

## **RINDHCA INAUGURATES REGIONAL OFFICE IN PANAMA**

The Network of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights of the American Continent (RINDHCA) inaugurated its regional office on Monday 6th December in Panama. The Permanent Secretariat will promote and strengthen human rights in the 18 countries.

RINDHCA is co-financed by the European Union (EU), through the NHRI. EU.2 Project, and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) . "With the establishment of the Permanent Secretariat, RINDHCA will respond more efficiently to the challenges human rights face in the region," said José Apolonio Tobar Serrano, Head of El Salvador National Human Rights Institution and Secretary-General of RINDHCA.

Mr. Tobar also thanked the EU and OHCHR for their financial support. He also thanked the Danish Institute of Human Rights for their support of achieving this goal. RINDHCA embarks on a new challenge, for which a solid and trusting relationship with the Ombudsman's Office of Panama will be essential, considering Mr Eduardo Leblanc an important local ally.

Opening a permanent office represents a commitment to strengthening the respect for human rights culture. Moreover, it provides the platform to advocate for fulfilling the international obligations acquired by each country.

Within its objectives, RINDHCA advocacy contributes to democratic systems and the respect of fundamental rights, which are essential pillars of the rule of law. RINDHCA promotes the work of national human rights institutions in line with the Paris Principles.

Ms Anahí Quintero, a Panamanian lawyer specializing in human rights, will head the Permanent Secretariat as RINDHCA Permanent Technical. Ms Quintero highlighted the importance of strengthening cooperation amongst RINDHCA national human rights institutions (NHRIs), generating spaces for dialogue, learning and exchange among its members.

Ms. Quintero also noted "that with the opening of the RINDHCA Regional Office, Panama will have a wider space for respect for human rights, integration, cooperation, participation, promotion, equality and transparency." This network comprises Argentina, Bolivia, Canadá, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haití, Honduras, México, Nicaragua, Panamá, Paraguay, Perú, Uruguay and Venezuela.



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