

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT 2017-2018

By Sandro Rizoli, MD

Viva Cartagena!

Mexico City was an excellent meeting—our thanks to Dr. Magana and many other colleagues—but now it is time for the Panamerican Trauma Society (PTS) to look forward to Cartagena, which we expect will turn into reality many changes our Society urgently needs.

After 30 years—and here I suggest reading Dr. Ivatury and Aboutanos “The First 3 Decades of the PTS” manuscript. After 30 years, the PTS is going through a period of renovation and hope of enormous changes. It is a time to grow or die.



The changes started officially at the last year strategic planning in Panama. The direction chosen by the PTS is to move toward financial independence. To create a Society fully capable of standing on its own feet. A strong Society that is capable of generating the income necessary to sustain all of its activities. It is an ambitious but achievable goal.

A self-sustaining structure is necessary to allow the PTS to gather all the professionals in the American continent, who are committed to the care of the injured and acute care surgery patient. This is the reason the Society exists. The members, their skills and goal of benefiting patients, are the most important assets of the PTS. We are a Society created to bring together all these colleagues, of all genders, cultures, from all nations of the continent, individuals and local societies that share the same principles as the PTS does.

And how is the PTS planning to create a self-sufficient structure that allows colleagues and associations from all the American nations to come together? For starters, by changing our annual congress. The congress in Cartagena in August 2018 will be an important part of this massive restructuring change. It is being planned and conducted by the PTS with the support of local PTS members and the Colombian Association of Surgery, which has been very supportive. From now on, the PTS runs the congress and consequently its risks and also possible gains.

To be successful (and the Cartagena congress must be successful), it will use a novel format for the scientific program, which will improve its high-level content (scientific and clinical value). Instead of back-to-back lectures, the program will have only a few “magistral” (great) lectures. The program will have many more open case discussions that promise to be engaging and will energetically stimulate discussion and opposing views. Participants of the congress (attendees) and invited presenters will have the opportunity to give input into the discussion. Instead of topic-directed case presentations, which will be in the morning, the afternoon program will have different sessions where experts (and public alike) can debate “evidence” and “experience” in an attempt to create guidelines that are compatible with the reality of the nations of the American continent. One goal for these sessions is to transform some of the discussions into guidelines that will later be published in the Panamerican Journal – and be used to improve clinical care. We will also have a ceremony where the

PTS will be openly acknowledge the importance of all major national trauma associations from across the American continent.

Since the meeting will be in the beautiful city of Cartagena, the planning committee is also encourage the participants to bring their families. The scientific program will end early (around 3pm), so families can enjoy the beach, the cuisine and everything else Cartagena has to offer. The congress in Cartagena has the potential to be a mark in the history of the PTS. I hope you, your national association and your country will come and be part of this historical congress.

The PTS has a lot more to offer to its members. The PTS wants to increase the participation of all institutions committed to the injured and acute care surgery patient from all American nations. The PTS is committed to increasing representation of women and non-surgeons (including nurses, paramedics and medical students) in the annual congress, in the governance of the Society and in all of our activities. The PTS has been an open forum for equality and representation from different countries and cultures, and wishes to increase the participation of all genders and opening more and more space to the interests of nations and cultures from the continent. The PTS has provided (and continues to do so) great opportunities for young and emerging leaders and we will embrace anyone that genuinely wants to offer their skills to the advancement of our Society and patient care. The Society represents all of us and so should its governance and activities.

Besides massive changes to the annual congress and how the Society values its members, there is much more to come. The PTS has been a hub for continuing education courses, and offers the best courses in trauma and acute care surgery. Many of the courses offered by the PTS are being revamped, while others are being added. The Panamerican Journal of Trauma, Critical Care and Emergency Surgery is near acceptance into Medline and indexation in PubMed. The content of the Journal, currently thanks to Dr. Ivatury's dedication and competence, has become scientifically solid with constant output. The opportunity to have our own indexed Journal has added value to our members.

Thanks to the work and dedication of many colleagues, the PTS trauma registry and the no-cost support offered to all institutions interested in creating their own local/national trauma registries; exchange program with opportunities to train overseas; support PTS offers to members to write scientific manuscripts; opportunity to transcontinental collaboration in research; PTS trauma book to be made available in print and online; weekly clinical tele-conferences and case discussion; growing number of activities for surgeons, nurses, paramedics, medical students and other health professionals; growing numbers and strength of the medical student trauma leagues; support for quality improvement projects; ongoing revolution led by Dr. Scalea and the executive committee to improve the efficiency of the Board and governance/leadership of the PTS; initial discussions about trauma center accreditation for Latin America, etc. – they all point to a healthy growing Society of brilliant professionals. A group of members that share a common goal, to provide the best care to the injured and acute care surgery patients of the Americas.

The most important asset of the PTS is its members, and we are very fortunate in this respect. At this crucial time when our Society aspires to be self-sufficient to continue its the mandate of advancing patient care, we need the dedication, enthusiasm, skills and time of each one of our members. From the youngest trauma league medical students to the most powerful and influential members that left the society, we need all of you. It is time to assemble, to leave small differences aside and to work together. We will reach our goals, after all one thing we have in abundance in the Americas is

awesome, skilled and competent professionals that have trauma and acute care surgery at heart. You can start by coming to Cartagena! See you there.

Sandro Rizoli, MD
PTS President, 2017-2018