Message from the president

Since 12 January, the world’s attention has been focused on Haiti and the devastation that ravaged the country when an earthquake with a magnitude of 7.0 hit. Messages from members of FDI World Dental Federation around the world have been pouring in, with an expression of condolences for the loss of all people affected by the event, concern for the welfare of fellow members of the Haitian Dental Association, and questions about how to help. As recovery efforts continue, it is clear from the images emerging from Haiti that in addition to an immediate, desperate need for food, water and shelter, many thousands of people fortunate enough to have survived are suffering from severe dental and facial injuries, in addition to previous struggles with dental pain and untreated disease.

FDI World Dental Federation has joined a campaign with its Regional Organisation in Latin America, LARO/FOLA, and the Dental Tribune International to help both the general population and dental professionals of Haiti. FOLA is leading the campaign, inviting dental manufacturers and professionals alike to donate dental instruments, materials and equipment to support the long term rebuilding effort in Haiti. I call on FDI members and dentists everywhere to support the effort to restore dental services in Haiti. Further information about this project can be obtained from Dr Adolfo Rodriguez, President of LARO/FOLA (jarodcode@telnet.do).

Registration opens for 2010 Congress in Salvador da Bahia, Brazil

Registration for the 2010 FDI Annual World Dental Congress in Salvador, Brazil opened on 25 January. Co-hosted by FDI World Dental Federation and the Brazilian Dental Association (ABO) in Brazil’s sunny Bahia state, the 2010 FDI Congress promises to inspire, with a diverse Scientific Programme (ADA CERP accredited), World Dental Exhibition, and a financial centres, Salvador is abuzz with cultural activities throughout the year. Home of capoeira, Bossa Nova and the world’s largest Carnival celebration, this former capital of Brazil – set within a developing economic region – offers an appropriate stage for this year’s FDI Congress, entitled Oral Health for All “Regional Challenges, Global Solutions”.

To learn more about the 2010 Scientific Programme and to register for this year’s FDI Congress, visit the FDI World Dental Federation website at www.fdiworldental.org.

Did You Know?

Brazil represents a significant number of the world’s dental professionals. There are approximately 227,000 dental professionals in the country, including 43,000 specialists and 40,000 students. With 187 dental schools (as well as prosthetic technicians and auxiliary staff, such as dental hygienists and oral health assistants) and more than 500 local associations (of which 320 are ABO branches), Brazil has the largest associative network of continuing education in dentistry on the planet.

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Salvador da Bahia is located on the northeast coast of Brazil and is the country’s third-largest city. In addition to its role as one of Brazil’s major themes affecting the profession today, presented by some of the world’s leading speakers. The topics are intended to introduce new trends in dental technology and patient care and to discuss issues relevant to oral policies and private practices, overviews of research, teaching and clinical practice, and debate about integrating dentistry and other health professions to achieve improved general and oral health.

The FDI Congress is the only global dental event to feature business and policy meetings of leaders from more than 150 National Dental Associations in their vision to improve dentistry and oral health. The 2010 Scientific Programme is structured to address major themes affecting the world’s largest community of dental professionals. The topics are intended to introduce new trends in dental technology and patient care and to discuss issues relevant to oral policies and private practices, overviews of research, teaching and clinical practice, and debate about integrating dentistry and other health professions to achieve improved general and oral health.

The Executive Board of the World Health Organization (WHO) renewed FDI’s status as a “non-governmental organization (NGO) in official relations” during its 126th session in Geneva, Switzerland from January 18-23. FDI’s incoming Associate Director and Head of Public Health, Dr. S.D. Shamsi-nath, and Manager of Public Health and Advocacy Projects, Jon Grail, attended the meeting, together with representatives from the World Health Professions Alliance (WHPA).

The Executive Board session opened with a report by Director-General, Dr Margaret Chan, highlighting key issues for discussion throughout the week-long series of meetings, including an update on relief efforts in Haiti, the accomplishments and ongoing challenges towards achieving the WHO Millennium Development Goals, and acknowledgement of the effective international response in containing the new H1N1 virus to date. (A complete version of Dr Chan’s report is available on the WHO website: www.who.int)

The decision by the Executive Board Standing Committee on Nongovernmental Organisations to renew the status of FDI World Dental Federation as an NGO in official relations was based upon reports submitted by FDI outlining previous and current work plans related to public health. Notably, the Committee recommended recognising the contributions and continued support of FDI in the achievement of WHO’s objectives. FDI representatives followed discussions on a number of other agenda items relevant to oral health and dental practice, including the drafting of a global code of practice for the international recruitment of health professionals, implementing a strategy for preventing and controlling non-communicable diseases (of which oral health-related illness is the most common chronic disease), and ongoing monitoring of the progress towards WHO’s Millennium Development Goals.