

Dear friends and colleagues,
Ladies and gentleman,

Its a great pleasure for me to welcome you all to Chile and to the opening cocktail party here in the Sheraton Hotel.

I hope all your travels went well. For many it is a long way from home and a few times zones difference. I am exceptionally happy and thankful to see you all here at my first congress as your president. Truly these past 20 months have been a challenge for me and my board but we believe that we will have many things to tell you and share with you this week.

Our 34th Congress will start tomorrow morning. It has been a tuff job for the organizing committee to make everything first-rate for your stay in Chile. It has also been a big challenge to serve and please over 80 nations with such different cultures so I would like to use this opportunity to thank Misses Jacqueline Rodriguez, Manager Director for ACHICA, Mr. Fernando de la Fuente the President of ACHICA and all the people working behind the scenes for the great work they have done over the last months. We all look forward to this exciting week.

Tonight is a special night in many ways. We will be honouring the best of the best within the WACS community.

We will hand out the honorary memberships and I will also give out the President's award tonight.

It may seem strange to do this at the beginning of the congress but I feel this will allow you the opportunity to shake hands with these great people over the next few days.

Again, I welcome you and wish you a great night.