

Subject: Interview on the 2010 IPRA XIX Public Relations World Congress

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REYNALD SERRA (HOST): We inform you that the XIX Public Relations World Congress will take place next year around these dates. Our Guest, Mr. James Holt, Chief Executive Officer of the International Public Relations Association, IPRA, is here to talk about this important event, organized by the Universidad de San Martín de Porres. How are you? Welcome.

JAMES HOLT, IPRA CEO: Thank you very much.

REYNALD SERRA: This is an organization that demands a lot of anticipation.

JAMES HOLT: That is right. This is why I am here for the launching of next year's event.

REYNALD SERRA: Public relations were, in some way – I do not know how it happened in other countries of the world - but in Peru they were superseded or replaced, that is why they received the name of institutional image. Do you think public relations lost their essence during a period of time, and that we are now in the process of recovering it?

JAMES HOLT: I think that we are in a recovery process and it will be a mistake to limit the subject to a mere image. There is far more than an image. If there is nothing else deep inside, the image is worthless. I think we are in a recovery process and that our congress could help in this process.

REYNALD SERRA: In your opinion, which is the role of public relations in this new, globalized world, where institutions, organizations and companies need close relations not only among them, but also with the community in which they operate.

JAMES HOLT: That is right. I think that, above all, communication is necessary, because, in the past, companies had more freedom to act; now you have to live in a community with partners of every level and kind. If they do not succeed in communicating and integrating this into their actions, they are not going to survive.

REYNALD SERRA: So, we could say that it is the institution's identity. What it is actually on the inside and what it shows on the outside.

JAMES HOLT: That is right. And there is no difference between words and facts.

REYNALD SERRA: Then, Social Responsibility and Public Relations would be closely related?

JAMES HOLT: Yes, that is totally right.

REYNALD SERRA: Would this be a function of a public relations agent?

JAMES HOLT: To me, yes, but, at the same time, it must be agreed by the company. Social responsibility is a commitment every company must comply with, and it requires the management of the public relations professional to present it to its interested publics.

REYNALD SERRA: Tell us about this world congress that will surely convoke the most outstanding and prestigious speakers and experts. From which country will they come?

JAMES HOLT: From all over the world. We are an association of people that work in the field of public relations. They are top level professionals. Nowadays, we have about a thousand members in one hundred countries. Every two or three years we hold a world congress. Last year we were in Beijing, and, before that, we were in Istanbul; next year we will be in Latin America, in Lima. We are very happy because it gives us the opportunity to resume the relationship with Latin America and Peru. I think this is an opportunity for the Peruvian people to experience the latest developments in public relations, to *network* with people from all over the world. I have established important contacts around the world. I think it is important.

REYNALD SERRA: Besides, public relations are based on that.

JAMES HOLT: That is right. Without that, we have nothing.

REYNALD SERRA: And besides, for the country itself, to show it as a tourist destination. They are public relations agents from all around the world that will visit us and will share their experience to the rest of the world, to their countries.

JAMES HOLT: That is correct, because, at the same time, we are trying to give our members the possibility of visiting Peru. It is one of those places worthy of visiting once in a lifetime. For them is an opportunity to visit and know the country. I hope they return to their countries as Peruvian ambassadors. It is important to me and to the country, as well.

REYNALD SERRA: I agree. We thank you very much for being in our program “Mesa Central”. This was James Holt, Chief Executive Officer of the International Public Relations Association, IPRA.