

## COLOMBIA

A parade of cars decorated for the occasion began the celebrations for World Blood Donor Day in Colombia. Carrying banners displaying the theme of the day, “I don’t know you, but thank you for saving my life”, the parade was headed by vehicles from the Ministry of Social Protection and the National Health Institute (NIH), followed by vehicles from the District Blood Centre, blood banks and transfusion services.

There were pre-arranged stations along the way where people were invited to become voluntary blood donors. The National Park was the meeting point, where the main ceremony took place. The agenda included speeches testimonies from blood recipients and recognition of voluntary blood donors and organizations that have supported voluntary blood donation.

“When a person receives a public award, one feels very good” are the words of one blood donor on receiving recognition.

The NIH sent promotional materials, such as booklets and posters, around the country to support promoters at local level. In many places, ceremonies were held to recognize voluntary donors and companies and other organizations that have supported voluntary blood donation, and various recreational activities celebrated the event.

A few days before 14 June, the mass media helped to raise public awareness of the day with information on blood donation prepared by the NIH, Bogotá’s Secretary of Health, PAHO/WHO and the Colombian Red Cross.

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