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Address

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This address is included in this archive, because I believe sincerely that the 40th Anniversary of anything as important as the World Health Organization should have as much acknowledgement as possible.

I was about to address the General Assembly of the United Nations on the great worth of WHO, two days later and this was a Washington gathering of folks who shared a deep appreciation of and affection for its organization...for the people who operate its many programs...and especially for those thousands of humane and compassionate professionals who labored every day in the towns and villages and tiny settlements that dot our globe.

I used my own experience as a pioneer in the field of pediatric surgery as the great stimulus that made me a true believer in the need for international cooperation and in the need to develop excellent health professionals within each nation and every society.

After talking about the unpleasantness and the horror of the second World War, malnutrition and hunger, ignorance and disease, hatred and poverty, hopelessness, and a ravaged and diminished humanity throughout history, I spent the rest of my time lauding the accomplishments of WHO, while facing the stark reality that there was still much work to be done that we know about...and much more to be done that has not even yet crossed our minds.

Although I didn't say it before this audience, I did say it before the U.N. General Assembly: "If anything happened to WHO, we would have to reinvent it immediately."