

MESSAGE OF ARMANDO DUARTE PELAEZ, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD AAPA 2012-2013, ORLANDO, FLORIDA.

GOOD MORNING, BUENOS DIAS, BOM DIA.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR PRESENCE HERE IN ORANGE COUNTY, A PART OF THE WONDERFUL SUNSHINE STATE, FLORIDA.

MY RECOGNITION AND VERY SPECIAL CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR HOST, PORT CANAVERAL, WHO HAS ORGANIZED THIS 102nd AAPA ANNUAL CONVENTION TO THE LAST DETAIL. THANKS TO ALL THE PARTICIPANTS WHO HAVE MADE THIS SUCCESSFUL CONVENTION POSSIBLE. THANKS TO THE SPONSORS, THANKS TO THE ORGANIZERS, THANKS TO OUR INTERPRETERS WHO ARE OUR COMMUNICATION CHANNEL, THANKS TO THE AAPA FOR BEING THE BRIDGE THAT JOINS US AND THE SOUL OF OUR PORT EVENTS AND LOGISTICS. THANKS FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART TO MY TEACHERS AND MENTORS WHO HELPED ME FORGE MY CAREER AT THE AAPA.

DEAR COLLEAGUES AND PARTICIPANTS IN THIS MAGNIFICENT EVENT: MY INTENT WITH THESE WORDS IS NOT TO LECTURE ON PORT ISSUES BECAUSE I BELIEVE THIS DEAR AND RESPECTED ASSOCIATION HAS GREAT AND WISE TEACHERS, PROFESSORS AND DEANS OF GREAT VALUE, EXCELLENT AND HIGH RANKING PROFESSIONALS, WONDERFUL TECHNICAL EXPERTS AND PEOPLE WITH ALL THE EXPERIENCE IN THE WORLD, WHO MAKE IT WORTHWHILE TO COME TO MEET, AND TALK TO, AND LEARN, FROM THEIR KNOWLEDGE. IF YOU DON'T KNOW THIS, YOU ARE EITHER IN THE WRONG PLACE OR ARE JUST WASTING YOUR TIME.

MY INTENTION IS ONLY TO PLANT A FEW SEEDS IN YOUR MINDS AND YOUR HEARTS, WITH THE HOPE THAT IN TIME THEY WILL SPROUT, GROW AND BEAR FRUIT; IF I AM ABLE TO DO THIS, MY PASSAGE THROUGH LIFE WILL HAVE MADE SENSE AND, IN PARTICULAR, THROUGH THIS BELOVED ASSOCIATION AND THROUGH THIS APPOINTMENT.

ALLOW ME THEN TO USE A METÁPHOR TO ILLUSTRATE WHAT I WANT TO SAY: LET'S USE THE CASE OF A COIN:

Coins necessarily have two sides and I would like to compare them to our port activities, which may be looked upon as coins. Coins have to be manufactured and minted correctly and be balanced so that it may stand on its edge without falling to either side; thus, it is not enough for our ports to have all of the experience, knowledge and technical capabilities and/or commercial skills, operational efficiency, etc. on one side of the coin, if we don't assign to the other side, the side of the human component, the necessary weight and care to make sure it is balanced, because this would lead to failure and that is the reason why many fall while others reach long distances, rolling smoothly on their edges, like perfect wheels. In other words, let's invest in our human capital, it is our greatest treasure; let's be good leaders, treating our people well like they deserve; let's motivate them, train them, pay them well, let's make them feel they are important parts of the motor that runs our ports. That is how you build a clan, a sense of belonging, a sense of commitment, a desire for success and personal improvement. This gives enterprises the advantage over the competition.

If you have an employee with good working conditions, well treated, well paid and well motivated, and this person does not respond or abuses that position or tries to take advantage of you, let him go immediately and give that opportunity to someone who values it. In this way, you will gradually build a winning team because these people will appreciate their employer and feel committed to the company.

- I also want to mention another common sin in modern life: Believing that when you hold a high position, the more arrogant, selfish, puffed-up you are, and the more you look down on people, makes you think you are more important or more deserving than others. What a huge mistake!! This only brings resentment, annoyance, ill will and rejection. That is why, when you are no longer there, no one calls or consults and, on the contrary, the once powerful person is now rejected by others.

It is nice to be an important person in life, but the fundamental part is that although you may be successful, above all else you should be a nice person. Remember: If you want to be first, you should be last, first; if you want to be served, serve others first; if you want to be loved, love others first; if you want to be successful, do your work with love and put your soul in it. While holding our high positions, let's be human, simple and humble, following the example set by Pope Francis: let's cultivate the spirit and inner peace, let's strengthen our relationship with God, whatever our beliefs may be, He is definitely the beginning and the end of all things. Let's love and care for Mother Earth and be considerate of nature and the environment; our children and grandchildren will also need this planet to live in. Let's be careful with water: in less than 20 years wars will be about the need to control water, the world will be thirsty and we in the Americas, thank God, have abundant water.

Allow me to summarize the other seeds I have been planting throughout my year as Chair of AAPA:

-I hope you remember how I started my talk today: Good Morning, Buenos Días, Bom Dia, I hope that after greeting each other in this way several times a year, we have created an awareness that a mere three languages bind 33 countries in our continent. The same number of countries use at least 27 different languages in the European Community and they were able to unite! Let's try to unite and we will become the largest and the best economic block, with our wealth of natural resources in the world !!!

-Now I can confirm something I told you when I began my year as Chairman of AAPA, that power is fleeting and it is a fraction of life you must take advantage of in order to serve, to be able to cooperate, to help, to build links to unite and integrate our ports and countries throughout the Americas and to be able to plant seeds that one day will grow in the minds and the hearts of the people listening to you. Never forget this description and the concept of the word Power, because many get confused and become intoxicated with it, it goes to their head and blurs their vision and fall into an abyss, blinded and drunk with power. God save us from going there.

- We must decisively support the AAPA education and training programs by sending our young people to learn; this will develop a new generation that can work for our beloved association, to guarantee it will continue and prevail and in addition will contribute to the success of our ports and their profitability.

- With all due respect, in order to assist in the need for large investments in the ports, allow me to suggest you consider Public-Private Partnerships, wherein ports continue to be owned by the National, State or Municipal Government, but it opens the possibility for private 20 to 30 year concessions, depending on the amount of investment required, that enables private sector investors to inject the capital required for modernization, which will execute all work required and to manage the port for the agreed period and, upon completion, returns all power and property (ownership) to the National, State or Municipal Government, retrofitted and equipped with leading edge technology. For the period of the concession, the concessionaire will not only pay taxes, but must also pay an established amount for use and usufruct. This may make viable many ports that are currently unfunded to operate, remodel and be reborn.

- I would like to especially thank everyone who supported me and made possible the recent Latin American Port Congress in Bogota, where between 150 and 200 attended from North America and other apart from Latin American countries. We enjoyed the active engagement of our sister ports in the United States, even sponsoring various events and actively participating in a sincere desire for integration and closer ties with Latin America. I want to highlight, among others, the presence of the Honorable Secretary Darcy who went to meet the Latin American leaders, to offer her assistance and to build closer ties between the US Corps of Engineers and the Latin American Ports.

- I also want to express my deep gratitude to Kurt, Jean, Ed, Rafael, the Staff and all AAPA officials for their support and assistance. They are an excellent working team, and I feel honored for having worked with them during my tenure as Chairman. To all of them, my heartfelt thanks!!!!

-In addition, I would like to thank my colleagues from all ports in the Americas for their continued support and cooperation, who have attended and sponsored the activities and who generously invited me to participate, which is perhaps the greatest treasure I discovered in my time as Chair of the organization.

-My deep gratitude to the wonderful and efficient simultaneous interpretation team who make it possible for us to transmit our ideas and to achieve the objectives, by conveying what we say.

-Finally, I urge all of us to endeavour to maintain a sustainable development policy in our ports; let's do everything possible to earn money but, above all, to continue implementing Corporate Social Responsibility programs every day, to help the communities around our ports, striving to improve our relations with them, helping those who are less fortunate, building support and assistance mechanisms. This will help us become better human beings and will definitely contribute to alleviate the tensions among our societies and to guarantee a better democratic future in our countries. Let's all join and help each other each day, together, united, we are the future of the world.

Thanks a lot to Patricia my wife, Armando Jr, Alejandro and Juan Andrés my three sons, to be so patient and understanding, by all my trips during this year.

FRIENDS, GOD BLESS ALL OF YOU WHO HAVE SO GENEROUSLY ATTENDED THIS MEMORABLE CONGRESS, AND UPON REFLECTING ON MY MESSAGE, MAY THE HOLY SPIRIT GUIDE YOU SO THAT WE MAY ALL NURTURE THE SEEDS THAT I HAVE TRIED TO PLANT IN YOUR MINDS AND IN YOUR HEARTS.

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR BEING SO WONDERFUL TO ME, ESPECIALLY DURING THIS YEAR. WITHOUT YOU, MY WORK AND EVERYTHING WE HAVE ACCOMPLISHED TOGETHER WOULD HAVE NOT BEEN POSSIBLE.

GOD BLESS ALL THE AMERICAS!!!!!!

ARMANDO DUARTE-PELAEZ
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD, 2012-2013
AAPA.