

OPENNING SPEECH

Msc. Olivier Castro Pérez, President of Central Bank of Costa Rica
International Pension Seminar, 2015 “Perspectiva Global de Pensiones: Inversión, Cultura previsional y reformas de nueva generación”

Mr. Edward Odundo, President of International Organization of Pension Supervisors, IOPS.

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Mr. Édgar Robles, Superintendent, Superintendencia de Pensiones de Costa Rica and Vicepresident of IOPS.

Ladies and Gentleman

I appreciate the invitation to address these words to such a select and especially to an audience of specialists worldwide pension auditorium. The pension is a subject that has fascinated me throughout my life. I was the first Superintendent of Pensions of Costa Rica and had a relevant role in the reform we did in 2000.

So I am very pleased to see the high interest that is in review, analyze and conclude on experiences of different arrangements and pension systems, which finally looking how to provide the best possible benefit to a population that, for its

diversity, is not in technical and analytical ability to make the best decision on the matter. That concern is what brings you and us here in Costa Rica, so that in this two-day meeting, we can extract what are those best international experience that fits the pension systems of our nations, to strengthen and include in our work schedules, challenges that aim at improving confidence in managing pension systems as well as regulation and supervision.

Pension systems today face many challenges as a result of the radical changes in labor organization, globalization of financial markets, the speed of communication leading to almost immediate contagion of situation that affect or benefit the results of pension funds, improvements in life expectancy of the elderly and acceleration in the aging population.

Just to cite one example, currently in Costa Rica about 5% of the population is part of the so-called third age, i.e. having more than 65 years. Estimates of local and international authorities indicate that in just two decades nearly a quarter of the Costa Rican population will be older adult.

All these changes are challenges that force who is now managing, regulating and supervising pension funds, faced with a great responsibility the understanding of the effect of those changes on the future performance of pension funds and the commitment they have with the contributing population. That means a big

challenge for our country and has no doubt that many of the nations, represented in this room today, have similar realities.

Everything I've mentioned so far will be addressed in this seminar and meetings scheduled jointly by the International Organization of Pension Supervisors and the International Association of Supervision of Pension Funds, who we are pleased to have visiting our country.

The challenges ahead are great, but most important should be our actions in the face of the answers that millions of citizens, who are represented here today through you, expect regarding their retirement.

I am sure that the discussion here at the end of two days allowed carrying a message of confidence to the different actors of the pension systems of several countries.

The road is not easy, as the plurality of our societies will always present diverse positions on what to do on pensions. At this point is where perhaps the greatest challenge lies: engaging the public, employers, politicians and government entities in the solutions according to the reality of each country. I am quite sure that assertiveness and communication are vital tools for achieving the objectives.

I welcome you to Costa Rica and hope that, besides exchanging knowledge concerning pension systems, also have a pleasant stay in our country.