

## **Officers 2005-2009**

<i>President</i>	Prof. Héctor O. J. Pena Curupaytí 690 C.P. 1607 Villa Adelina Pcia. de Buenos Aires, Argentina Tel. (5411) 4766-0941 E-mail: hojpena@ciudad.com.ar
<i>Vicepresident</i>	M. Sc. Bruce W. Presgrave U.S. Geological Survey National Earthquake Information Center Stop 966, Box 25046 DFC Denver, CO 80225-0046 U.S.A. Tel. (303) 273-8461, Fax. (303) 273-8450 E-mail: presgrave@usgs.gov
<i>Secretary General</i>	M. Sc. Santiago Borrero Instituto Panamericano de Geografía e Historia Ex-Arzobispado 29 Colonia Observatorio 11860 México, D.F. Tel.: (52-55) 5277-5888 / 5277-5791 / 5515-1910 Fax: (52-55) 5271-6172 E-mail: secretariageneral@ipgh.org

## **CHAIRPERSONS OF COMMISSIONS**

<i>Cartography</i>	Mrs. Alejandra Coll Escanilla Universidad Tecnológica Metropolitana Dieciocho 414 Santiago de Chile Tel.: (562) 787-7361 / 787-7362 Fax: (562) 787-7388 E-mail: acoll@utem.cl
<i>Geography</i>	Eng. Mario Alberto Reyes Ibarra Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática (INEGI) Av. Héroe de Nacozari Sur Núm. 2301 Fracc. Jardines del Parque Aguascalientes, Ags., 20270 México Tel.: (52-449) 910-5406 Fax (52-449) 910-5406 E-mail: mario.reyes@inegi.org.mx
<i>History</i>	Prof. Dr. Maria Cristina Mineiro Scatamacchia Museu de Arqueologia e Etnologia da Universidade de Sao Paulo Av. Prof. Almeida Prado, 1466 Cidade Universitaria 05508-900 Sao Paulo, SP, Brasil Tel. (55-11) 3091-4977 / 9611-3322 Fax (55-11) 3812-3778 E-mail: scatamac@usp.br
<i>Geophysics</i>	Dr. Walter Fernández Director Escuela de Física Universidad de Costa Rica San José, Costa Rica Tel. (506) 207-5394 / 207-4235 Fax. (506) 207-5619 E-mail: wfer@cosmos.ucr.ac.cr

## **Background**

The Pan American Institute of Geography and History was created February 7, 1928, during the VI International American Conference at the Ministerial Level held in Havana, Cuba.

At the request of the delegation of the Government of Mexico, headquarters were established in Mexico City, where President Pascual Ortiz Rubio, by decree dated May 3, 1930, placed a building located in Ex Arzobispado 29, Colonia Observatorio, at the disposition of the American nations for the installation of the offices of the General Secretariat. In 1949, one year after the signing of the Charter of the OAS in Bogotá, Colombia, the Institute signed an agreement with the Council of the Organization of American States and became its first Specialized Organization. The agreement was modified and signed in Washington, D.C., on May 6, 1974.

## **Objectives**

- To encourage, coordinate, and publicize cartographical, geographical, geophysical and historical studies as well as other related scientific studies of interest to the Americas.
- To promote and carry out studies, work and training in the aforementioned fields of activity.
- To promote cooperation among organizations interested in these fields of activity in the Americas, and with related international organizations.

## **Organization**

### **GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

The General Assembly is the supreme organ of PAIGH and determines the scientific, administrative and financial policies of the organization. It elects the officers of the Institute. The General Assembly consists of the delegations appointed by the Member States, the officers of PAIGH and the invited observers. Each one of the delegations of the Member States is entitled to one vote. The General Assembly ordinarily meets every four years.

### **DIRECTING COUNCIL**

The Directing Council is the permanent Pan American organ of PAIGH, which is entrusted with functions of the General Assembly during the intervals between the meetings of the latter. The Directing Council is composed of the representatives of the Member States, and the officers of PAIGH. The Directing Council ordinarily meets once a year.

### **COMMISSIONS**

The Commissions are the organs responsible for developing and executing the scientific and technical programs of PAIGH, approved by the General Assembly or the Directing Council. Likewise, they promote and coordinate the scientific and technical development in their respective fields in the Member States. There are four Commissions: *Cartography*, *Geography*, *History* and *Geophysics*. They are subdivided into Committees and Working Groups. The Commissions ordinarily meet every two years.

### **MEETING OF OFFICERS**

The Meeting of Officers is the principal and coordinating organ of the activities of the Institute between the Meetings of the Directing

Council. The Officers are the President, the Vice-President, the Chairmen of Commissions and the Secretary General. They ordinarily meet biannually.

### **GENERAL SECRETARIAT**

The General Secretariat is the central and permanent organ of PAIGH and its purpose is to perform the administrative functions necessary for the successful operation of the Institute; to coordinate the activities of the other organs, to lend the necessary assistance for their operation; to carry out such other functions as may be assigned to it, and to see to compliance with decisions taken.

### **NATIONAL SECTIONS**

The National Section is the body established by each Member State for the accomplishment of the aims of PAIGH, on the national level, and relies upon the financial support of its Government for that purpose. The National Sections are composed of the persons appointed by the Governments of the Member States as representatives to the various bodies of PAIGH.

## **Finances**

The Pan American Institute of Geography and History is a non-profit organization which supports itself through the quotas that are contributed by the Member States. The scale of contributions is established by the PAIGH General Assembly every four years.

## **Publications**

PAIGH publishes the following journals which are distributed from Mexico. These are:

- **Revista Cartográfica**
- **Revista Geográfica**
- **Revista de Historia de América**
- **Boletín de Antropología Americana**
- **Revista de Arqueología Americana**
- **Revista Geofísica**

Furthermore, the editorial production of the Institute includes a diversity of occasional publications (atlases, guides, handbooks, charts, glossaries, etc.) which contribute to broaden the intellectual patrimony of the nationals of the Americas. There are now more than 500 occasional publications, and the corresponding catalogue may be requested free of charge from the General Secretariat.

## Awards

PAIGH grants various awards in its different disciplines.

### **PAN AMERICAN MEDAL OF THE PAIGH**

The prize is awarded every four years, to a scientist of a Member State of the PAIGH who is outstanding for his/her trajectory in one of the fields of interest of the PAIGH: Cartography, Geography, History, and Geophysics. A medal may be awarded for each of the four Commissions.

### **"WALLACE W. ATWOOD" PRIZE**

The prize is awarded biennially to an author of a Member State of the PAIGH under the age of 35 at the time of presenting an unpublished work in any of the four basic areas of the PAIGH: Cartography, Geography, History, and Geophysics and related sciences. The prize consists of a diploma, the publication of the work and publicity via the different media of the PAIGH.

### **"CARLOS A. CARVALLO YAÑEZ" PRIZE**

The prize is awarded every four years for the original work recognized by the jury as of great value and importance for the development of the Cartography of America, that constitutes a relevant contribution to scientific development, always and when it deals with the disciplines covered by the Cartography Commission. The prize consists of a diploma, recognition in cash and publicity via the different media of the PAIGH.

### **"ARCH C. GERLACH" PRIZE**

The prize is awarded every four years for the original work recognized by the jury as of great value and importance for the development of the Geography in America. The prize consists of a diploma, recognition in cash and news of the prize, announced via the different media of the PAIGH.

### **COLONIAL HISTORY OF THE AMERICAS "SILVIO ZAVALA" PRIZE**

The prize is awarded biennially to the work on the Colonial History of America published in one of the Member States, in one of PAIGH's official languages (Spanish, English, French or Portuguese). The prize consists of a diploma, recognition in cash and news of the prize, announced via the different media of the PAIGH.

### **"LEOPOLDO ZEA" THOUGHT OF THE AMERICAS PRIZE**

The prize is awarded biennially to the work on the Thought of America published in one of the Member States, in one of PAIGH's official languages (Spanish, English, French or Portuguese). The prize consists of a diploma, recognition in cash and news of the prize, announced via the different media of the PAIGH.

### **"LUIZ MUNIZ BARRETO" PRIZE**

The prize is awarded every four years to the original work that constitutes a contribution relevant to scientific development without identifying the theme confronted, anytime it relates to the disciplines covered by the Geophysics Commission. The prize consists of a diploma, recognition in cash and news of the prize, announced via the different media of the PAIGH.

## Training and fellowships

Through its Commissions, PAIGH offers a wide range of courses, workshops and conferences, directed to specialists and professionals in the areas of interest of the Institute, and in general to other professionals interested in those fields.

## Scientific and Technical Program

### **CARTOGRAPHY**

Through its Commission on Cartography the Institute develops projects that stimulate and assist in institutional strengthening for the development of Geospatial Data Infrastructures at the national level, consistent with international standards and the multinational efforts of the Member States.

The thematic includes: production of fundamental data and structured thematics based on norms and international standards; the development and administration of geospatial databases; the application and on-line visualization of spatial data (portals) in multinational projects; studies related to the proposition of policies applied to the production, diffusion, and employment of spatial data that contribute to the development of such instruments of Member States; studies that permit one to know the cost and the socio-economic return of public investment in the development of spatial data infrastructures; the development of methods for the exchange and application of data derived from multiple remote sensors; studies that permit one to know the positional exactitude and qualities of cartographic or geospatial products incorporated in the geospatial databases, based on international standards for the handling and exchange of geographical data via SDIs.

### **GEOGRAPHY**

In this field the Commission on Geography is developing projects that analyze climatic change and its multiple effects, as well as themes related to the prevention of, attention to, and mitigation of, the effects caused by natural disasters.

The thematic includes: generation of methodologies of geographic analysis destined to prioritize spatial planning actions; studies based on the use and rational management of resources and the defense of the natural and cultural patrimony; studies that promote regional development at various scales and its relation to the processes of multidimensional integration; studies that propose mechanisms to improve the teaching of the science of geography with priority to the higher level and climate change and the effects of natural disasters.

### **HISTORY**

The Commission on History develops projects with a global perspective concerning historical cultural, anthropological, economic and social processes of Latin America and its countries. The Commission gives preference to the lines of research that focus on Natural Disasters and interventions of Man in the landscape.

### **GEOPHYSICS**

The Commission on Geophysics supports projects directed to the study and monitoring of geophysical processes destined directly or indirectly to the mitigation of the impact caused by natural threats and disasters.

**"AN INTERAMERICAN INSTITUTION READY,  
THROUGH ITS RELATED SCIENCES,  
TO RETHINK THE AMERICAS IN THE  
21st CENTURY"**

### **PAN AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY GENERAL SECRETARIAT**

**Ex Arzobispado No. 29, Col. Observatorio  
11860 Mexico, D.F.**

**and/or**

**Apartado Postal 18879, 11870 Mexico, D.F.  
Tel.: (52-55) 5277-5888 / 5277-5791 / 5515-1910**

**Fax: (52-55) 5271-6172**

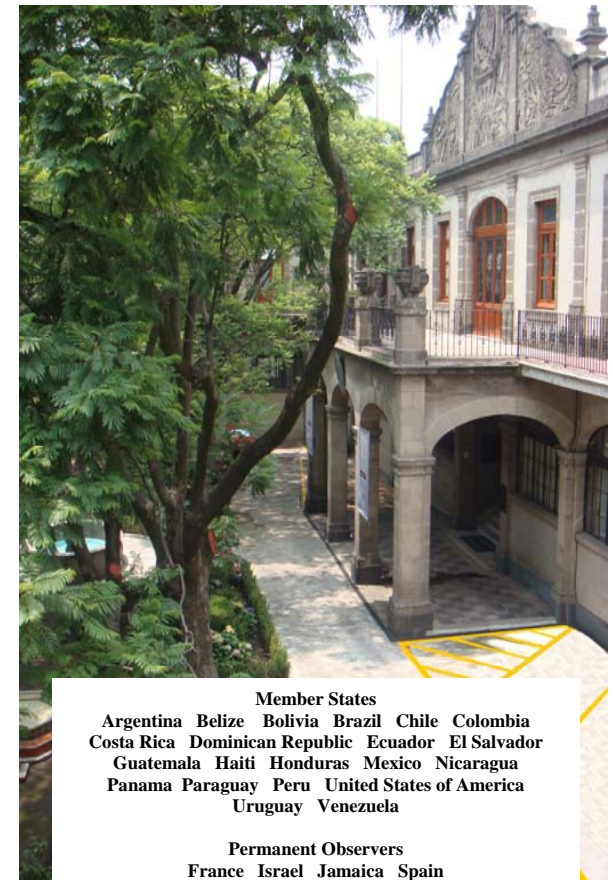
**secretariageneral@ipgh.org  
www.ipgh.org**

SPECIALIZED ORGANIZATION OF THE  
ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES



PAN AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

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