



PAN AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION
WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION



27th PAN AMERICAN SANITARY CONFERENCE
59th SESSION OF THE REGIONAL COMMITTEE

Washington, D.C., USA, 1-5 October 2007

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**WELCOMING REMARKS OF THE DIRECTOR OF
THE PAN AMERICAN SANITARY BUREAU
DR. MIRTA ROSES PERIAGO**

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**OPENING SESSION OF THE
27th PAN AMERICAN SANITARY CONFERENCE**

Washington, D.C., 1 October 2007

Thank you very much, Mr. President. Good morning to you all; I see that the hall is already becoming a little small for our enthusiastic participants, and this, of course, fills us with pride and is an indicator of the interest that the Organization and health hold for all of you--and one could say, for the Hemisphere and the entire world at this time. Many of those present and many delegations who are visiting us here in this building, which we call the House for Health in the Americas, are attending for the first time.

On 2 December of this year, the Organization will celebrate its 105th birthday, and I believe it is always very moving for an organization of such an exalted age to witness the interest that it still holds for its Member States, which number far more than the 11 republics that established it 105 years ago, and to receive their continuing support and cooperation. Here in the Secretariat we are all ready to help you move forward in your efforts; to discuss, debate, and reach the necessary consensus on each issue. We have a very tight agenda with critical items for the future of the Organization. As this is a Pan American Sanitary Conference, the highest body under the Constitution and the quinquennial transformation of our annual Directing Council, it must address the major issues that will mark the next five years--in particular, the adoption of the Organization's strategic plan, which is the guide for all of you to commit to working together for the well-being of the peoples of the Americas. I hope that at the end of the week you will all be able to look with satisfaction on the successes achieved; that you will have established bonds of friendship and working relationships among yourselves, because it is in that collective network, that collegiate network that it has taken 105 years to build, that the hopes of our Hemisphere's health authorities to achieve a better future lie. Thank you very much and welcome to this city.