Message from the president

I am sure that every practising dentist sincerely believes that they are members of a respected health profession. But the oral health care environment is changing rapidly and I wonder how the public views dentists, when we spend more time on spa services, tooth whitening and travel packages for dental tourism. But the status of dentistry is a privilege and not a right.

In order for us to establish the dentist/patient relationship of trust, critical to successful health promotion and treatment of oral disease, it is essential that the public perceives dentistry as a profession and not merely as a vocation or trade.

I believe that the main value of a strong national dental association is in ensuring that dentists are able to conduct themselves as health care professionals rather than simply suppliers of services. The formula for success is not a simple one and I have observed what is required for dentists to work together as professionals to improve the health of their fellow citizens rather than just compete for health care dollars in the marketplace.

Recently, I had the first-hand experience in observing the operations of two of the FDI’s largest members, the Associação Brasileira de Odontologia and the American Dental Association, and also two of our smaller members, the Chilean Dental Association and the Croatian Dental Society. I witnessed several common elements in their success in supporting dentists as respected and ethical providers of evidence-based health care in very different environments.

Students are the energy and lifeblood of new ideas that will cause us to constantly re-evaluate what we do and why we do it. In the four associations I visited, students are welcomed into the profession with the respect that allows their enthusiasm and new ideas to have a positive impact. The specialty groups in these countries are major contributors to scientific knowledge and catalysts for lifelong learning.

Working in the interests of dentists means working in the public interest and many countries are now finding that the licensing or regulatory authority ensures this. The ability of a dental association to maintain good government relations does not mean that the government is a partner in everything we do, but that the government always considers the views of a national association when making decisions that will impact the health of its population. This is a difficult goal to achieve, but a common feature of the most successful associations.

For associations that manage to present dentists as the ethical and compassionate health care providers that we strive to be, the support of the dental industry is not simply transactional but meets the needs of both industry and profession in their mutual quest to improve oral health. The best associations seek out the true professionals in the industry as partners in health promotion.

The alternative to a strong national dental association may well be an unprofessional environment, where dentists compete for patients by each representing their own version of ethical and appropriate practice. With limited prospects for support in areas such as continuing education, evidence-based issues management and health promotion initiatives, it is easy to imagine a once respected profession being viewed as simply another provider of services. Ethical practice should be defined by our best collective efforts and not by the self-interest of a few individuals.

Although it is unfortunate that the existence of a strong dental association is still only a dream in some countries, the FDI offers help to remedy this situation. Our head office staff, senior officers, Communications and Member Support Committee and established FDI association members all have the interest and ability to help a fledgling association become the main source of support for the dental profession. Assistance with association management, organisation of continuing education programs, policy statements and member services such as tobacco cessation strategies are just a few of the areas where we can help.

Even in countries where dentists have long benefitted from their dental associations, enthusiasm, hard work and commitment are required to maintain the momentum to preserve dentistry as a profession.

Congratulations to thousands of colleagues worldwide who work to provide excellent services of professional associations for practising dentists. To those functioning without the support of a strong dental organisation, we can help – please ask us.

Dr Burton Conrad
FDI President

FDI sponsors CE programme in Francophone Africa

Current Therapies in Periodontal Health

Forty-two dentists, from both the private and public sector, attended the Continuing Education (CE) programme sponsored by the FDI in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. The attendees represented 85% of the dentists of Burkina Faso and also included others from Côte d’Ivoire, Niger and Senegal. The CE programme, which took place 16–17 October, was a part of the Premières journées Dentaires du Burkina Faso.

The CE programme was presented in the form of a two-day workshop, titled “Current Therapies in Periodontal Health”. It was presented by Dr R. Stauth from the University of Lyon in France. He focused on existing approaches to periodontal disease treatment in the context of an overall treatment plan, taking into consideration factors such as classification data, aetiology, care of the patient during the initial phase, HIV and periodontal health. In addition, two hands-on workshops were conducted, where attendees practiced incisions and surgical sutures and radiological assessment. A series of events were organized for the congress, amongst which were an oral health awareness day in nine schools and a separate oral health awareness day for the public. All the events were broadcast by the Burkina Faso central television channels and press.

During the congress, the Scientific-Practical Conference of the Association des Chirurgiens-Dentistes du Burkina Faso (ACDB) was held. All the realized activities were highly and positively evaluated by the participants of the congress.

Dr Yannick Joachim, President of ACDB, praised the delegates for taking time off to update themselves and commended the efforts of the FDI, the Groupement des Associations Dentaires Francophones, partners of the congress and the CE programme, and the organizing committee for bringing up a stimulating and enlightening convention.

As reported by Prof. Denis Bourgeois, FDI Co-Programme Manager for Africa.
Get the Peace of Mind you deserve when placing your next order of premium dental alloys. With over 100 years of experience Ivoclar Vivadent sets the standard for performance, quality and trust worldwide.

- **Performance** – Seamless integration with Ivoclar Vivadent ceramics
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FDI prepares for 2010 Congress in Salvador da Bahia, Brazil

Delegation including FDI President, Councillors and head office representatives visit congress site

An FDI delegation, invited by the 2010 FDI Annual World Dental Congress (AWDC) local organising committee, Associação Brasileira de Odontologia (ABO), visited the congress city during ABO’s International Dental Congress, XV CIOBA. During this preparation phase, every congress event was reviewed. After nearly a week of seeing what, where and how things happen in Salvador da Bahia, the expert committee was delighted with what they experienced and was pleased with the hospitality from the people of Bahia and their interest and willingness to help and accommodate visitors.

In addition to visiting various sites for congress activities, the FDI delegation also met with the Chief of the State Government Office, Mr. Fernando Roth Schmidt, who reassured Bahia’s interest in hosting the 2010 event. “We know for sure that the congress [the congress] requires some kind of support, directly from the government or in private partnerships. The convention centre is the ideal place for the event, and it will immediately be improved regarding air conditioning and replacement of equipment. Strong investments are being done in the city for the important events that will take place. Furthermore, as part of such an effort, the airport will also be enlarged, and the seven direct flights to the USA and Europe that currently exist will be increased to 22 in the next two years.”

The delegation also met with the Vice-Governor of Bahia, who stated that Bahia is honored to host the FDI congress and also affirmed the support of the Governor of Bahia, Mr. Jaques Wagner.

More information about the FDI’s visit in Brazil can be found online at www.fdiworldental.org/congress/letters/2009_11_31_en.html.

Plan your attendance for the 2009 AWDC in Singapore

Congress information available online

With the 2009 congress behind us, it is now time to start planning your attendance for the 2009 FDI Annual World Dental Congress in the city of Singapore.

FDI Scientific Programme

Organise your visit to the FDI congress around the scientific sessions you would like to attend. The Scientific Programme, which includes limited attendance courses and forums, is available for viewing online. Please visit: www.fdiworldental.org/microsites/Singapore/congress4.html.

Get up to 20% discount with the Star Alliance network

The Star Alliance network has been appointed as the official airline network for the 2009 FDI congress. Simply call the reservation office of any participating Star Alliance member airline and quote the event code SQ01S09. Registered participants plus one accompanying person travelling to the event are automatically granted a discount of up to 20%, depending on the class of travel. For more information, please visit www.fdiworldental.org/microsites/Singapore/congress7.html.

After the congress...

Take advantage of Singapore’s proximity to other popular tourist destinations in the region by signing up for one of the post-congress excursions. Pacific World, organiser of the post-congress excursions, has prepared trips for congress attendees to Indonesia, Thailand and Malaysia. For more information, please visit www.fdiworldental.org/microsites/Singapore/vagroic_3.html.

2009 FDI Continuing Education programme

First stop, Malaysia

2009 will be another busy year for the FDI Continuing Education (CE) team. Twenty-five programmes have been scheduled for 2009 with the first one taking place in January in Malaysia. The Malaysian programme includes a workshop on endodontic retreatment and sessions on managing biofilms for optimal oral and systemic health and new approaches to detection and monitoring of early caries lesions. The Malaysian programme will be followed by ones in February in Cote d’Ivoire, Myanmar and Singapore. The complete 2009 FDI CE programme calendar with more information on the above sessions and others, is available online for viewing at www.fdiworldental.org/federation/4_0calendar.html.

Tsunami Dental Reconstruction Fund Grant Program

Request for Proposals (RFP)

In response to the Indian Ocean Tsunami of 26 December 2004, the ADA Foundation and the American Dental Association’s Committee on International Programs and Development created a Tsunami Dental Reconstruction Fund Grant Program to address long term oral health needs of the communities affected by this natural disaster. The Request for Proposal seeks applicants from US and non-US based organisations, who are working to rebuild oral healthcare initiatives and infrastructures in countries affected by the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami such as but not limited to: India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Maldives, Myanmar, Somalia, Sri Lanka, and Thailand.

Proposals must be received by FDI no later than 31 MARCH 2009. Additional information and application form can be found online at www.fdiworldental.org/adaf/grants/index.asp?INDIANOCEAN

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Tsunami Dental Reconstruction Fund

A grant of up to USD$70,000 will be awarded to develop oral health care training, service programs.

The costs associated with providing dental services to affected populations (equipment, supplies, transport, training).

Community outreach to affected populations (oral health education, training, service programs).

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Grants will be awarded to support activities such as:
• The refurbishment of damaged dental facilities and infrastructure
• The construction and maintenance of a dental facility to establish continued oral health care and infrastructure in an affected area.