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# AUSJAL *al día*

Executive Secretary Newsletter. Latin American Universities Entrusted to the Society of Jesus

## The 35th General Congregation and the Jesuit University

A significant and large group of university-related Jesuits attended the 35<sup>th</sup> General Congregation. José Morales Orozco, SJ (UIA-Ciudad de Mexico), Jesus Sario, SJ (UCA), Rafael Velasco (Cordoba), Ivo Follman, SJ (UNISINOS), René Cardozo (Bolivia) y Arturo Sosa, SJ (UCAT) attended from Latin America. The General Congregation invested most of its energies on the election of Adolfo Nicolas, S.J., as General Superior. It was not proposed to sign documents (decrees) on the different apostolic areas, but to confirm the relevance that the mission of the Society of Jesus has in the context of postmodernism, globalization and post-Christianity.

The 35<sup>th</sup> General Congregation remembered that the intellectual apostolate is a defining characteristic for the Society of Jesus since its very start. This dimension about its way of acting reaches special meaning within the change of eras that humanity faces. The Jesuit

universities are a major tool to accomplish today's demanding intellectual-apostolate. It is a challenge for universities to make an effective contribution to build this world as a space where all human beings may live in peace; to use its variety and cultural richness protecting the biodiversity and environment conditions, from the faith in the God of Life who enhance a fair and fraternal world. The 35<sup>th</sup> General Congregation invites universities to stay in the frontiers, in those social areas where divisions and tensions remain, in order to contribute to building bridges and promoting reconciliation.



Arturo Sosa SJ

## AUSJAL Briefs

**Meeting of the AUSJAL Board of Directors.** The AUSJAL Board of Directors held its meeting in the «Universidad Católica de Córdoba.» Besides reviewing and analyzing the projects' and initiatives' performance and the financial association's performance, were also reviewed the results of the 35<sup>th</sup> General Congregation and the preparation of the AUSJAL Ordinary Assembly (2009) and a possible meeting with the General Father.

**Tutors graduation.** The tutors' formation program for virtual environments that leads the AUSJAL Network of Peers on Education and Technology held the graduation of its 5th edition where 37 professors from eight universities of AUSJAL, FLACSI and «Fe y Alegría» participated. In total they add up to 116 graduates.

**AUSJAL Publications.** The responsible of the publishing funds from the «Universidad Iberoamericana» - Mexico City, «Universidad Católica Andrés Bello» (Venezuela) and «Universidad Católica del Ecuador» celebrated an audioconference where they agreed to subscribe a general agreement of joint publication; it is on the elaboration phase. Later on, it will be presented to the rest of the Network's universities.

**Videoconference on global warming.** In the context of the AUSJAL Course on Environment and Sustainability, UCAB as the Course Regional Coordinator, organized a videoconference that allowed the students from Bogotá, Nicaragua, Guatemala and Venezuela to talk to the co-winner of the Nobel Peace Prize 2007 Engineer Juan Carlos Sanchez who is a member of the United Nations Panel for Climate Change. The subject was climate change and its implications for Latin America. After his presentation Sanchez answered to the students' concerns.

**Leadership on video.** The participants of the AUSJAL University-Leadership Program had the chance to talk to Manuel Ramiro Muñoz professor of the «Pontificia Universidad Javeriana de Cali.» The videoconference consisted of a presentation by professor Muñoz and a discussion about the video «Challenges for Latin America.» Students from «Universidad Iberoamericana» from Mexico City, «Universidad Rafael Landívar» from Guatemala, UCA from Managua, «Universidad Javeriana de Bogotá», «Universidad Javeriana de Cali» and «Universidad Católica Andrés Bello» from Caracas.

**REDLEIDH in videoconference.** The participants of the Latin American Network for the Education and Research on Human Rights REDLEIDH held a first virtual meeting through the videoconference system in order to following the Network's activities and projects. Representatives from ILSA (Colombia), CELS (Argentina), AUSJAL, IIDH (Costa Rica) and York University (Canada) participated in this videoconference.

**Portal release.** The BRIDGES LAC European and Latin American Network of Universities and Organizations, where participate the Jesuit institution «Universidad de Deusto» (Spain) and AUSJAL, has released its Website <http://www.bridges-lac.org/>. It is a project financed by the European Commission and coordinated by OBREAL in the context of the Erasmus Mundus Program. Its major objective is to strength the relations between Europe and the Latin America and the Caribbean in the higher education area.

## Peers on Economy and Administration gathered in Nicaragua

16 representatives from the AUSJAL universities and the Executive Secretariat gathered in the «Universidad Centro Americana» of Nicaragua, Managua, from May 19 to 21, 2008, to celebrate the 6<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Network of Peers on Economy and Administration.

The agenda dealt with the topics of faculty's performance evaluation; research promotion; students' and faculty's exchange; ethics in the formation plans; and the representatives' designation for the International Association of Jesuit Business Schools.

Among the most important agreements stands out the establishment of an AUSJAL Chair of Administration and Economy based on the following criteria: to include subjects within the AUSJAL strategic guidelines, specially about SME; subjects under intensive regime with the specific objective of promoting a true exchange in the

academic and cultural fields and about the different realities of the Latin American countries.

The group also agreed to exchange research proposals and to promote a major interrelation between research teams. The Network decided to create a virtual space to stimulate the faculty exchange and networking; it is already available in the AUSJAL portal at <http://homologos.ausjal.org>



## Management and impact indicators ready

Last May, the AUSJAL Network of Peers on University Social Responsibility celebrated its 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting in the «Universidad Católica de Córdoba». Rafael Velasco (president of «Universidad Católica de Córdoba» and AUSJAL Vice-president) and Luis Ugalde (president of «Universidad Católica Andrés Bello» and AUSJAL president) were in charge of the meeting's opening. Besides sharing the strategies that universities are developing for institutionalizing the university social responsibility, the worktables included the elaboration of the indicators' final version on students' formation; knowledge development and diffusion; building links with society; university management; and environmental management.

The AUSJAL Executive Secretariat presented a final version of the project «Institutional Strengthening on University Social Responsibility for AUSJAL universities» which started on June 1, 2008. The following tasks were also defined; they include the edition and publication of the document «Policies and Indicators for University Social Responsibility»; the

development of collection instruments and methodologies; inventory of the existing information and instruments and development of the database. Also, the peers agreed to keep in contact through virtual forums in order to identify and socialize awareness strategies for the university communities participating in the self-test for university social responsibility.

The represented universities in the meeting were the «Universidad Javeriana de Bogotá» and «Universidad Javeriana de Cali» (Colombia); «Universidad Católica del Ecuador»; «Instituto Universitario Jesus Obrero», «Universidad Católica del Táchira» and «Universidad Católica Andrés Bello» of Caracas and Guayana (Venezuela); «Universidad Católica del Uruguay»; «Universidad Antonio Ruiz de Montoya» (Peru), «Universidad Iberoamericana» of Mexico City and «Universidad Iberoamericana de León» (Mexico); «Pontificia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro» and UNISINOS (Brazil); «Universidad Rafael Landívar» from Guatemala; ISEFH (Paraguay); UCA from El Salvador, the AUSJAL President and the Executive Secretariat.