

## REPORT ON THE BOLIVIA 2015 OUTREACH MISSION



A delegation from AHPBA and IHPBA travelled to Cobija, Pando in a remote area in the North of Bolivia during June 2015. The members of the delegation were O. Imventarza, E. Dixon, J. Lendoire, O. Gil, R. Oddi, S. Oks (anaesthesiologist), Angela Plante (nurse) and M. Gimenez. This outreach mission was organized with the cooperation of the President of the Bolivian Chapter of the AHPBA, Dr. Renan Antelo. Due to low frequency of flights to Cobija, the mission had to spend a night in Santa Cruz de la Sierra on the way there and again on the return journey.

Once in Cobija the following activities were carried out with the help of Dr. Antelo and the local organizer, Dr. Erik Burgos (President of the Surgical Society in Pando):

1. Meeting with the Governor of the State of Pando and the Mayor of Cobija to gain support for the mission and start talks aiming at securing continuing training activities for medical staff (surgeons, anaesthesiologists, Intensive Care doctors; and nurses) after the Mission.
2. Visits to two hospitals to discuss clinical cases and patient management with staff and residents.
3. HPB surgeries at both hospitals, assisted by local doctors and using the materials that we had taken with us while making full use of the local infrastructure.
4. Interviews with local television channels in order to inform the population of the purpose of the Mission, the reach of both Societies and OMS' support.
5. Lectures and case presentations at the Amazon State University (two whole days). The audience was made of advanced medical students, residents and staff from the City of Cobija and surrounding towns in Bolivia and Brazil (Cobija is on the Bolivian-Brazilian border in Amazonia).

Moreover, we made the best of our stopovers in Santa Cruz de la Sierra. With the help of the local Surgery Society, its President and the local organizer, Dr. Cristobal Duran, we gave lectures in Santa Cruz and discussed clinical cases, on which we later performed operations with the help of local doctors. We also run panels to update attendants on latest HPB pathology.

During those few days our team observed incredible enthusiasm shown by students, doctors and nurses, and their amazing desire to improve and develop professionally, which is sure to continue and intensify long after the completion of the Mission.