Havana hosted the meeting of the

2014 COPANT General Assembly

The National Bureau of Standards of Cuba (NC) welcomed 77 delegates representing 28 active members, 5 adherent members, 10 regional and international organizations and 2 national standards bodies as guests. The meeting was held in the historic city of Havana, in the majestic Hotel National with a spectacular view of the Caribbean Sea, on April 21 and 23, 2014.

The opening ceremony was attended by the Deputy Minister of Science, Technology and Environment of Cuba Dr. America Santos Rivera, who highlighted the benefits that standardization brings to the economic development of the countries and the political support that this national standards body has.

COPANT members were pleased to count among the special guests to the representatives of the international standardization bodies, Mr. Kevin McKinley, Deputy Secretary General of ISO (International Organization for Standardization), Mr. James Matthews, Vice President of IEC
(International Electrotechnical Commission) and Frans Vreeswijk, IEC General Secretary; Héctor Carril, Chairman of Study Group 5 Regional Group of ITU-T for the Americas (SG5 RG-AMR) of ITU-T (International Telecommunication Union) as well as representatives of regional and sub-regional standards bodies and related organizations such as CEN/CENELEC/ETSI, PASC, CROSQ CANENA, FINCA, AMN and IAAC.

COPANT President, Joe Bhatia, in his address to the General Assembly welcomed the active members who joined COPANT over the past year, Suriname Standards Bureau (SSB), St. Kitts and Nevis Bureau of Standards (SKNBS) Bahamas and Bureau of Standards (BBS); and the new adherent member British Standards Institution (BSI). He also mentioned that we should improve communication, cooperation and collective generation of ideas among members to better represent the voice of our region in the international community and move forward with our own agenda in our community.

During the General Assembly meeting an agreement of mutual cooperation between the Forum of IEC National Committees of the Americas (FINCA) and COPANT was signed, that will seek to benefit members of both organizations in the creation and strengthening of national committees and participate more actively in the work of development of international standards IEC.

Following the presentation of Rosario Graham, Director General of Standards and Regulatory Tourism Quality in Mexico about the system of standardization and conformity assessment in tourism services in that country, it was decided to create a Focal Group on Tourism Services with the aim of exchanging experiences and information among members of COPANT and follow the work of the ISO Standards Committee on tourism services ISO/TC 228.

John Walter, CEO of SCC, presented the findings of the Working Group he led on the identification of Strategic Priorities COPANT 2014-2015 and members that will lead and coordinate the four pillars identified were appointed:

- Developing Capacities: Mexico and Argentina
- Increase participation in specific areas: USA and Brazil
- Promote Efficient Conformity Assessment: Chile and Colombia
- Strengthen Cooperation and Regional Collaboration: Central America and the Caribbean

The above mentioned Working Group was instructed to develop the COPANT 2016-2020 Strategic Plan and its communication strategy.
Finally a Discussion Session was conducted through four working groups to define the contributions of COPANT for the Strategic Planning ISO 2016-2020, those recommendations will be formally submitted.

The next meeting of General Assembly 2015 will be held in Mexico on the invitation of the national standards body of that country.

**WORKSHOPS**

During the week of the activities related to the General Assembly meeting the following workshops for COPANT members and local guests were held:

**Workshop: “Building the Future of Standardization in COPANT”**

Read the article at the following link.

**Workshop - “Strengthening the Conformity Assessment Infrastructure in the Americas”**

Read the article at the following link.

**EVENT PHOTOS:**

April 20 – Welcome cocktail

April 21 – General Assembly

April 22 – Workshop “Building the Future of Standardization in COPANT”

April 22 – Dinner

April 23 – General Assembly

April 24 – Workshop “Strengthening the Conformity Assessment Infrastructure in the Americas”