



ORGANISATION MONDIALE DU TOURISME
WORLD TOURISM ORGANIZATION
ORGANIZACION MUNDIAL DEL TURISMO
ВСЕМИРНАЯ ТУРИСТСКАЯ ОРГАНИЗАЦИЯ
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MINUTES OF THE FIFTY-FIRST MEETING OF THE UNWTO COMMISSION FOR THE AMERICAS

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**MINUTES OF THE FIFTY-FIRST MEETING OF THE
UNWTO COMMISSION FOR THE AMERICAS**

I

On 6 June 2010, the Regional Commission for the Americas held its fifty-first meeting in the city of Puerto Iguazú, Argentina, under the chairmanship of the Vice-Minister of Tourism of Venezuela, H.E. Mr. Edgar Rengifo. The meeting was attended by representatives of the following Member States of the Commission: Argentina, Bahamas, Brazil, Colombia, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Haiti, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Venezuela and Uruguay and 10 Affiliate Members: (see detailed list of participants in Annex 1).

The meeting began with the approval of the following Agenda:

1. Approval of the Agenda
2. Communication of the Chairman of the Commission (Venezuela).
3. Preliminary remarks of the Secretary-General
4. The state of tourism worldwide and in the Americas.
 - (a) 2009 performance and future trends
 - (b) Report on the activities of UNWTO's Tourism Resilience Committee and the T-20 initiative
5. Presentation of the study: **"Spanish Outbound Market to the Americas"**.
6. Panel discussion on the trends for air travel and hospitality and the challenges for marketing destinations.
7. The situation faced due to the natural disasters in the region.
 - (a) The case of Haiti
 - (b) The case of Peru
8. General programme of work 2010-2011. Priorities for the Americas:
 - (a) New UNWTO Strategic Outlook for the Affiliate Members. Presentation of PLATMA (Networking Technological Platform for Affiliate Members).
 - (b) Programme for the development of Tourism Statistics and the Tourism Satellite Account. Tourism satellite projects in the region.
 - (c) Report on ST-EP and MDG-F programmes in the region.
 - (d) Progress in the application of the Global Code of Ethics
 - (e) Seventh International Tourism Forum for Parliamentarians and Local Authorities. Puerto Vallarta, Mexico.
9. Place and dates of the fifty-second meeting of the Commission for the Americas.

II**Communication of the Chairman of the Commission**

In his communication as Chairman of the Commission, the Vice-Minister of Tourism of Venezuela expressed gratitude—on behalf of all the participants—for the cordial welcome given by the authorities of Puerto Iguazú and Argentina to the delegations in attendance and in his message he highlighted the social policies for tourism implemented by his government.

Subsequently, the Chairman gave the floor to the Secretary of Tourism of Argentina, Mr. Carlos Enrique Meyer, who thanked the delegates of the Commission for their presence and expressed pride in once again hosting another meeting of the Commission as well as the session of the Executive Council.

III**Preliminary remarks of the Secretary-General**
(Document CAM/51/3)

The preliminary remarks of the Secretary-General concentrated mainly on the following points:

1. Declines in both international arrivals and tourism receipts in 2009, which was the worst year in six decades; however, towards the end of 2009 a slight improvement began to be observed with 7% growth being achieved in the first four months of 2010 and with a concomitant increase in the domestic tourism of countries.
2. The UNWTO established the Tourism Resilience Committee in late 2008, and as a result of its four meetings, the issue of tourism and its intrinsic capacity to form part of the solution in the context of the international crisis have been presented to seven Heads of State, highlighting the basic equation: tourism equals jobs.
3. He also reported on the T-20 initiative, the proposal to bring together the top officials of the national tourism administrations of the countries that make up the G-20 and whose first meeting took place in Johannesburg, South Africa, in February 2010. The purpose of this meeting was to initiate a ministerial dialogue on how to study in depth the synergies between greater global economic cooperation and the efforts of the tourism sector to reinforce its resilience and to stimulate new growth that is sustainable and responsible.

4. With regard to the Programme of Work of the Organization for 2010-2011, he pointed out the most significant events that had been held since the General Assembly in Astana:

- The Ministerial Summit held at the WTM in London,
- The INVESTOUR Forum for Africa and the Leadership Forum held jointly between the UNWTO and EXCELTUR, in January 2010.
- The UNWTO Summit on Tourism, Sports and Mega-Events in South Africa, in February 2010.

He then reported more generally on the UNWTO's specific activities in the Americas during 2010 in terms of the support provided to the countries that suffered natural disasters and various examples of technical cooperation in the region, mainly MDG-F and ST-EP projects.

As for the financial situation, the Secretary-General briefly described that, in accordance with what was presented at the last General Assembly, the Secretariat had applied a policy of prudence in expenditure, and introduced cost-saving measures where possible.

The Secretariat has made a commitment to redouble efforts to obtain extra-budgetary funds for technical cooperation activities and other programmes. The Secretariat's new programme for fund-raising will seek additional funding sources that will allow the Organization to expand its reach and the services it provides, without increasing the regular budget or the contributions of the Members.

Lastly, he discussed the restructuring that is being carried out at the Secretariat, which includes the appointment of a new Management Team composed of three Executive Directors and the division of programmes into three categories according to the type of tasks and their degree of permanence, and he pointed out that the aspects of the restructuring are explained in detail in the White Paper to be presented at the forthcoming Executive Council.

Various delegations took the floor in response to the report presented by the Secretary-General.

The Minister of Tourism and Sports of **Uruguay** thanked the Secretary-General for his statement and highlighted the importance that the Organization is giving to the subject of mega-events (principally in the case of **Brazil** which will host the forthcoming World Cup of Football and the 2016 Olympic Games) given the importance and repercussions they have on the regions. He also welcomed the T-20 initiative carried out by the Organization aimed at the countries forming part of the G-20, which implies a de facto hierarchization of the tourism sector.

The Minister of Tourism of **Paraguay** highlighted the inclusion in the Agenda of the item relative to the management actions carried out by countries in response to the natural disasters that struck the region (**Haiti, Chile, Peru**) and called for greater dissemination of the work of the CAM within the organization, urging that the CAM have a more politically active role.

Both the Vice-Minister of **Peru** and the Minister of Tourism of **El Salvador** highlighted the importance of domestic tourism as an engine for the economic and tourism development at the regional and local levels.

IV

The state of tourism worldwide and in the Americas

With regard to the situation of tourism in the world and in the Americas, the Programme Manager for Communication of the UNWTO gave two presentations:

1. Results of 2009 and future trends (click [here](#) to see the presentation (in Spanish)).
2. Report on the activities of the UNWTO Tourism Resilience Committee and the T-20 initiative ([document CAM/51/4\(b\)](#)).

As for the second presentation, it was pointed out that it was an updated version of the report on the activities of the Tourism Resilience Committee presented on the occasion of the 18th General Assembly (document A/18/8 – http://www.unwto.org/conferences/ga/en/pdf/18_08.pdf).

The aim of the Resilience Committee is to more closely monitor markets, to serve as a platform for sharing experiences on the impact of the crisis and response measures, to act as a support for public-private partnerships and as a source of policy orientation on how to overcome the crisis by maintaining coherence between short-term and long-term actions. One of its main achievements has been the ***Roadmap for Recovery*** which consists of a set of 15 recommendations revolving around three interconnected areas of actions: ***resilience – stimulus – green economy***.

The T-20 Initiative emerged as a response to the *Roadmap for Recovery* and aspires first and foremost to debating the valuable contribution of tourism to the global economic recovery, positioning tourism as an engine of economic, social and environmental change, driving the long-term transformation towards a green economy.

The second meeting of the T-20 will take place in October in the Republic of Korea, at a place to be determined.

V

Presentation of the report:
"The Spanish Outbound Market to the Americas"
(Document CAM/51/5)

The Regional Director for the Americas presented the report "The Spanish Outbound Market to the Americas" as part of the activities carried out by the Regional Programme in line with the directives of the Secretary-General.

The Report's objective is to provide the Organization's Members in the region with a quantitative and qualitative view of the Spanish outbound market, as well as with information that could be useful when carrying out marketing actions.

Although the study, for practical reasons, is limited to the Spanish outbound market which has experienced substantial growth, many of the elements analysed can be extrapolated to other European markets such as Germany or France, to cite just two examples.

The Regional Director gave a brief Executive Summary to the participants about the report and gave a more general presentation that can be viewed [here](#).

VI

Panel discussion on the trends for air travel and hospitality and the challenges for marketing destinations

The sixth item on the agenda was taken up in the form of an interactive debate on the subjects presented in items IV and V.

The debate was moderated by the UNWTO Regional Director for the Americas, with a panel formed by Affiliate Members of the Organization, experts in three specific areas of business activity.

Tourism Fairs and the role they play in the marketing of destinations, with the President of the Executive Board of IFEMA, which is the organizing body of FITUR; **the hotel sector** with the representative of the Asociación de Hoteles de Turismo de Argentina (AHT), which forms part of the Cámara Argentina de Turismo and the **air transport sector**, represented by the global distribution system Amadeus.

Each of the panellists set forth their view of the current situation of tourism and the way in which their respective sectors are meeting the challenges posed by the financial crisis and the important changes society is undergoing.

FITUR expressed the importance of adequately planning participation in Tourism Fairs so as to be able to obtain a return from the investment required and pointed out the professional nature of these gatherings and FITUR's decided focus on the Americas. Several country delegations took the floor to request greater support on the part of the organizers of the Fair in the face of the substantial economic effort entailed for participants, taking into account the current situation of budget cuts. Statements were also made recommending that the Fairs include a larger quantity of specialized activities aimed at specific market segments that provide added value.

As for the hotel sector, the representative, the representative of AHT highlighted the difficulties being experienced by the hotel industry and the incidence of the crisis on the need to lower prices and its effects on profit margins. The debate, in which various country delegates participated, revolved around the way in which domestic tourism in many countries, including Argentina, has come to compensate in good measure for the decline in international tourism and alleviate the need for hotel operators to adapt their rates to the current crisis situation in order to stimulate demand.

Lastly, the subject of air connectivity in the region was discussed by the representative of Amadeus, who mentioned the need to create hubs that reinforce intra-regional tourism. In various statements, delegates raised the question of the lack of adequate air connectivity in many zones of the region, such as the case in the Caribbean islands and the reasons why low-cost airlines have not developed in the Caribbean and in Central and South America in the same way they did in North America or Europe. Also discussed were the high operating costs of airlines that hamper competitiveness and in many case represent a hurdle to the greater development of tourism flows.

VII

The situation faced due to the natural disasters in the region

(Documents CAM/51/7(a) and CAM/51/7(b))

First of all, the Regional Director gave an introduction to this agenda item with a brief mention of what was done in the case of the earthquake that struck Haiti in February of this year: the Montego Bay initiative that gave rise to a series of actions that were consolidated in a meeting held at the ITB Fair in Berlin last March, where the Minister of Tourism of Haiti presented the tourism master plan.

The representative of the Republic of Haiti, Mr. Daniel Fouchard, then took the floor and complemented his statement with a presentation explaining the effects of the earthquake and the recovery process undertaken, where tourism and agriculture are called upon to play an important role in the reconstruction of the country.

Then, the Vice-Minister of Tourism of Peru, Ms. Mara Seminario Marón, presented a report accompanied by a video explaining the activities carried out in the

month of January by the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Tourism in the evacuation of more than 4,000 tourists who were stuck at the train station of Aguas Calientes, the access point to the archaeological site of Machu Picchu, as a result of the flooding caused by torrential rains.

VIII

General programme of work 2010-2011
Priorities for the Americas
(Document CAM/51/8)

The Regional Director for the Americas presented this document which was well-received by the Members of the Commission.

General programme of work 2010-2011
Priorities for the Americas

New UNWTO Strategic Outlook for the Affiliate Members
Presentation of PLATMA (Networking Technological Platform for Affiliate
Members)
(Document CAM/51/8(a))

The Regional Director for the Americas informed the Members of the Commission about the new strategic orientation of the UNWTO for the Affiliate Members, in the understanding that these Members of the Organization contribute knowledge and diversity although they lack, for different reasons, broad representation in geographical and sectoral terms.

He also pointed out that with the aim of strengthening the Organization and positioning the Affiliate Members, it is necessary for the Regional Commissions to attend to the non-governmental members with a broader, region-centric approach, so that they become an essential part of their activities and thus become better integrated in the programme of work of the UNWTO.

He then gave the floor to the Director of the Secretariat of the Affiliate Members, Mr. Javier Blanco, who presented to the delegations the new online Technological Platform of the Affiliate Members (PLATMA) whose objective is effective communication between the Affiliate Members and the UNWTO as well as among the Affiliate Members themselves (click [here](#) to see the presentation (in Spanish)).

General programme of work 2010-2011
Priorities for the Americas

Programme for the development of Tourism Statistics and the Tourism Satellite Account

Tourism satellite projects in the region
(Document CAM/51/8(b))

Among other priorities, the Regional Director briefly discussed the two essential manuals that contain the recommendations on statistics of the United Nations: the **International Recommendations on Tourism Statistics 2008 (IRTS 2008)** and **Tourism Satellite Account: Recommended Methodological Framework 2008 (TSA: RMF 2008)**.

He mentioned the objectives of the technical assistance of the UNWTO in the area of statistics and the TSA, pointing out that for national programmes the UNWTO can offer its experience and training under two possible scenarios: 1) reinforcement of the national system of tourism statistics and 2) the development of an experimental TSA.

As for the Tourism Satellite Account projects in progress in the region, he mentioned the one that is being carried out in Central America (already in its second phase) and the one that will begin in mid-July for MERCOSUR and which will hold its first workshop in Uruguay in mid-October approximately.

General programme of work 2010-2011
Priorities for the Americas

Report on the ST-EP Programme and on the MDG Achievement Fund in the region.
(Document CAM/51/8(c))

The Regional Director for the Americas gave a presentation on the activities being carried out in the region.

In the framework of ST-EP, there are projects in Bolivia, Ecuador (2), Guatemala, Honduras (3), Nicaragua (2) and Peru (4), while MDG-F projects are distributed as follows: Nicaragua (2), Honduras, Ecuador (2), Peru and Panama.

General programme of work 2010-2011
Priorities for the Americas

Progress in the application of the Global Code of Ethics
(Document CAM/51/8(d))

The Secretary-General informed the Commission on the progress made in the application of the Code of Ethics.

He mentioned the low level of responses obtained the last survey carried out on the application of the Code of Ethics and at the request of the World Committee on Ethics in Tourism, he urged the Member Countries of the region that had not responded to the survey to do so in order that the Secretariat could have the necessary information to complete the UNWTO's report to the United Nations General Assembly in 2010.

As for the activities of the World Committee, he reported that the next meeting would be held in Bali in June 2011 by invitation of the Ministry of Tourism of Indonesia. The meeting will be held in conjunction with a technical workshop in a town in Bali in order to fulfil the principle that local communities should share in the economic benefits of tourism.

General programme of work 2010-2011

Priorities for the Americas

Seventh International Tourism Forum for
Parliamentarians and Local Authorities
(Document CAM/51/8(e))

The Regional Director for the Americas announced to the participants the holding of the 7th International Tourism Forum for Parliamentarians and Local Authorities which will take place in the city of Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, on 16-18 November 2010.

Then, the Undersecretary for Tourism Operations of the Ministry of Tourism of Mexico, Mr. Alejandro Moreno Medina, took the floor and extended to the delegations his invitation to attend the above-mentioned forum.

He pointed out that the forum's content would tackle subjects such as the types of tools available to public decision-makers, the specific function of parliaments as well as the major challenges currently being faced with regard to the handling of the financial crisis and its effects on tourism.

Before the final agenda item was taken up, Ms. Sandra Carvao took the floor to inform that the official celebration of World Tourism Day would take place in Guangdong, China, and that its theme would be "Tourism and Biodiversity" and invited the delegations to join this important event and to take part in it. For more information, those interested can consult the web page at: www.unwto.org/worldtourismday

IX**Place and dates of the 52nd meeting of the Commission for the Americas**

The Minister of Tourism of Paraguay proposed her country as a candidate to host the next meeting of the Regional Commission and her proposal was accepted unanimously.

When it came time to bid farewell to the delegations, the Secretary-General and the Chairman of the CAM reiterated, on behalf of all the delegates, their gratitude to the authorities of Puerto Iguazú and of the Argentine Republic for their hospitality and for the impeccable organization.

ANNEX 1

51st Meeting of the UNWTO Commission for the Americas
Puerto Iguazú, Argentina, 6 June 2010

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

The following list was prepared based on the information provided to the Secretariat by the participants in the 51st Meeting of the UNWTO Commission for the Americas.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**PRESIDENTE / CHAIR****VENEZUELA**

Excmo. Sr. Edgar RENGIFO
Viceministro del Poder Popular para el Turismo
Ministerio del Poder Popular para el Turismo
erengifo@mintur.gob.ve

Sra. María Carlota CARRERO
Coordinadora Internacional
Ministerio del Poder Popular para el Turismo
mcarrero@mintur.gob.ve

VICEPRESIDENTE / VICE-CHAIR**PARAGUAY**

Excmo. Sra. Lyz Rosanna CRAMER CAMPOS
Ministra Secretaria Ejecutiva
Secretaría Nacional de Turismo – SENATUR

info@senatur.gov.py

Sr. Benjamín CHAMORRO CORTESÍ
Director General de Gestión Turística
Secretaría Nacional de Turismo – SENATUR

info@senatur.gov.py

Sr. César DIAZ CABALLERO
Jefe de Prensa
Secretaría Nacional de Turismo – SENATUR

info@senatur.gov.py

Sr. Rubén BENÍTEZ WOITSCHACH
Secretario privado de la Ministra
Secretaría Nacional de Turismo - SENATUR
sec_general@senatur.gov.py

PARTICIPANTES / PARTICIPANTS**ARGENTINA**

Excmo. Sr. Carlos Enrique MEYER
Secretario de Turismo
Secretaría de Turismo secpriv@turismo.gov.ar

Sra. Maya GONZÁLEZ BENDER
Directora A/C de Relaciones Internacionales e Institucionales
Secretaría de Turismo mgbender@turismo.gov.ar

Sra. María Cristina SAN MARTÍN
Coordinadora de Unidad de Secretario
Secretaría de Turismo secpriv@turismo.gov.ar

Sr. Benjamín ORELLANO
Asistente Técnico
Secretaría de Turismo borellano@turismo.gov.ar

BAHAMAS

Mr. Earlston MCPHEE
Director Sustainable Development Planning
Ministry of Tourism and Aviation emcphee@bahamas.com

BRASIL / BRAZIL

Sr. Patric LOTTICI KRAHL
Director del Departamento de Relaciones Internacionales
Ministerio de Turismo drel@turismo.gov.br

Sra Sarah PEREIRA KOCH
Asesora del Director del Departamento de Relaciones Internacionales
Ministerio de Turismo sarah.pereira@turismo.gov.br

Sra. Fernanda CARNEIRO
Coordinadora General
Ministerio de Turismo fernanda.maciell@turismo.gov.br

Sra. Soraya COSTA
Coordinadora General de Relaciones Multilaterales
Ministerio de Turismo soraya.costa@turismo.gov.br

COLOMBIA

Sra. Nohora Isabel VARGAS CASTRO
Director General
Instituto Distrital de Turismo de Bogotá

nohora.vargas@idt.gov.co

EL SALVADOR

Excmo. Sr. Jose Napoleón DUARTE DURAN
Ministro de Turismo
Ministerio de Turismo

larevalo@corsatur.gob.sv

Sra. Wendy del Carmen ESCOBAR
Directora de Planificación y Política Sectorial
Ministerio de Turismo

wescobar@corsatur.gob.sv

HAITÍ / HAITI

M. Daniel FOUCHARD
Directeur général du tourisme
Ministère du tourisme

daniel_fouchard@yahoo.com

MÉXICO / MEXICO

Excmo. Sr. Alejandro MORENO MEDINA
Subsecretario de Operación Turística
Secretaría de Turismo

amorenom@sectur.gob.mx

Sra. Paola MÉNDEZ PROBST
Coordinadora de Asesores del Subsecretario de Operación Turística
Secretaría de Turismo

pmendez@sectur.gob.mx

PANAMÁ / PANAMA

Sra. Gabriela ANTELO
Secretaria General
Autoridad de Turismo de Panamá

gantelo@atp.gob.pa

Sr. Jaime CORNEJO
Director de Planificación
Autoridad de Turismo de Panamá

jcornejo@atp.gob.pa

PERÚ / PERU

Excma. Sra. María Magdalena SEMINARIO
Viceministra de Turismo
Ministerio de Comercio Exterior y Turismo mseminario@mincetur.gob.pe

REPÚBLICA DOMINICANA / DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Lic. Luis SIMÓ
Subsecretario de Asuntos Internacionales
Secretaría de Estado de Turismo luissimo@sectur.gov.do

URUGUAY

Excmo. Sr. Héctor LESCANO
Ministro de Turismo y Deporte
Ministerio de Turismo y Deporte hlescano@mintur.gub.uy

OBSERVER COUNTRY**ESPAÑA / SPAIN**

Excmo. Sr. Juan MESQUIDA FERRANDO
Secretario de Estado de Turismo
secretariaestado.turismo@tourspain.es
Ministerio de Industria, Turismo y Comercio del Gobierno de España

Sr. Miguel MORATA BLASCO
Director del Gabinete del Secretario de Estado
secretariaestado.turismo@tourspain.es
Ministerio de Industria, Turismo y Comercio del Gobierno de España

Sra. Beatriz MARCO ARCE
Subdirectora General de Cooperación y Competitividad Turística
Instituto de Turismo de España beatriz.marco@tourspain.es

REPRESENTATIVE OF THE AFFILIATE MEMBERS**THR ASESORES EN TURISMO, HOTELERÍA Y RECREACIÓN S.A.**

Sr. Eulogio BORDÁS
Presidente
España

bordas@thr.es

AFFILIATE MEMBERS**AMADEUS IT GROUP**

Sr. Felipe GONZÁLEZ ABAD
Senior Advisor
España

felipe.gonzalez@amadeus.com

AMFORT

Sr. Joan PASSOLAS
Secretario General
España

amfort@hotmail.com

ARALDI,S.L.

Sr. Alfredo GARCIA RAMOS
Presidente
España

alfredogr@araldi.es

CÁMARA ARGENTINA DE TURISMO-CAT

Sr. Juan MIRENNA
Presidente
Argentina
presidencia@camaraargentinadeturismo.travel

Sr. Rolando DOMINÉ
Directivo
Argentina
info@camaraargentinadeturismo.travel

Sr. Carlos GERBI
Protesorero y Representante de la CAT ante la OMT
Argentina
info@camaraargentinadeturismo.travel

CENTRO MUNDIAL DE EXCELENCIA DE LOS DESTINOS-CED

Sr. César CASTAÑEDA
Director de Operaciones
Canadá

ccastaneda@ced.travel

**FEDERACIÓN EMPRESARIA HOTELERA GASTRONÓMICA DE LA
REPÚBLICA ARGENTINA-FEHGRA**

Sr. Mario ZVALETA
Vicepresidente Primero de FEHGRA
Argentina

mzavaleta@heghra.org.ar

FERIA INTERNACIONAL DE TURISMO-IFEMA

Sr. Luis Eduardo CORTÉS MUÑOZ
Presidente del Comité Ejecutivo
España

beatriz.ferrandiz@ifema.es

Sr. Raúl DÍEZ VÁZQUEZ
Director
Dirección de Comunicación y Prensa
España

diez@ifema.es

Sra. Ana LARRAÑAGA
Directora de FITUR
España

fitur@ifema.es

INSTITUTO DISTRITAL DE TURISMO DE BOGOTÁ

Sra. Nohora Isabel VARGAS CASTRO
Directora General
Colombia

nohora.vargas@idt.gov.co

Sra. Rosa Margarita FIGUEREDO MOLINA
Subdirectora de Gestión de Destinos
Colombia

rosa.figuero@idt.gov.co

INSTITUTO NACIONAL DE APRENDIZAJE (INA) – NÚCLEO TURISMO

Sra. Marjorie ARAYA MORALES
Jefe de Núcleo de Turismo
Costa Rica

marayamorales@ina.ac.cr

Sra. Marcela GARCÍA ESPINOZA
Docente de Núcleo de Turismo
Costa Rica

mgarciaespinoza@ina.ac.cr

UNIVERSIDAD RICARDO PALMA – ESCUELA DE TURISMO, HOTELERÍA Y GASTRONOMÍA

Sr. Hugo DURAND CHOCANO
Perú

hdurand@mail.urp.edu.pe

CANDIDATE FOR AFFILIATE MEMBERSHIP**INSTITUTO POLO INTERNACIONAL IGUASSU “POLOIGUASSU”**

Sr. Faisal SALEH
Director Presidente
Brazil

faisal@poloiguassu.org

SECRETARIAT

Mr. Taleb RIFAI
Secretary-General

Mr. Carlos VOGELER
Regional Director for the Americas

Mr. Alejandro VARELA
Deputy Regional Director for the Americas

Mr. Márcio FAVILLA
Executive Director

Mr. Zoltán SOMOGYI
Executive Director

Mr. Javier BLANCO
Director, Affiliate Members

Ms. Sandra CARVAO
Programme Manager, Communications