

FERNANDO ALVAREZ DEL RIO

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Jean-Pierre Elkabbach, President, Lagardère News

First, I would say to Fernando Alvarez del Rio – you're Mexican. You're dealing with two of today's major scourges. You described the struggles played out in real-time against migration and a new disease – the swine flu of April 2009 which wreaked havoc and made the entire world point an accusing finger at you (Mexico). Mexico was weakened at that time. Is it doing better today?

Fernando Alvarez del Rio

Yes, we are definitely healthier now. First of all, I just want to excuse Dr Constanste Cordoba. He was extremely keen on being here, given the emphasis he puts in this forum on fostering good governance. He is considering that many of the problems at many regional levels also require good governance. At the very last minute, he was not able to come. He sends his apologies.

In terms of the virus, Dr Cordoba mentioned all the struggles and efforts we have to make. One of the key issues in terms of these linkages has to do with the importance of trying to have more regional epidemiological surveillance. A lot of the issues that we have are very much linked to the reactions or to the manifestations of climate change. These have to do with vector-borne diseases. Many of the countries in the world have the highest-ever cases, though fortunately not in Mexico. However, many countries in the region do, in terms of dengue, malaria and so on.

What is required at the moment is to try and establish regional frameworks. Here, for example, I would like to talk about this American public-health initiative. Basically, what it has to do, in this aspect, which links both climate change and health, is to lead much better and to be able to have much quicker responses to that.

Jean-Pierre Elkabbach, President, Lagardère News

We'll come back to this subject in a few minutes. You have extraordinary experience after confronting the sudden emergence of a completely unknown virus in April 2009. This panicked political leaders, which is understandable, and at the same time, even scientists, who were witnessing the spread of a previously unknown illness. We'll come back to this shortly.

Narendra Taneja, Energy CEO and Convener, World Oil & Gas Assembly (WOGA)

Yes. I want to ensure that there is absolutely no confusion on this. There is an initiative we were discussing. It is a model in which all our panellists speak for 10 minutes and then we will have the questions. We have just changed it a little bit. What we are trying to do is: you can focus on what you have, for instance, in your presentation, while we ask you questions at the same time. This is in order to make it a little bit more engaging and interactive. We are changing the format a little bit, if you permit that.