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**17 September 1993**

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**Agenda item 25**

**STATEMENT BY DR PERLA D. SANTOS-OCAMPO,  
REPRESENTATIVE OF THE INTERNATIONAL  
PEDIATRIC ASSOCIATION,  
IN BEHALF OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,  
DR ROBERT J. HAGGERTY**

Greetings from the Office of the Executive Director of the International Pediatric Association. I am delighted that Dr Perla Santos-Ocampo, former President of the International Pediatric Association, can represent our organization at this important meeting in Manila from 13 to 17 September 1993.

The International Pediatric Association is an organization of 128 national pediatric societies. Also included are 16 international subspecialty and regional pediatric societies. Altogether, therefore, we represent almost all the pediatricians in the world. Our goal is to improve the health and welfare of children throughout the world largely through educational efforts. For many years, the major educational effort has been the triennial World Congress, the last one being in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992, and the next one in Cairo, Egypt, in 1995.

Over the past decade, under the inspired leadership of the former Executive Director, Dr Ihsan Dogramaci, the IPA has, in conjunction with UNICEF and WHO, developed a number of pre-Congress and pre-national society workshops dealing with major child health issues. The highest level representatives from the three sponsoring organizations - IPA, UNICEF and WHO - and leaders in pediatrics and public health from the involved countries have attended these meetings. As a result, it has been possible to develop recommendations that deal directly with policy within the regions where the meetings are being held. We will continue to hold such pre-Congress workshops in various parts of the world with the goal of improving the health of mothers and children through education and policy changes.

I hope to initiate two further activities of the International Pediatric Association. The first is to foster exchanges among pediatricians at all levels (residency through senior faculty) throughout the world. Few other contacts can improve the understanding of each other's culture more than working side by side from time to time in our own settings. Many people from developing countries seek to come to the developed countries to learn the latest in technology. I believe, equally strongly, that we in the Western world also have much to learn from cultures in developing societies. One example is the effectiveness of the "doula", recognized by two western pediatricians, Dr John Kennel and Dr Marshall Klaus, while they were working in Guatemala. As a result, this practice is gradually being introduced into the developed world. Fostering

exchange programmes will speed up this transfer of knowledge from each of our societies, and I hope that the IPA can be a vehicle for increasing such exchanges.

The other role I see IPA playing in the future is to highlight the devastation to children and speed up its elimination. The problems of children that result from the ethnic rivalries from terrorism and from disruption of food and medical care, highlighted recently in the Balkans and also in Somalia, must be stopped. I believe that it is time for pediatricians throughout the world to express their outrage at these travesties and to speak forcibly for the welfare of the children, and to rise above political, nationalistic, and ethnic loyalties and be the international voice for the welfare of children.

With the help of those of you who are attending this meeting and pediatricians throughout the world, I believe that the IPA can continue to play a very important role in the education of pediatricians and in the exchange of ideas. The IPA can present new policies to national governments for their consideration and for the improvement of the life of children wherever it is endangered.

I welcome your participation in this enterprise and wish you great success in the deliberations of these meetings.