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**“How good and pleasant it is when God’s people live together in unity!
It is like precious oil poured on the head... running down on Aaron’s beard...
It is as if the dew of Hermon were falling on Mount Zion.
For there the Lord bestows his blessing, even life forevermore.” Ps. 133: 1-3**

**“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit.
Rather, in humility value others above yourselves.” Phil. 2:3**

Dear Friends,

In last month’s newsletter, Brent shared exceptional accounts from Cape Town, South Africa, the site of one of the most amazing Advocates conferences he had ever attended. Yet, less than a month later, another Advocates conference took center stage. This time, the exceptional account is mine (Ruth Ross).

On September 3-6, 2015, I was privileged to be in San Salvador for the 11th Convencion Latin Americanas de Abogados Cristianos (CLAC), hosted by Acercamiento de Christiano de El Salvado (ACAES) in conjunction with the Federacion Inter-Americana de Juristas Cristianos (FIJAC) whose members represent fifteen countries. More than 100 delegates were vibrantly in attendance, including our Advocates, pastors, and other non-legal advocates from the region. The focus of the conference was on diagnosing and addressing violence in Latin America, noting that the Northern Triangle of Central America experiences the highest incidence of murders and assassinations in the world. After receiving alarming reports from across the region, FIJAC released 10 vitally important pronouncements, including “an expression of solidarity with the few but courageous voices in these countries holding a message of peace, reconciliation, restorative justice and the fight against impunity.” (See *FIJAC’s Face Book page*).

As one might expect, the conference was conducted in Spanish, but I was blessed by those who tirelessly translated for me - thank you, Grisela, Elizabeth, Roxana, Rolando, and Francisco! It was wonderful to reconnect with all those I previously met at regional Advocates conferences in Uruguay, Dominican Republic, and even one of our translators from the 2008 Global Convocation in Washington, DC.

It was most encouraging to be reunited with Juan Carlos Tobon and his wife, Mary Luz, from Medellin (see June 2015 Newsletter for full story). This was their first regional conference and they reported on the good work being done in Colombia. Juan Carlos has since joined the FIJAC network as an individual member while awaiting the formal organization of Colombian lawyers to be established. He is excited to begin strategic collaboration with the region, and is organizing a Colombian congress in Medellin in July, 2016. We expect many from the Latin region to attend and I am already making plans to join them.

It was truly heartening to see the support given to Juan Carlos as well as a Chilean sister, both of whom are working diligently to strengthen the fledgling Christian lawyers’ networks in their respective countries. We agreed we would speak by phone soon to exchange ideas and projects. Overall, there was much encouragement borne out of our fellowship and commitment to one another.

On Saturday morning, I was honoured to address the conference and bring greetings on behalf of Brent, the Global Council (GC), and the entire AI network, via translation. Those present in South Africa will recall the overwhelming presence of unity and humility, which brought such spiritual blessing to the event. I shared the importance of this dynamic, and then prayed for all the advocates present, invoking the same blessing and commissioning them to their vital calling as Kingdom Advocates. In a separate meeting later in the day, I was also invited to pray for the newly commissioned board of FIAJC. Many said they understood my prayers (in English), if only by the Spirit!

It was also a privilege to acknowledge and thank former GC and Board member, Prof. Nina Balmaceda, for her long and faithful service to Advocates on behalf of the region. As Nina steps down, our dear sister, Elizabeth de Larios of Guatemala, will provide leadership on the Advocates' Global Council as one of the three GC representatives appointed by the region.

The newly elected president of FIAJC, Uziel Santana of Brazil, will replace Nina in this capacity as well. It was a great joy to see Uziel again, having first met him at the 2015 Religious Leadership Partnership in Ottawa, Canada. Uziel has great initiative and energy, and expressed his desire to work more closely with Advocates to strengthen the national associations of Christian lawyers. It was a great blessing to share with Uziel and several of his leadership team throughout the weekend. FIAJC has chosen Uziel's beloved Brazil to host the next biennial Latin American conference in 2017, with dates to be determined.

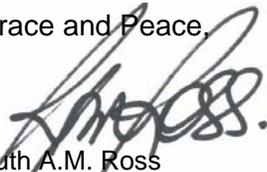
On Saturday night, we enjoyed an evening of cultural celebration. I had great fun handing out my Canadian hat and handkerchief in exchange for correct answers to trivia questions -- about Canada, of course. I also explained the "Maple Leaf Prophecy" -- delivered in Toronto in 2005 by GC member Mark Mudri of Australia, and shared in Cape Town last month -- with the many who committed to pray for our work and for the Latin region. Then the Latinos broke out in song and dance as only they can do (except for perhaps Africa); special thanks goes to Juan Carlos for breaking the ice with his Colombian music!

My original plans were to leave on Sunday but the local lawyers had organized a sightseeing tour by bus which was far too important to miss. We had a great time of fellowship, singing, walking, touring, and enjoying the beautiful and friendly country of El Salvador. If you are interested, many of our photos can be viewed on Face Book (*search for: ACAES Abogados Cristianos*).

On Monday, the fellowship and regional planning continued until the last possible moments. Even at the airport, we continued our discussions -- via Google Translate! Many of us committed to studying languages before the next Latin American conference in 2017.

This month, join Brent in New Delhi, India from October 22-24 for the 14th Advocates Asia Conference!

Grace and Peace,



Ruth A.M. Ross
Acting Deputy Executive Director & Board Chair

PS: A very challenging thing happened while I was in San Salvador. GC member Teresa Conradie emailed me requesting assistance for one of their pastors who attended the recent Advocates Africa conference. He and a colleague were held up at gunpoint and their wallets and passports stolen leaving them stranded in Medellin, Colombia. I was able to connect them to others offering help, since I spend considerable time in Colombia where my husband is working. I am thankful to report there has been intervention on their behalf, demonstrating the importance of our international network. Thank you for your ongoing prayers!