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Statement

I will make all my efforts to plan educational and public health initiatives in the epilepsy field in this highly potential region. I have been working with epilepsy since my undergraduate course in Medicine. Since that time I realized the big disparity between cumulated scientific information in epilepsy and the gap of treatment as well public knowledge about the condition, especially in developing countries. In this way I consider mandatory to struggle in Latin America to divulge and to establish the overwhelming amount of best practices in this field. In this way ILAE in accordance with the World Health Organization is a way to go further for fair and updated achievements for people with epilepsy in this region.

The first people considered to have lived in Latin America date from ancient ages (BC) like the Maya, and in pre-Columbian era there were also Aztecs, Inca and Tupi civilizations, some of them with advanced techniques for the time. After European colonization, several countries were formed in Latin America and the current largest Spanish and Portuguese (Brazil) speaking communities of the world, with around 360 and 197 million people, respectively, live in this American region. Latin American and Caribbean has circa 590 million inhabitants and although there is a recent rising in some regional economic and social indexes, about 5% still live below the poverty line and social inequality is very large in most of these countries. Nevertheless this area was considered in 2013 by World Bank as one of the world's most efficient energy-using-regions having a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth of 4.7% in 2011. During the last two decades there was also in this area a decrease by a half in values of child malnutrition and under-five mortality rates as well as an increase from 60 to 90% of gross enrollment in secondary school of the relevant age group. Nevertheless there is still scarce public information about epilepsy in these countries as well a huge gap in treatment including all levels of care. Epilepsy incidence in Latin America and the Caribbean ranges from 1 to 2% and there is an urgent need for investment in its prevention and treatment. According to Pan American Health Organization Plan of Action on Epilepsy (2011) it is estimated that over 50% of these people have no access to services.

I sincerely hope that the Latin American Commission may work as a committed team with ILAE to decrease the gap of health and education provision in epilepsy in this promising area of the world.