

YMCA OBSERVATORY, International Edition

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This publication sent by e-mail and included in the Internet site: www.ymca.org.ar, intends to share, in short, information and ideas with the broad international world of the Young Men's Christian Association /YMCA.

HIS HOLINESS, POPE FRANCIS

Pope Francis is a much appreciated friend of Argentina's YMCA. As Archbishop of Buenos Aires, Cardinal Jorge M. Bergoglio has shared many activities with our YMCA and we have taken part in numerous calls made by the Archdiocese itself. For instance, in the Metropolitan Cathedral, in May 2002, we celebrated the YMCA's centenary in our country and he headed the ceremony. He also headed the ceremony in the most important Methodist Church of Argentina in 2007. More recently, the today's Pope Francis presided the interreligious ceremony of our 110th anniversary with the presence of evangelical pastors, a Rabi and a Sheikh of Islam. In May 2012, we requested the audience whereby he received the current secretary general of the World Alliance of YMCAs, Johan Etvik. In April 2009 he had received the then secretary general of the World Alliance of YMCAs, Bart Shaha. Besides being a close friend, Francis has been a constant adviser, characterized by his typical humility and deep respect for the works of YMCA in our country. Let us pray for his ministry.

"YOUTH PEACE NETWORK" PROGRAMME

Mariano Tomeo, Argentine YMCA's young volunteer leader has been chosen by Vancouver's YMCA, Canada, to take part in this excellent educational programme that shall extend for three months.

EXCHANGE OF LEADERS WITH URUGUAY AND BRAZIL

During the first half of the year there was an exchange of volunteer leaders among the three Southern Cone YMCAs: Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay. In all cases with an excellent evaluation by the YMCAs and by the attending leaders. Shortly, two leaders from the Argentina YMCA will attend National Encounter Leaders of the Uruguay YMCA.

PROFESSIONAL TRAINEESHIPS

In April, Nancy Di Perna, Argentina's YMCA senior executive spent three weeks in Sao Paulo's YMCA for an intense professional traineeship. In May, Gustavo Daiqui, executive of the Tourism Centers and Camping Activities area, took part in an experience of professional exchange in Mexico's YMCA. In both cases with satisfactory outcomes. Shortly, Mario Cenci, executive of the Leadership, Childhood and Adolescence area, will do likewise in San Antonio's YMCA, USA.

EUROPEAN FESTIVAL IN PRAGUE'S YMCA

Alfonsina Gómez, young volunteer of Rosario's YMCA shall represent Argentina YMCA in the festival to be held in Prague during the month of August. Furthermore, thanks to the generosity of Spain's YMCA, she will stay a week in the Iberian Peninsula for an exchange-learning period.

WORLD YOUTH DAY 2013 IN RIO DE JANEIRO

Argentine YMCA shall take part, formally, in the World Youth Day 2013 to be held in July in Rio de Janeiro, with Pope Francis' vital and stimulating presence. The institutional representation shall be exercised by two young volunteers: Romina Sarmiento and Luis M. Alman Bornes, latter member of the Board.

FAIR SHARE - WORLD ALLIANCE

Voluntarily, Argentina's YMCA decided to increase, in 2013, by 10% its contribution to the World Alliance of YMCAs. To be part of the international family implies, at the same time, to be supportive in terms of commitments and responsibilities.

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

On May 24, Argentine National Holiday's eve, national YMCA issued the following declaration, which was uploaded by the World Alliance of YMCAs to its website: "THE OBLIVION OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES-The marginalization and exclusion suffered by indigenous peoples is a disgrace for the whole society in many areas of the world. What is happening with the Qom community, in the Province of Formosa, Republic of Argentina, is an example of misfortune that hurts human heart and conscience. There we see, besides marginalization and exclusion, racism, prejudice and violence, giving rise to death. Indigenous peoples are made of brothers and sisters whose basic rights are being violated. All of us, citizens of the world, should assume the existence of this calamity and make our voice, stentorian and clear, heard in favour of justice and of respect for human dignity. What is happening in Argentina is an example of what is going on in too many places of this planet. Pope Francis has recently referred to this subject in St. Peter's Square and the international press has described, by way of negative experience, the sufferings of the Qom community in Argentina."

AWARD "YOUNG MEN CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION/ YMCA - CITIZENSHIP AND VALUES"

On June 5, in the Buenos Aires Stock Exchange, Argentina's YMCA awarded its prize "YMCA - Citizenship and Values", in its ninth edition, to the Instituto Movilizador de Fondos Cooperativos. The act pulled in a massive audience and had a strong impact.

MEETING OF NATIONAL SECRETARIES GENERAL IN LONDON

The meeting of national secretaries general held in February in Dunford House, near London, has been very positively assessed by Argentina's YMCA, which expressed its congratulations for the initiative promoted by the World Alliance's secretary general, Mr. Johan Etvik. Argentina was represented by its secretary general, Norberto Rodríguez. In Dunford House, lived a friendship and harmony climate, in an environment of deep reflection.

MALVINAS ISLANDS

In April, Argentina's YMCA expressed itself again as to the occupation of the Malvinas Islands. It pointed out in its statement, sent in Spanish and English to YMCA's broad international world, to the Argentine Government and to the Embassy of the United Kingdom in the country, that: "The international community regards in astonishment -and with obvious incapacity to modify the situation- the usurpation of the Malvinas Islands, undoubtedly Argentine by right. The occupying power, 14000 km away from the islands, puts forward as unique arguments, anachronistic per se, the military force and the attitude to blatantly ignore the repeated calls for dialogue and for the bilateral negotiation made by the United Nations General Assembly. In the middle of the XXI Century, this colonial remnant embarrasses the planet as a whole, certainly including the United Kingdom itself, whose Prime Minister displays a dishonourable warmongerism. MALVINAS ISLANDS HAVE BEEN, ARE AND WILL BE ARGENTINE. The United Kingdom should take note that the entire Latin America has closed ranks regarding this conviction. It should be advisable that both the British government and the British people revisit the ideas of the renowned London philosopher and jurist Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832), who sponsored the liberation of South America, which he considered a

geographic and cultural space populated by "dreamers of realities and makers of dreams". Malvinas Islands are part of that utopia and time will turn it into reality.”

WORLD WEEK OF PRAYER

The secretary general of the Argentine YMCA, Norberto Rodríguez, has been invited by the World Alliance of YMCAs to cooperate in the preparation of contents for the celebration of this current year 2013.

PALESTINE

Once again, in 2013, Argentina's YMCA will take part of the excellent experience in the Holy Land identified as "Journey for Justice", organized by Palestine's YMCA. Young leader Iris Merli shall participate as institutional representative. This participation is part of Argentine YMCA's commitment to the values of justice and peace.
