



**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
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**IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Panama Canal Focus of International Engineering and Infrastructure Congress**

ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA. IWR Deputy Director Lillian Almodovar and PIANC USA Deputy Secretary Kelly Barnes attended the *International Engineering and Infrastructure Congress Panama Canal 2012* held in Panama City, Panama, April 18-20, 2012. Ms. Almodovar represented IWR and PIANC USA Section, where she serves as the PIANC USA Latin American Liaison.

During the conference, Ms. Almodovar and Barnes attended sessions on topics such as “Best Practices in the Management of Large Projects” and “Design of New Locks.” USACE Director of Civil Works, Mr. Steve Stockton, gave a key-note presentation on “Managing Mega-Infrastructure Projects,” to an audience of approximately 600 international participants. Additionally, PIANC member Mr. Alberto Alemán Zubieta gave a plenary presentation entitled “The Road to the Panama Canal Expansion.” Mr. Zubieta is the CEO of the Panama Canal Authority, the autonomous agency that manages the Panama Canal. The Panama Canal Authority also organized a full-day technical tour of the canal expansion project for conference attendees. The tour included stops to view spectacular construction scenes of the deepening of the Pacific and Atlantic Canal entrances and the building of the new locks and water-reutilization basins on the Atlantic and the Pacific. The Canal Expansion project is slated to be finished in 2014.

Ms. Barnes staffed the PIANC exhibit booth (English and Spanish displays) during the conference, which served as a superb venue to promote upcoming PIANC technical conferences and workshops and display PIANC technical reports and USACE IWR materials. In order to take advantage of “cross-promotional” opportunities, PIANC shared the exhibit space with American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) Coasts, Oceans, Ports and Rivers Institute (COPRI) and the Academy for Coastal, Ocean, Port, and Navigation Engineers (ACOPNE). PIANC USA and COPRI have a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in place dating back to 2002. Ms. Barnes also serves on the Board of Trustees for ACOPNE. Mr. Mike Ports, the Board’s president, was available to educate engineers on port and navigation engineering certification.

IWR proudly supports PIANC USA’s international efforts, again highlighting IWR’s dedication to intergovernmental collaborations and partnerships as a means of accomplishing common goals. For information on IWR’s ongoing study related to the Panama Canal Expansion, please visit: [www.iwr.usace.army.mil/portandwaterways/](http://www.iwr.usace.army.mil/portandwaterways/)

**More about the Conference**

The event’s purpose was to reach out to maritime agencies, ports, commercial interests and other stakeholders in Latin America and introduce them to the PIANC organization. It was also intended as a forum to share information on educational opportunities and activities, leverage expertise, and attract new individual and corporate members to PIANC, with a longer term goal that they coalesce to form new national sections. Brazil and Argentina recently formed PIANC national sections and Panama has joined as a Qualifying Member. The Panama Canal conference proved to be an excellent opportunity for networking with other Latin American attendees and industry executives. The Secretary General of PIANC from Brussels, Mr. Louis Van Schel, was in attendance to support PIANC’s efforts.

**Learn More**

For more information, visit [www.iwr.usace.army.mil](http://www.iwr.usace.army.mil) and [www.pianc.us](http://www.pianc.us)