

## 2024 Opening Speech by the President of the Argentine Society of Cardiology

*Discurso inaugural de la presidencia de la Sociedad Argentina de Cardiología 2024*

Dear colleagues, family, and friends.

Today is the most important day in my professional life, as I am greatly honored and proud to have been appointed President of our house, the Argentine Society of Cardiology.

And I feel even prouder to know that my colleagues have valued my work and my career by selecting me for this position.

I had the tremendous luck and pleasure to have worked for the past 2 years for the board led by Héctor Deschle and Claudio Majul. As I have once said, I think a good leader knows how to create a work environment based on freedom and trust, and both these colleagues share that virtue. Therefore, I want to express my gratitude to both.

The progress made by the SAC throughout its 86 years of history has not just been the result of the work by some visionary. It was due to the generous and committed contribution of each of the presidents; the members of our different boards and commissions; the Argentine Journal of Cardiology (RAC); the Argentine Cardiologic Foundation; the districts, councils, and local departments that are part of SAC País; the lecturers delivering courses; technicians, nurses, and non-medical staff, and particularly, every member of our society. I also want to say thank you very much to all of them.

Today I have the duty of representing them all, and in order to grow, we need to continue to recreate that work ethic that makes us proud to be part of the SAC. Personally, I am committed to that goal and certain that each member of our Society agrees with me, as the SAC makes us all better because of our effort and merit.

Nowadays, the paradigm implies living with no role model to look up to. Forty years ago, I attended case conferences every Wednesday and took my first steps in our Councils hoping to be inspired by and

learn from this or that head of department, dreaming that one day I might be able to follow their steps. Personally, that worked for me.

Today relationships tend to be more fluid and transversal. Fortunately, technology has made knowledge highly accessible, and the utopia of resembling someone else has been lost in time. This new reality, in turn, has made us more disconnected and sometimes leads to a deep feeling of personal and professional loneliness.

And what do we receive from the SAC? The answer to this question may be personal. I would like it to be the place where you belong, a place open to dialogue, the frame for your professional development sharing ideas and experiences, your possibility in this ethereal universe of becoming an inspiration yourself, an environment where you can bond with colleagues to defend your interests and the interests of your community. It is truly amazing to witness the SAC grow despite the conditions in our country. I believe we are ALL making a great contribution.

Those of us who have had the honor to preside this Society never intended to redefine our institution, but rather to do our best for the SAC to continue to expand its brilliant and prolific history.

My proposal has several parts:

1. We shall continue to provide resources and work hard to meet all the Index Medicus requirements so that our Journal is admitted, as it certainly deserves to be.
2. We shall continue to reinforce our bonds with every international association, giving rise to a space of integration and cooperation. We are about to sign an agreement with the Uruguayan Society of Cardiology (SUC) that, starting next year, will turn our biannual course into their cardiologic training platform, including Uruguayan cardiologists as lecturers.



3. We are going to renew the Young SAC Department, encouraging their involvement in personal and collaborative projects with other departments and councils, and foster bonds with similar departments from different international associations. We will make every effort for members to be able to take part in international congresses, submit papers, and become more active in other activities by the Society. We also aspire to a closer relationship with the Argentine Council of Cardiology Residents (CONAREC). Always respecting individual needs and expectations, we need to promote participation among our younger members so that they continue to work and grow in our Society, as they will eventually become our leaders.
4. We would like to issue the first "SAC Practical Handbook of Cardiology" providing simple and practical answers to the most common clinical situations in the medical office or hospital. This project will become real thanks to the deep involvement of every area in our Society.
5. We shall work more closely with the Argentine Cardiologic Foundation, as we are certain that our goals can be boosted by this collaboration.
6. We are organizing the first Congress on Cardiometabolic Prevention and Hypertension, designed by the Councils of cardiometabolism, hypertension and cardiovascular prevention and sure to become a success. This is in addition to our traditional and consolidated Imaging Congress, for which we intend to find a more attractive venue.
7. Ten inter-district conferences and various other workshops have been planned. SAC País has developed a cardiology course for non-cardiologist physicians starting next year. We are also working to organize and support rotations around sites in Buenos Aires for residents in training from other parts of the country and taking the Biannual SAC Course to be able to select one rotation based on their merit. A central policy of our Society is to offer any means needed to consolidate the SAC throughout the country.
8. We have created the National Intersocietal Relations Department to coordinate exchanges and activities with local scientific societies, as we need to improve our perspective with a more comprehensive view on cardiovascular conditions. We are also announcing a new Council called Cardiac Ecology and Healthy Habits, important for the promotion of cardiovascular health.
9. We shall encourage the role of the Research Department and seek financial support for our registries. We need to be aware of our reality. Applications will be opened throughout the country to grant scholarships for original papers and will continue to provide the best paper published in the last year with the RAC Award.
10. We have signed an agreement with the Argentine Catholic University (UCA) for a Higher University degree on Nuclear Cardiology (UCA-SAC) next year, in addition to the existing postgraduate degree on Hypertension, Cardiometabolism and Dyslipidemia that we have successfully been teaching together for 2 years.
11. Five additional ongoing virtual courses will be added to the 39 courses we already offer. Next year we shall use a percentage of the revenue to pay for the fees of our colleagues who prepare the lectures. We will also deliver a choice of 3 SAC courses at half their price to every department, every Council and every district in SAC País, and the relevant authorities shall decide which members are receiving the benefit. We are aware that this is merely symbolic in this context, considering the huge effort that has been made, but it is critical to invest in our human resources, the most valuable and essential resource for our Society.
12. Next year we are holding and enjoying our 50th Argentine Congress of Cardiology. We will do our best to make it a very special event. This year our Society has worked hard to protect our professional practice and shall continue to do so. In the past, and maybe to this date, many believed that the Society had to focus only on scientific activities. Times have changed. We are healthcare workers and should be able to highlight the value of the work we do. The SAC cannot be indifferent to the economic reality affecting our cardiologists. We are not a labor union. We have the Argentine College of Cardiology for that. However, we are joining forces with other scientific societies to open any necessary means of communication with fund providers in order to defend our medical fees. We intend to submit a proposal to the relevant political authorities regarding any actions needed to ensure proper medical practice and to protect our professional rank. We cannot just be witnesses to this overwhelming reality. We have the responsibility of being protagonists and protecting the wellbeing of our cardiologic community and patients. We have already made some progress in this sense. To conclude, it is now time to express my gratitude to others, as we always need others to become who we are. I would like to thank the more than 100 residents who have come to our clinics since 1993, renewing day after day my desire and joy to continue to learn and teach. I thank my colleagues and friends Adrian Charask and Enrique Fairman for creating a respectful work environment where each of us has been able to develop as a group and as individuals. I also thank Carlos Bertolasi, Carlos Tajer and Carlos Barrero for their relevant involvement in my professional development. My deepest

thanks to Carlos Barrero: my boss, my friend, and a brother I was given as a gift of life. Thanks to Enrique Abramovich for helping me see my strengths and understand my weaknesses. Thanks to my siblings in law, nieces, and nephews. Thanks to my three children,

Luli, Mica, and Rocco, for letting me transcend through them every single day in my life, and a big thank you to Yanina, for everything.

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