all of which contribute to the excessive increase of the prison population.
3. We recognize that the growth rates of different studies and projections related to crime and imprisonment have been exceeded and that these rates have also exceeded the growth rate of our populations.
4. We are mindful that with few exceptions, the countries of the region do not have plans to develop new prisons although the existing prisons cannot meet the demand for prison spaces given the number of spaces available in our prisons.
5. We observe that our Latin American populations are not adequately aware of the negative consequences of excessively long prison terms and the problem of overcrowding that this has caused, and this has caused a lack of community pressure on prison authorities to build an adequate number of prisons to guarantee that there is adequate physical space for the housing and rehabilitation of prisoners.
6. We are conscious of a disconnect between the different components of the Criminal Justice System in many of our countries, many of which do not have joint or complementary policies. The prison authorities have not been able to get the same level of funding as the police force, making it difficult to adequately meet the needs of the growing prison population caused by an increased number of arrests and harsher incarceration sentences imposed by the judicial system.
7. We note that despite the laudable efforts of different countries, it has not been possible to adequately train the personnel of Latin American Prison Institutions. In addition, we are mindful of the excessive turnover of Prison administrators and technical personnel.

8. We have shared with interest and satisfaction information regarding best practices in the management of a growing number of young adults and women in prison in the region, highlighting the importance of prison authorities having adequate resources in order to be able to attend effectively to the needs of the prison population.
9. We understand that despite the existence of rules and standards regarding alternative sentencing and options for the early release from prison, these are not implemented enough by our justice administrators, as they do not have the human or material resources which they need to guarantee effective protection of the community.
10. We recognize that the seriousness of these problems impels us to share our experiences and strategies in order to strengthen our prison systems and to find joint solutions to the challenges that face the entire Latin American region to a greater or lesser extent and which threaten the efforts made by our governments to control crime. It is crucial that we desist from isolated efforts and foster cooperation so as to strengthen our national capacity to ensure the the much needed prison reform is undertaken sucessfully.

Given the above, we the participants of the Latin American Seminar of the International Association of Corrections and Prisons, agree to carry out the following actions:

1. Create a Latin American Chapter of ICPA in order to foster regional participation and to constitute a specialized forum to promote cooperation and exchange of ideas in the field of corrections and prisons in the following areas:
 - Experiences and good practices
 - Innovation
 - Scientific research and specialized studies
 - Management procedures
 - Effective transfer of solutions
2. Create a Latin American Web Page linked to the ICPA Website, with information from the countries in the region in Spanish and Portuguese and links to the Web pages of the Prison Systems of our region.
3. Establish of a community made up of government authorities, academics, service providers, prison workers and other stakeholders from the field of corrections, in order to form strategic partnerships and generate synergies to foster continual development and modernization of Latin American Prison Systems.

4. Establish links between our ICPA Latin American Chapter and regional and international fora, and with other regional Chapters linked to ICPA, in order to develop professional careers in Corrections and Prisons.
5. Constitute a planning committee to organize the second ICPA regional Latin American Seminar.
6. Establish a task force to foster the participation of leaders in the area of Corrections and to ensure their participation in the XII United Nations Meeting on Crime Prevention and Treatment to be held in Salvador, Bahía in 2010.
7. Collaborate with the ICPA Programming Committee in the preparations for the XIV Annual International Conference of ICPA to be held in Mexico.
8. Constitute a task force to translate training, management and prison programme materials compiled by the Training and Development Committee of ICPA from English to Spanish.