



INTERNATIONAL UNION AGAINST  
SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS

24<sup>th</sup> Conference of IUSTI Europe  
4 – 6 September 2008, Milan

Regional Director's Report, Latin America  
Professor Patricia Garcia



Meeting of the National STI Programs of Latin America and the Caribbean, Opportunities and Challenges for the Programmatic activities and for Research. March 2008, Lima, Peru

The Latin American and Caribbean Association for the control of STI (ALAC-STI) is an international scientific association founded in 2003, aimed at bringing together professionals from different specialties from the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, who are interested in collaborating on activities related to services, training and research applied to the control of sexually transmitted infections.

Among the objectives of the ALAC-STI, one of the most important is to encourage its members to collaborate actively in supporting national STI programs according to the circumstances and needs of each country, and the formation of national STI scientific societies or STI chapters or sections within other similar societies already existing in each of the countries in the region.

In 2007, ALAC – ITS became part of the International Union against Sexually Transmitted Infections (IUSTI) as official representative for the Latin American and Caribbean region.

In September 2007 the Association organized the **“First Latin American ALAC-STI Conference”** in the city of Porto Alegre, including a scientific program that involved more than 200 participants from 20 countries and the First Joint Meeting of ALAC-STI-GCTH – PAHO/WHO, attended by the representatives of 14 national programs from the countries of the region.



This meeting agreed that ALAC-STI would carry out a diagnosis of the situation of the programs in the Latin America and Caribbean region and that the results would be discussed by the country representatives at a later meeting to be held in the first half of 2008.



In December 2007 the evaluation instrument was sent to the National Program Coordinators of 20 countries, only Haiti failed to respond. The purposes of this survey were to obtain an overview of the status from basic information provided by the national programs, to share and analyze it at a meeting in the city of Lima - Peru in order to identify strengths and weaknesses, opportunities for collaboration and to plan joint actions.

In March 14 to 16, 2008, in Lima Peru we had the “Meeting of the National STI Programs of Latin America and the Caribbean, Opportunities and Challenges for the Programmatic

activities and for Research." And **"2nd Latin American ALAC-STI Conference"**. The conference was organized by Peru's National Institute of Health (INS), supported by WHO/PAHO, USAID - VIGIA and UNFPA; and had representatives from National STI programs from 18 countries, ALAC – ITS, IUSTI-Latin American, WHO, PAHO, Cayetano Heredia Peruvian University and the Latin America and the Caribbean Technical Aid Group for HIV/AIDS (GCTH). During the last day we organized an open course entitled: "International STI Course" attended by health professionals from various countries.

A work plan 2008-2009 was outlined as well as commitments from the different countries. A web site has been established [www.alac-sti.org](http://www.alac-sti.org) where the report of the meeting can be found in Spanish and English.

The next meeting will be held as part of the 5<sup>th</sup> Latin American Forum on HIV/AIDS in Lima Peru in 2009.