

**DISCURSO INAUGURAL DEL PRESIDENTE DE LA ASOCIACIÓN DEL PERSONAL  
2015-2016  
LUIZ MARCELO VARELLA DE AZEVEDO  
(Pronunciado el 14 de julio de 2015)**

Bom dia a todas e todos! Bonjour à tous !

Prezadas e Prezados Colegas,

En primer lugar, quisiera agradecerles la confianza de elegirme para representarles en el período 2015-2016. Agradezco a cada uno de ustedes los mensajes de apoyo y felicitaciones enviados. Es un honor para mí poder servirles y espero ser digno de la confianza en mí depositada.

También quisiera agradecerles a los miembros del Comité saliente por toda su labor, especialmente a nuestra querida colega Beverly Wharton-Lake, y felicitar a los nuevos miembros del Comité del Personal 2015-2016 (Michael Thomas, Beatriz Santos, Teresa Bustamante, Steven Griner, Catherine Pognat, Kim Osborne, Paulina Corominas, Marya Hynes y Roberto Rojas), así como a nuestra Presidenta saliente Carla Sorani por su elección como Representante Principal de los participantes en la Comisión de Pensiones y Jubilaciones de la OEA, y a Juan Monticelli, como Representante Alternativo en dicha Comisión.

Espero poder trabajar de manera muy coordinada con todos ustedes en la representación, defensa y promoción de los derechos y del bienestar de todas y todos los funcionarios de nuestra Organización.

Asimismo, permítanme expresar un agradecimiento especial a la Sra. Maria T. Mellenkamp y a todo el equipo del Comité de Nominaciones, así como del Comité de Escrutinio y los demás voluntarios, por su excelente labor en la organización de todos los aspectos de las elecciones llevadas a cabo exitosamente la semana pasada.

Dear Colleagues,

As I have previously mentioned during my campaign, the period of transition to a new administration always presents opportunities and challenges. It is a time that brings a lot of positive expectations, but also apprehension for the staff of the Organization. In that sense, I believe that the Staff Association plays a fundamental role at this juncture. With the recognition of the value of the human capital of the OAS, Staff will be even more motivated to give their best efforts to implement the new directives and support the new administration.

In this regard, I would like this new term of the Staff Association to be marked by three main principles: **Openness for Dialogue, Transparency and Teamwork.**

Regarding **dialogue**, it should be based on mutual respect and trust among the Staff, the Administration and Member States. We are all invested in the success of this Organization, but this success can only be sustained by a participatory approach to decision-making, where all stakeholders are involved and heard. And I quote Secretary General Almagro on this: *“Es importante preguntar para saber más, porque el que va a la bodega y no bebe, burro fue y burro vuelve”*.

There are many pending issues that will require our commitment to sit down and discuss matters that affect the Staff welfare and which will allow us to put the 'Human' in the Human Resources of the Organization, such as training and career development for Staff, the prevention of workplace and sexual harassment and *telework*. As well as, the new organizational structure, the suspension of ongoing competitions, the establishment of the Ethics Committee and the role of the ombudsperson.

Regarding **transparency**, as I mentioned during my intervention during the first "Cabildo Abierto" with Secretary General Almagro, I believe the OAS should lead by example in this area. This applies to the Staff Association, as well. In this regard, I will work to continue strengthening the transparency and accountability of our activities. One proposal will be to create a distribution list where those interested can receive copies of the agendas of the meetings of the Staff Committee in advance so they can be informed of what is being discussed and offer input.

The Committee will also continue to report promptly to Staff on activities and strengthen the spaces that allow feedback from staff regarding ideas, suggestions and proposals to improve the work environment of the Organization, including from those who work outside Headquarters.

Regarding **teamwork**, those of you who know me know that this is something I strongly believe in and I wish to emphasize it during our term. In this regard, I look forward to working jointly and in coordination with all the members of the Committee.

We are very mindful of the long and successful history of accomplishments by the Staff Association and will be drawing on that resource through a continuing relationship with the Association of Retirees of the OAS (AROAS) and with the Federation of International Civil Servants Associations (FICSA), as well with several current staff members who have previously served on the Staff Committee and who remain dedicated to the welfare of the Staff. We will also reach out to new volunteers to assist us with different tasks and activities.

In the same vein, the Committee will continue to support projects and initiatives of groups of employees in the areas of sports and culture, including the Soccer Tournament, the 5k Run, the Art Group and the OAS Choir. These activities foster and strengthen the union of the Staff, consultants and interns.

Also, allow me to express that, as a member of the LGBT community, I am particularly sensitive to issues of inclusiveness, equality and accessibility of minority and vulnerable groups in the workplace and will pay particular attention to policies and initiatives that affect these groups.

Por último, quisiera recordarles que nuestra Asociación es financiada por contribuciones voluntarias de los miembros del personal. En ese sentido, quisiera hacer un llamado a aquellos que aún no contribuyen (o que dejaron de contribuir) para que lo hagan. Nuestra Asociación es de todos y todos y seguirá sirviendo mientras nosotros sigamos manteniendo ese espíritu de cooperación por el bien común.

Finalmente, me gustaría expresar mi agradecimiento especial y profunda gratitud por la labor de las Presidentas de la Asociación de Personal anteriores, como Anna Chisman, Linda Poole, Gillian Bristol, Yacsire Cutler y nuestra Presidenta saliente Carla Sorani, para citar algunas, así como de los ex-Presidentes Rene Gutierrez y Michael Thomas. Ustedes son una fuente de inspiración. Espero poder dar continuidad a sus labores.

Muito obrigado a todos! Merci beaucoup à tous !