



*directing council*

PAN AMERICAN  
SANITARY  
ORGANIZATION  
VI MEETING

*Havana, Cuba  
15-24 September 1952*

*regional committee*

WORLD  
HEALTH  
ORGANIZATION  
IV MEETING



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ADDRESS OF DR. CARLOS LUIS GONZALEZ AT THE CLOSING SESSION  
OF THE VI MEETING OF THE DIRECTING COUNCIL  
OF THE PAN AMERICAN SANITARY ORGANIZATION

Honorable Representatives:

When you were good enough to elect me Chairman of the VI Meeting of the Directing Council of the Pan American Sanitary Organization, I said that I was accepting for my country that high honor of which I was so underserving myself, with the full conviction that it would be very difficult for me to fulfill the responsibilities that such a position entails. But I also expressed the very strong hope that, with the help of all of you and the cooperation of the Secretariat, we would carry to a successful conclusion the tasks that were before us. Today it gives me great pleasure to say that this hope has been fully realized and that thus this VI Meeting can show a favorable balance, recorded in the group of Resolutions that make up the Final Report we have just signed. I therefore take special satisfaction in expressing my most sincere thanks to the distinguished members of the Directing Council and to the Director and Secretary General of the Bureau. I should also like to make particular mention of the valuable assistance received from the Vice-Chairmen of the Council, the Chairmen of the Main Committees, and the members of the General Committee, who cooperated with admirable tact and competence in the orientation and conduct of the business before the Council at this Meeting.

I believe that we may feel well pleased with the way in which this Meeting developed. Each and every one of us has had the opportunity to express his point of view on the various matters that composed the agenda; to offer opinions on the activities of the Organization; to state any pertinent criticism of the work of the Bureau; and, finally, to indicate the measures considered advisable to improve its administrative machinery. Those who have had the good fortune, as I have, to attend previous Meetings, surely will not fail to notice that there has been increasing interest on the part of the Member Countries

in knowing the work of the Organization better and supervising it more thoroughly, a laudable and wise attitude, for our Governments and peoples are the interested parties who are affected by the way in which the Pan American Sanitary Bureau administers the programs, performs the services entrusted to it by the Constitution or assigned to it by mandate of its governing bodies, and utilizes the resources contributed by the Governments.

But the beneficial results of this Meeting are not to be seen merely in the recommendations and decisions adopted as a consequence of the discussions that have taken place in the committees or in the plenary sessions. They must also be seen in things not written in the minutes or reports and that cannot be measured in material terms, because they belong to the things of the spirit. I refer to the communication of ideas; to the friendly and informal exchange of personal opinions on health, social, or economic problems that affect the life of our peoples; to the opportunity for reviving old friendships and making new ones, which enables us to know better those who have the same ideals and face the same hard tasks in behalf of public health; and to the environment that was so propitious for frank and calm expression of the desires, the worries, and the hopes that we public health men all carry deep in our hearts. In other words, meetings like this are a particularly appropriate occasion for keeping permanently alive the old concept of harmony and understanding among men, a subject that has come to the fore recently and is today the object of profound studies in scientific circles under the expressive title "cultivation of human relations".

Under the stimulus of this mutual understanding, the public health specialists of the New World have for a long time gradually been developing a sense of teamwork and a growing conviction of the interdependence of our countries in matters of public health. It could be said that it is in the field of public health that the ideal of Pan American brotherhood, eulogized by Bolívar more than a century ago, has crystallized in greater and more concrete achievements. And this same sense of solidarity passes beyond our continental limits to project itself, with all firmness and sincerity, on a world-wide scale, through the World Health Organization, for which our Pan American Sanitary Organization serves as Regional Committee and Regional Office for the Americas. It is for this reason that I consider the presence of the Director General of the World Health Organization to be of fundamental importance for the coordinated and harmonious development of the activities of both Organizations.

Gentlemen: When I took the Chair I had the honor to present, in the name of the Council, its most sincere thanks to the

Government and the people of Cuba for the generous hospitality they extended to us; and for the facilities provided, among them the use of this beautiful and majestic Capitol, where the Meetings of the Executive Committee and the Directing Council have met in magnificent and unusually commodious surroundings. May I repeat today the expressions of our most sincere gratitude.

I would be unjust. if I failed to recognized at this time the conscientious and self-effacing work of the personnel of the Secretariat, who, working long hours day and night, provided the necessary documents when needed; and of the translators and interpreters, who patiently and with such good will and ability enabled all of us to surmont the barriers of language and to follow the proceedings step by step.

Gentlemen: In the name of the Directing Council of the Pan American Sanitary Organization, I declare the VI Meeting closed.

Havana, Cuba  
24 September 1952