

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

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**Spokesman:** James Holt, IPRA CEO

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**RAÚL VARGAS (HOST):** Lima, Peru will be the center, the venue of the IPRA 2010 XIX Public Relations World Congress. A campaign is being developed in this regard. It is organized by IPRA, the International Public Relations Association, in collaboration with the Universidad de San Martín de Porres in its respective Professional School of Communication Sciences.

We are in the company of IPRA Chief Executive Officer, Mr. James Holt. This is one of the most important associations in the world, and without a doubt, the fact that Peru will be the venue of the next event is also important, to the effects of showing how much we are improving on this subject, which is very much related with development, tourism, etc.

Mr. James Holt, thank you for being with us. Good Morning. Please tell us a little about the International Public Relations Association, IPRA, and its current importance in the world.

**JAMES HOLT, IPRA CEO:** Our organization was founded in 1954. We have over 50 years of experience. We have a thousand members in 100 countries around the world. We are present in almost every country where public relations are practiced. Since 40 years ago, we have created a series of international public relations congresses, and the next one will take place this coming year in Lima, Peru.

**PATRICIA DEL RÍO (HOSTESS):** In which aspects have public relations changed in the past 50 years? Have there been any important changes?

**JAMES HOLT:** Yes, a lot of changes. First of all, at the beginning, the founders of IPRA were people who had experienced the war. Their version of public relations was very similar to the advertising used in the war. This has totally changed; nowadays, public relations constitute a key tool for spreading the messages from public and private organizations, becoming sources of information for the press.

**AUGUSTO ÁLVAREZ RODRICH (HOST):** The profession of public relations is very important for the companies, for the State, but sometimes there are bad public relations practices. They tend to mingle with corruption or that sort of things. Do you have ethical codes you could provide to establish important things that must be taken under consideration in the practice of this profession?

**JAMES HOLT:** We developed the first code of ethics back in 1961. All the members have to sign a document they must respect, and we are always trying to improve the ethical practice of public relations, because bad practices do not help anyone in this profession.

**RAÚL VARGAS:** Then, what are Public Relations nowadays? You have indicated that they have experienced several stages – What do they consist of, which would be their main characteristics?

**JAMES HOLT:** They try to be simple. They are the external and internal communication of an organization. I was listening to the debate about what is happening in Puno. To me, it is an important opportunity to practice public relations, to communicate with people, to explain, to educate them. I think there is an enormous opportunity. At the end, it is a problem of communication.

**RAÚL VARGAS:** There are two aspects that quickly link public relations first with mass media or communication, and then with what is now called entrepreneurial social responsibility. Is there a differentiation; are we, more or less, dealing with the same thing with some variants?

**JAMES HOLT:** To be honest, there are two variants of what is called Social Responsibility: There is what I truly consider Social Responsibility, which means to work with the community where the company is located. It means to contribute something to the community where we live.

There is another version, which is a marketing variant. I do not like this kind of activity at all. It is really important if, for example, a mining company is working in a zone. It is important for the company and for the community that there is a communication and social activity from the company.

**RAÚL VARGAS:** And, in the case of mass media...? Because this is where, nowadays, we are speaking of a type of corporate communication, which means that, instead of working in the media, the journalists begin to work in the companies and become their communicators. They are not necessarily public relations agents; they are journalists who also work as communication agents. There is a whole discussion because, after all, journalism has to remain autonomous and independent from the State, from public authorities, but also from business power.

**JAMES HOLT:** That is right; or else there would be no freedom of press. In some way, it has become corrupt. I think that it is very important to make a separation between the two professions. When you mix both of them, and this happens in many countries, there is corruption; and that is something we have to fight together.

**RAÚL VARGAS:** Which is the importance of the public relations nowadays?

**JAMES HOLT:** Public Relations are growing a lot, especially in Latin America, where the organizations have many things to communicate to their interested publics. The problem in every society is always the lack of communication; and that is where we must apply what we have learned.

**RAÚL VARGAS:** Very good. Thank you, Mr. James Holt, for being here with us. We will look forward to the XIX Public Relations World Congress that will take place in our country next year.

**JAMES HOLT:** My colleagues asked me to say that, in a few minutes, we are going to have a press conference at the Universidad de San Martín de Porres.