

XVI World Congress of Cardiology

These lines were written shortly after the closure of the XVI World Congress of Cardiology in Buenos Aires, when its voices still resounded, and it was still difficult to separate the subjectivity of the experiences from the objectivity necessary to evaluate any event.

Thirty four years have gone by since the previous World Congress of Cardiology had been held in Argentina; for many of us it was not a living experience, for others, it is a distant memory. So the XVI Congress has been a unique experience for a great number of Argentinean cardiologists.

As we all know, the XVI World Congress of Cardiology was the result of many years of efforts, open discussion and cooperative work of the World Heart Federation, the *Sociedad Argentina de Cardiología* (Argentine Society of Cardiology, or SAC), and the *Federación Argentina de Cardiología* (Argentine Federation of Cardiology, or FAC).

The first ideas, negotiations, and conversations started more than eight years ago. Since then, a period of intense work and interchange of ideas between the SAC and the FAC started, which was not free from differences of opinions within the SAC and between both Societies, in order to create the appropriate work environment to achieve the goal of holding the World Congress once again in Argentina. Afterwards, there were a series of international presentations and negotiations, the formal proposal, and finally the World Heart Federation's conferral, which took place in 2004. Since then, the different committees were designated, and worked hard for four years. This stage was not easy either, as Horacio Faella, MD, President of the Congress, pointed out in his opening speech. Many times, the need to reach a consensus with the World Heart Federation on every issue made it difficult to proceed and take decisions. After so many years of hard work it was possible to get excellent results.

The World Congress of Cardiology has been a landmark in the history of the *Sociedad Argentina de Cardiología* and in all Argentine medicine. Furthermore, it has been the symbol of how much can be achieved by posing clear objectives and finding a way to them. It has been an example of how scientific societies managed to achieve a goal in common, despite the expected difficulties and different opinions that arouse along the process. It has been proved that to achieve an ambitious project through willpowers is feasible in Argentina, and that it is also possible to organize events in our country like the ones held in developed countries. That was indeed the feeling of the participants: that the Congress paralleled the ones organized in Europe or United States.

More than 17,500 people from all over the world shared four intense days of work, interchange and fellowship. About 1,600 free contributions from all over the world were shown in the Congress. The most outstanding personalities from Cardiology worldwide were present and shared experiences during sessions with professionals representing countries from different latitudes. The number of high-level cardiologists from Argentina and South America participating in the sessions was significant.

Throughout the Congress, the Sessions from international organizations to which the SAC is a member were held. These organizations included the *Sociedad Sudamericana de Cardiología* (South American Society of Cardiology), the *Sociedad Interamericana de Cardiología* (Inter American Society of Cardiology), and the World Heart Federation. In addition, several meetings were held by other societies, including, but not limited to, the American College of Cardiology, the American Heart Association, the *Sociedad Española de Cardiología* (Spanish Society of Cardiology), and the *Sociedad Brasileña de Cardiología* (Brazilian Society of Cardiology). What I mean is that it was not just an international Congress; the cardiology from all over the world was present and held meetings in Buenos Aires. In all those meetings, the international acknowledgment for the job done was unanimous.

The motto of the Congress was "From Patients to Populations". The scientific content mirrored that orientation; the latest diagnostic and therapeutic advances were discussed, yet the Congress showed a strong bias towards cardiovascular prevention.

Special emphasis was put on topics such as identification of risk patients, pandemics such as obesity, diabetes and its effect on vascular risk, prevention at an early age, cardiovascular disease in women, extension of secondary prevention through the poli-pill, basic research, research on populations and public policies to improve cardiovascular health, and more.

In the XXIII South American Congress of Cardiology, held concurrently with the World Cup, the number of participants was also an absolute success. Its sessions were all crowded by an audience eager to participate in a regional meeting and discuss local issues in their mother tongue.

In my opinion, one of the most outstanding events in this World Congress was the special historical edition of the *Revista Argentina de Cardiología*, which was distributed to all the participants. The history of the Argentine Cardiology is written on pages of our Society's *Revista*. For 74 years, this publication has

been the main source in which Argentine cardiologists publish opinions and research studies. In this special issue, key articles from its history, written by academic leaders in Argentine Cardiology, have been extracted, edited and placed in perspective by Argentine and foreign specialists of the highest level.

The activities for the community carried out during the Congress deserve a special comment: the tent for training in basic cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), organized by the *Fundación Cardiológica Argentina* (Argentine Cardiology Foundation) and the American Heart Association, and the marathon and tent in *Plaza de la República* square for measuring risk factors in the community, organized by the *Fundación Cardio* and the *Fundación Cardiológica Argentina*. All of them had an outstanding impact among participants, who reinforced the idea that the mission of the Scientific Societies and their Founda-

tions is to spread clear messages about healthy lifestyles to people.

The commercial exhibition had a dimension not seen in previous congresses in Argentina; it was open and spacious, which allowed for a great display of the stands from the companies that made a significant contribution for the Congress to become a reality.

For some days, Argentine Cardiology was placed in the international shop window by this XVI World Congress placed the Argentine Cardiology. The test was passed with flying colors.

My acknowledgement, gratitude, and congratulations go to all those involved in the organization of the Congress, since its first idea to its concretion. I am sure you have built what turns out to be an unforgettable memory to all of us, Argentine cardiologists.

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