Opening of International Conference on Prevention of Chagas Disease, Syphilis, HIV/AIDS

Monday, June 24th, 2013

The International Conference on Prevention of Chagas disease, Syphilis, HIV/AIDS opened this morning with the presence of the Minister of Public Health, Antonio Arbo; the Minister of Women, Gloria Rubin; the President of Universidad del Norte, Juan Manuel Marcos and the Founder of INICIAR for Global Action Foundation, Vera Nazarian. The sessions will last until 17.00 p.m., at the Universidad del Norte venue, located on General Santos Street and 25 de Mayo Street.

This activity is organized by the Ministry of Women, together with the Ministry of Public Health and Social Welfare, with the support of Iniciar for Global Action Foundation and Universidad del Norte, and has the participation of authorities from the four institutions, as well as health professionals, experts on all three subjects, representatives from State Institutions and Government Organizations.

The opening of the Conference was in charge of Dr. Juan Manuel Marcos, President of Universidad del Norte, who said: “I thank all the organizers because the auditorium is full, and for our Medical School and the health sector it is a pleasure to have you here. I appreciate the interest of INICIAR for Global Action Foundation, the Ministry of Women and the Ministry of Health; we are going to exchange ideas and focus on the
need to raise awareness, sensitize, train and reflect upon the importance of talking about Chagas disease, Syphilis and HIV/AIDS”.

The founder of INICIAR for Global Action, Vera Nazarin, expressed: “when we talk about awareness and prevention for everybody, men and women, and about shared experiences, we talk about all the social sectors, going beyond the diseases and reaching the social framework. We reach out to women, because they are the changes makers in our society, and men as well; now we have a generation of men and women where we have to talk and work side by side.”

Silvio Ortega, Director of SENEPA, stated: “when we started this joint work there were many unanswered questions, we sat down to develop what we wanted for this conference. The topics to be discussed are very important because we have to understand the needs of socializing these diseases, we have to sit down and talk, socialize and raise awareness among people, and we need people to be more knowledgeable about these diseases.”

The Minister of Health, Dr. Antonio Arbo, expressed his gratitude for being able to be part of the working group and said that he was honored to be in the classroom and share that moment with the students, both boys and girls. “It is impossible to eradicate Chagas disease, there are medicines for treatment available, however, you should know that the disease will live on if certain social patterns don’t change”, he underlined.

When the Minister of Women, Gloria Rubin, took the floor she manifested: “there has been team work and I should said that team work in Latin America is quite difficult, however we overcame all those barriers, in fact when we started this relationship we were the Secretariat for Women and now as we conclude we are the Ministry of Women. I hope you take advantage of this seminar, get informed about these diseases, we truly have to resume the fight against these diseases for the sake of the society, and work jointly, in fact we should not only request the spraying of spaces, but rather a reaction in the social sphere for the good of all men and women”, she concluded.
The goal of the Conference is to raise awareness, sensitize, train and reflect upon the importance of prevention when it come to Chagas disease, Syphilis and HIV/AIDS, as a social issue and not just as a disease. The speakers will be national and international, experts on all three topics. The public at large is invited to attend the dialogue rooms.

There will be five reflection and debate spaces, the idea is to update, reflect, talk and exchange ideas between the speakers and the audience on the topics developed in each dialogue room. After the presentations a panel will be open for debate and exchange of ideas between the speakers and the audience.