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THINKING OF** **AMERICA**

**Engineering Proposals to Develop  
the Americas**



UPADI

## Thinking of America

### Engineering Proposals to Develop the Americas

#### **BACKGROUND:**

In September 2009, UPADI signed the “Caracas Letter” in Venezuela, which launched the project called “Thinking of America” as a means for engineering organizations in the Americas to be more decidedly involved in the development decisions in our countries, always conscious of the major role that engineering professionals should and do play in our people's socio-economic wellbeing.

In March 2010, the first “Thinking of America” meeting was held in Recife, the capital of the state of Pernambuco, Brazil. This forum served as a meeting among organizations showing the Venezuelan, Brazilian, and Costa Rican experiences in medium- and long-term planning analysis and proposal projects in those countries. In addition, specialists and analysts from the different countries presented their expectations about energy integration, transportation, and other issues at the meeting.

There, in the city of Recife, is where the “Recife Letter” was signed as a document of understanding where UPADI pledged to push “country” projects in the member organizations and to encourage regional integration in relation to the issues of interest for development.

The following includes the text of the “Recife Letter.”



## The Recife Letter

*Aware of the professional responsibility in dealing with the needs and fragilities that affect societies, primarily the poorer segments, during tragedies and accidents caused by man or nature, such as the recent earthquakes that shook Haiti and Chile, the people directing the leadership exercise for the organizations related to technical areas, meeting in the city of Recife, in the state of Pernambuco, Brazil, to carry out the first seminar entitled “Thinking of America 2010 – Integration, Solidarity, and Development” reaffirmed the commitments contained in the Manifesto issued on September 19, 2009, in the city of Hatillo, Venezuela, and proclaim that:*

- a) Economic growth committed to social justice is mandatory for a nation to develop and requires that those physical improvements include the promotion of social and economic development related to the environment;*
- b) Engineering organizations have the duty to take a leading role in the decision making processes to broaden their contribution in promoting social wellbeing;*
- c) There is a need to value the planning culture due to the damaging effects that an economic intervention process, without this type of procedure, may cause in the form of physical intervention, including socio-economic equilibrium;*



- d) *Solidarity is the essential pivot point for any improvement process and economic and social progress; and*
  
- e) *Technical and cultural exchange is of the utmost priority in a successful integration process between different peoples and it needs to be stimulated.*

*From this point of view, the participants in the first "Thinking of America 2010 - Integration, Solidarity, and Development" seminar call on all the professionals in the technological areas to contribute to and participate in the second "Thinking of America 2011 – Integration, Solidarity, and Development" seminar, which will be held in October in the city of Caracas, Venezuela.*

*Recife, March 25, 2010*

The purpose of this initiative is for the member organizations in the Pan American Union of Engineering Associations (UPADI based on its acronym in Spanish) to lead the planning and improvement processes in each of their countries, starting out with diagnoses of the sectors that are affected by engineering. In other words, develop a "country project" where diagnostics and planning are used to develop the project while local, regional, national, and continental integration of professionals is stimulated through technical, economic, scientific, and social exchange through the national engineering organizations. It is equally important to encourage engineering to be exercised in a social position involving ethics, transparency and technical competency.



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For UPADI, this project represents a huge initiative, not just for the engineering organizations that adopt it, but also as a real opportunity to improve their countries' social, economic, and political situations.

Some countries have taken the initiative on the subject and, such as Chile, have ventured to suggest a strategic plan for country development in the 2004-2010 period as part of the Country Project of the Colegio de Ingenieros de Chile A.G., the Chilean engineering association. Likewise, Costa Rica's federate engineering association, the Colegio Federado de Ingenieros y de Arquitectos, has been working for three years on putting together the "Costa Rica 2025" project, where the engineers carry out analyses, run projects, and make visionary suggestions about the different sectors in their area of expertise, such as ports, sewage and rainwater systems, the highway system, energy, and urban development. Other organizations, such as those in Venezuela and Brazil, have also started up similar projects.

In March 2010, UPADI, with the support of CONFEA and CREA, Pernambuco held the first forum called "Thinking of America" in Recife, Brazil. This forum was attended by both the presidents of engineering organizations in Central America and the Caribbean and the representatives of countries in South America. The forum was useful in creating the initial network of countries interested in the project. Conferences were held at the forum about the different issues of interest: mobility, energy, transportation or food, which will be used as the frame of reference for the problems in our nations.

As part of the achievements arising from this first forum, a rapid response is expected from the engineering organizations that are members of UPADI so they can begin the analysis process and to reflect on the problems in each country to come up with medium- and long-term planning proposals based on the guide presented in this document.



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### **OBJECTIVE**

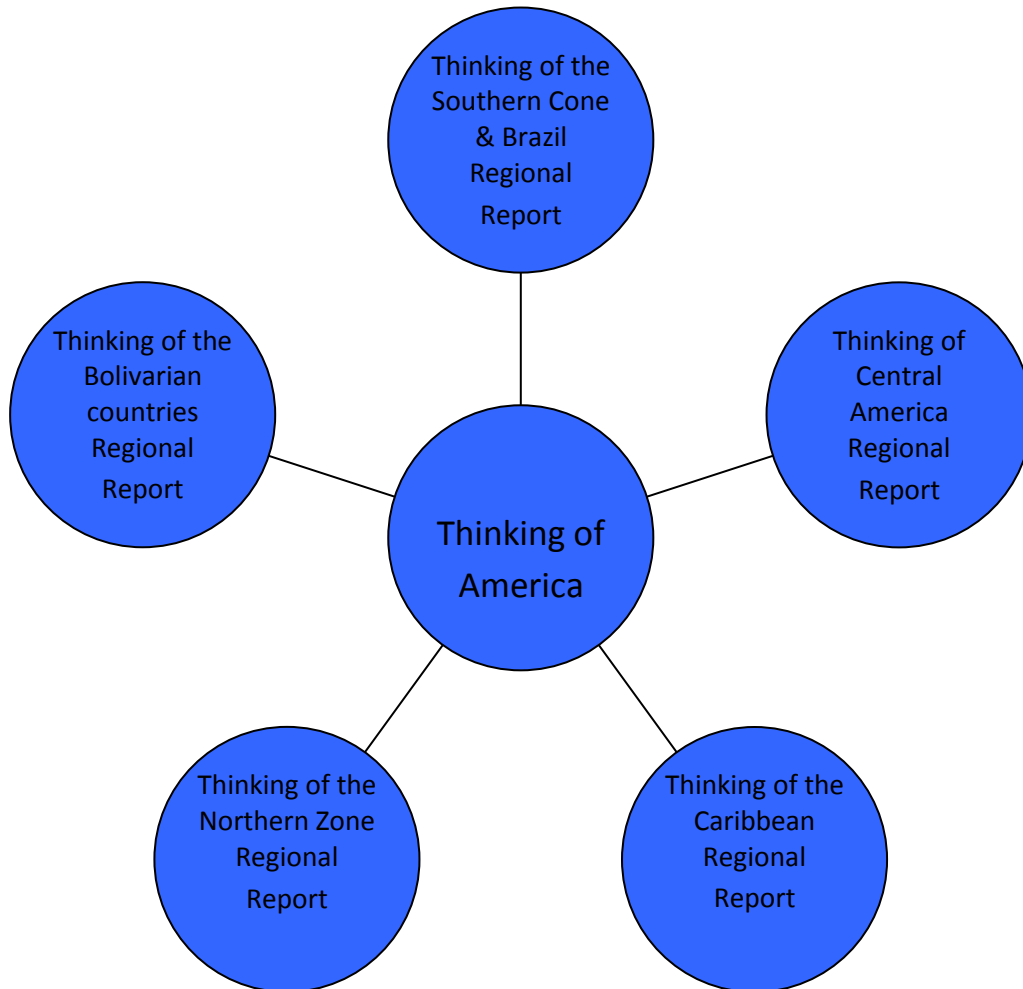
To encourage engineering organizations at the Pan American level and UPADI members to actively participate in their countries and to carry out a final project called Thinking of America.

### **SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE**

Urge the engineering organization in each country in the Americas to develop a national diagnostics project to venture to suggest strategies for integral development to boost "country projects."

### **METHODOLOGICAL PROPOSAL**

Since the UPADI is divided into five geographic regions, now is the time for the project to be developed by region to have the contributions by country with integrated contributions by region, considering their common socio-political and economic characteristics. The structure is shown in the following graphs:





Thus, a process such as the following will be carried out:

1. Project launch workshop in the region with methodological issues and organization by region.
2. Workshop Objectives
  - a. Determine the priority approaches by country
  - b. Designate the responsible parties in each country
  - c. Define the implementation dates in each country
  - d. Define the communication mechanisms in the region
  - e. Define the project follow-up structure in each country
  - f. Determine the priority approaches by region
3. Logistical support and follow-up will be done by the UPADI Vice-President's office in each area, which will have the following functions:
  - a. Preside over the launch workshops
  - b. Provide advice to the countries in process
  - c. Maintain the checks and balances instruments related to project progress
  - d. Send information to the headquarters for safekeeping and publication
  - e. Inform the UPADI President's office about progress
  - f. Integrate the country reports into a regional report
4. The countries in the region will book their processes so a date will be set to carry out the event "Thinking of \_\_\_\_\_ REGION."



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5. Each meeting event will be used to report on the progress of each country in their country project.
6. UPADI will compile and publish the results of each process.

**FUNCTIONAL PROPOSAL**

THINKING OF AMERICA				
THINKING OF THE NORTHERN REGION	THINKING OF CENTRAL AMERICA	THINKING OF THE BOLIVARIAN COUNTRIES	THINKING OF THE SOUTHERN CONE AND BRAZIL	THINKING OF THE CARIBBEAN
Thinking of Canada	Thinking of Honduras	Thinking of Colombia	Thinking of Brazil	Thinking of Cuba
Thinking of the United States	Thinking of Belize	Thinking of Venezuela	Thinking of Paraguay	Thinking of Puerto Rico
Thinking of Mexico	Thinking of Guatemala	Thinking of Ecuador	Thinking of Uruguay	Thinking of Aruba
	Thinking of El Salvador	Thinking of Peru	Thinking of Chile	Thinking of Haiti
	Thinking of Nicaragua	Thinking of Bolivia	Thinking of Argentina	Thinking of the Dominican Republic
	Thinking of Costa Rica			Thinking of Jamaica
	Thinking of Panama			Thinking of Trinidad and Tobago

**GENERAL PLANNING**

Proposal for initial workshops for the project defined to date:

REGION	DATE	VICE PRESIDENT	COORDINATOR AT HEADQUARTERS	PLACE
CENTRAL	July 2010	José Mario Sorto	Dennis Mora Mora	Honduras
THE CARIBBEAN	June 2010	Roberto Rexach	Dennis Mora Mora	Cuba
THINKING OF AMERICA	October 2010	PROGRESS REPORT	Dennis Mora Mora	Argentina