Nominee Statement: Francisco Martinez Castro

# Position: IAPB Latin America Regional Chair

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| **Nominee Name** | | | |
|  | Francisco G. Martínez Castro | | |
| **Nominee Job Title** | | | |
|  | Chair Regional IAPB Latino América | | |
| **Nominee Organisation** | | | |
|  | IAPB | | |
| **Nominating IAPB member organisation** | | | |
|  | Individual | | |
| **Represented by:** | | | |
|  | SERGE RESNIKOFF | | |
| **Seconded by:** | | | |
|  | **Van Lansingh** | | |
| **Seconding IAPB member organisation:** | | |
| **Instituto Mexicano de Oftalmología** | |
| **Seconding Statement** | | | |

Dr. Francisco Martínez Castro, current regional chair to IAPB Latin America, has formally expressed to us his interest to run for a second term as chair, as the Latin America eye care community ushers in the new decade, 2021-2030, under the Alliance “Friends of Vision” with the Pan-American Association of Ophthalmology (PAAO). We applaud his past performance and commitment to advocate for prevention of blindness and disseminate the IAPB objectives, strategies, and values across the public and private sectors of Latin America. The collaboration of the PAAO was essential to the founding of prevention of blindness committees in the early years of VISION 2020, and Dr. Martinez Castro’s ability to galvanize the ongoing support of organizations, including the PAAO, allows for future opportunities in advocacy, training programs, and continuing education for ophthalmologists from the region. In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and its disastrous socioeconomic and health consequences, change is needed to maintain engagement and resource mobilization for prevention of blindness. With the Friends of Vision program and Dr. Martínez Castro at the helm, we anticipate increased partnership and support from regional and international NGOs and eye care organizations, which will allow us to move forward with new strategies. We have also regularly received timely information, news, and updates on project advances and proven best practices via the Quarterly Bulletin produced by the IAPB Latin America office in Mexico City. This communication tool is instrumental in sharing best practices and knowledge from centers of excellence in the region with less-experienced programs and is critical for the latter’s growth and development. We wholeheartedly endorse Dr. Martinez Castro’s nomination to continue to serve our region as IAPB Chair. We appreciate your consideration of our endorsement and are happy to provide any additional information to fulfill the requirements of his nomination. We send you our best wishes.

**Nominee Statement**

As Executive Director of the Pan American Association of Ophthalmology (PAAO) I was invited to the first IAPB meeting in Latin America in 1999 and suggested an IAPB / PAAO Alliance, by identifying valuable IAPB strategies and goals, to disseminate them to 15,000 PAAO ophthalmologists through of the National Societies of Ophthalmology.

Today 19,000 ophthalmologists are affiliated, 21 of their National Societies, and alliances with Spanish and Portuguese societies in Europe.

For 8 years we have been working together IAPB / PAAO, and in these months we are studying to establish an alliance with them (“Friends of the Vision).

I request to extend one more period since:

1) I have proven ability to summon related groups.

2) I intend to improve relations with NGOs in the region.

3) The COVID-19 operative paralysis has sensitized ophthalmologists, NGOs, government health officials and industry to a change in traditional strategies.

4) Promoting "Friends of the Vision" will facilitate inviting more organizations and a recent sample is the request of the Barraquer Barcelona Institute and the Mexican Ophthalmology Society in process.

5) No initiative for timely detection will have an impact, if it is not accompanied by education, promoting self-care, with family support in patients, and for the other actors to insist that if they remain indifferent there will be no changes for the benefit of the community.

6) It is planned for the year 2022 in Buenos Aires during the Pan American Congress, to have 2 meetings: with NGOs and with National Societies and heads of Training Centers, to make this meeting effective for the third time and improve education to the ophthalmologists in training.

7) Optimize the dissemination platforms: the quarterly Newsletter, the web pages and a blog program for young residents coordinated by Doctors Jaime Soria and Joao Furtado.

8) Available to participate in IAPB - PAAO webinars, with optometry groups to disseminate the 15 YouTube Videos for early detection of Low Vision and other related groups.

Therefore, I ratify my interest in working towards these goals from the regional office with the support and loyalty of Mrs. Teresa Ambriz, who has served as secretary.