

## UPF Latin American Panel Discusses Responsible Water Management

Mario Salinas  
March 26, 2026  
Secretary General, UPF Latin America

FEDERACIÓN PARA LA PAZ UNIVERSAL  
AMBALIZADO Y EL CARIÑO

# DÍA MUNDIAL DEL AGUA

"Protección del Medio Ambiente y del Recurso Hídrico: Camino hacia la Paz, el Bienestar y el Desarrollo Humano."

JUEVES, 26 de marzo, 2026  
08:00 PM Hora de Colombia  
18:00 Sao Paulo 16:00 Colombia

MARIO SALINAS  
SECRETARIO GENERAL,  
FEDERACIÓN PARA LA PAZ  
UNIVERSAL - AMÉRICA LATINA

ELIECER ARAYA V.  
PRESIDENTE FEDERACION  
PARA LA PAZ UNIVERSAL -  
AMERICA LATINA

MIGUEL WERNER  
PRESIDENTE  
FEDERACION PARA LA PAZ  
UNIVERSAL - ARGENTINA

DR. JUAN CARLOS CASTRO  
VARGAS  
EX MINISTRO DEL AMBIENTE, DEL  
EJERCICIO DIVERSOS CARDS CENTRO  
DE LA ASESORIA NACIONAL DEL  
AGUA (ANAL) DESARROLLO Y JUSTICIA AL  
MINISTERIO DE DESARROLLO AGROARIO  
Y RIEGO (2011-2018)

EUREN CUEVAS MEDINA  
ABOGADO, MAESTRO EN NEGOCIOS Y  
RELACIONES INTERNACIONALES  
UNO DE LOS ASPECTOS MÁS  
RELEVANTES EN CORPORALES EN SU  
CONDOMINIO CON LA JUSTICIA  
AMBIENTAL, PROTECCIÓN DEL  
MEDIO AMBIENTE Y LA DEFENSA DE  
LOS DERECHOS AMBIENTALES

LIC. LUIS LÓPEZ  
EL SUPERVISOR DE LA ÁREA  
DIRECTIVA Y COORDINADOR  
INTERNACIONAL DEL CONSEJO  
ECONÓMICO Y DE LA RESERVA  
Y MUESTRO OBJETIVO DE  
PASTORAL MAJORDOMÍA DE LA  
CIERCIÓN

SERGIO PÁEZ  
DIRECCIÓN DE ASOCIACIÓN  
AMBIENTAL EN LA ASOCIACIÓN  
CONTEMPORÁNEA REFERENTE  
AMBIENTAL DE LAS CIUDADES  
SANTIAGO DEL ESTERO, CONDE  
ENUNCIAR EL ASOCIACIÓN  
TRATADO LA ECONOMÍA  
CICLABLE

**South and Central America** –A panel of leaders from South America, Central America and the Caribbean joined on March 26, 2026, to commemorate UN World Water Day in a webinar with the theme: "Protection of the Environment and Water Resources: A Path to Peace, Well-being and Human Development."

Sponsored by UPF in collaboration with affiliated associations, the event was moderated by **Mr. Mario Salinas**, secretary general for UPF-Latin America and regional coordinator of the International Media Association for Peace (IMAP). In his opening remarks, he thanked the heads of regional UPF chapters for inviting professionals and civil society leaders committed to protecting water resources and conserving water as generators of peace.

UPF regional president for Latin America and the Caribbean, **Mr. Eliecer Araya**, thanked the invited panelists and participants, and stressed the "need to adopt responsible water management practices and to raise awareness about the issues related to its access and equitable use worldwide."

**Mr. Miguel Werner**, president of UPF-Argentina, pointed out that responsible stewardship of nature and its resources leads to peace and prosperity. He quoted UPF founder Rev. Sun Myung Moon: "To love nature is to love God and humanity. When human life resonates with nature, human character will flourish in perfection."

The first panelist of the forum, **Dr. Juan Carlos Castro Vargas**, served as former minister of the Environment of Peru and in various positions in the National Water Authority. He said that 40% of socio-

environmental conflicts in Peru are related to water availability and quality. Water in the country contains high levels of lead, he said, adding that only 32% of wastewater in Peru and throughout Latin America is properly treated.

**Dr. Euren Cuevas Medina** is a lawyer and advocate for environmental justice, the protection of the environment and the defense of environmental rights in the Dominican Republic. He said that "around 90% of natural disasters worldwide are water-related, whether due to excess or scarcity. The Dominican Republic is a clear example: every year we face hurricanes, tropical storms, and floods that affect thousands of people."

He pointed out that losses from these natural disasters are related to land management, urban planning, watershed management, deforestation, and a lack of adequate infrastructure. "When preventive measures are not taken by the society the impacts multiply: lives are lost, homes are destroyed, and the development of communities is jeopardized."

**Mr. Luis Lopez** is international coordinator of the Ecumenical Council, a member of the Christian Continental Network for Peace (Reconpaz) in Guatemala, and a member of the Mayan community. "In the Mayan worldview, water is of fundamental importance," he said. "Its subterranean movement – so evident in a country of volcanoes and hot springs – is part of a sacred whole that cannot be seen, a hidden fabric that safeguards invaluable secrets." He explained that water is treasured as a living system that sustains and nourishes the people.

The final panelist was **Mr. Sergio Paez**, director of environmental education at the TRAEER Civil Association in Santiago del Estero, Argentina, where he promotes creative recycling and the circular economy. He noted that the United Nations this month recognizes three days related to water: World Water Day, International Day of Forests and International Day of Glaciers. He explained, "Glaciers, forests and freshwater form an interdependent life cycle: glaciers store solid water, forests regulate its flow and quality, and in turn, water sustains both ecosystems. Forests protect soil and recharge aquifers, while glaciers slowly release water to form rivers."

He added, "We cannot measure water as an economic good ... water must be considered as a heritage, an asset that can be consumed but that we must also care for, maintain and preserve." The right to water was recognized by the United Nations in 2010, he noted, and obliges states to guarantee access to safe, affordable, acceptable, and available water for all without discrimination. "There can be no lasting peace if profound inequalities exist in access to basic resources. Equality is the necessary foundation for water to be a bridge to peace and not a cause of conflict."