The 2009 FDI Annual World Dental Congress in Singapore has come to a close for another year. This year’s event saw a remarkable attendance, with over 10,000 delegates representing nearly 100 countries. The congress, held from September 10 to 14, was a pivotal event in the dental calendar, offering a platform for delegates to exchange ideas, share knowledge, and network with peers from around the world.

The congress was marked by various key highlights. The welcome ceremony took place at the Marina Bay Sands, one of the world’s most iconic hotels. The event was attended by Singapore’s Health Minister, Mr Khaw Boon Wan, who delivered an inspiring account of the positive changes in oral health that Singapore has undergone over the past decade. He emphasized the importance of continuous improvement in oral health and the need for collaboration across regions.

The congress also featured a range of other high-profile events. The 2009 FDI World Health Day (WOHD) was observed on September 12, with the theme “Strengthening Oral Health for Better Nutrition.” This event was part of a global campaign to raise awareness about the link between oral health and overall health.

The FDI General Assembly and Council elections were another major highlight of the congress. A total of 26 nominations were submitted, with nine new and ten existing positions open for election. The final results were announced during the congress, with new members of the FDI Council elected to serve for the next three years.

The congress also saw the launch of a new Oral Health source book, featuring contributions from leading experts in the field. The book provides a comprehensive overview of the latest research and best practices in oral health.

In summary, the 2009 FDI Annual World Dental Congress was a resounding success, offering a valuable platform for the international dental community to come together and discuss the key issues facing the profession.
What makes dental professionals smile

The FDI has relocated its global headquarters to Geneva, Switzerland, completing the final stage of a plan that has been several years in the making. The driving forces for the move were logistical and financial: the FDI sought to be in a country where it could conduct business as a single entity—versus the current structure of six distinct companies—which could also offer favorable taxation and simplified management accounting on commercial activities.

Switzerland was a top contender due to its proximity to the FDI's previous head office, which allowed the possibility of keeping the majority of existing staff. Furthermore, the city is a hub for international governmental and non-governmental organisations such as the United Nations, World Health Organization, World Heart Federation and the International Council of Nurses, which facilitates collaboration in integrated health promotion.

The new office is walking distance from the Geneva Airport, making it convenient for out-of-town visitors. It has 475 sqm of space and has been renovated to create an open concept workspace, with 360 degrees of windows. Earlier this year, FDI introduced a “Sponsor a Window” programme as a way to raise funds for the move. FDI Executive Director, Dr David Alexander, reported on the progress of the initiative. “The response to the Sponsor a Window programme has been significant and I would like to thank contributing member associations and individual donors for their generosity.”

FDI/Unilever Poster Award Competition

The six winners of the 2009 FDI/Unilever Poster Award Competition were announced at a reception hosted by the two organisations in Singapore on 5 September. They are:

- Sagar Abichandani (India) —“Evaluation of the Quality of Root Canal Fillings in Mumbai, India”
- Myat Hnin (Japan) —“Effects of simvastatin and alphalipocalcium phosphate combination on the early healing of bone defects”
- Yun-Ching Chang (Chinese Taipei) —“Study of invasion patterns of oral squamous cell carcinoma with a new device of modified grading system”
- Victor W. Fan —“Alveolar Bone Preservation and Augmentation with scaffold for implant therapy”
- Manisha Kukreja —“Comparative evaluation of hand wrist radiographs with cervical vertebrae for skeletal maturations in 10-12 yr old children”
- Mohanad Al-Sabbagh —“Genetic variations in periodontally involved smokers”

More than 120 submissions were received by the FDI for the competition this year. The host posters were selected as finalists prior to the congress & they were then invited to present their posters & research to a panel of judges, followed by a question & answer session at the congress. All winners received a free registration to a future FDI Annual World Dental Congress & $1,500 towards his or her participation in the congress. A FDI/Unilever Poster Award Competition will be held once again in 2010. More information can be found on the FDI website once it becomes available.

Meeting of the Section Defence Forces Dental Services (SDFS) in Singapore

On 51 August, Brigadier General (Dr) Benjamin Seet, Chief of the Singapore Armed Forces Medical Corps, officiated at the Opening Ceremony of the Military Programme for the 2009 FDI Annual World Dental Congress. The meeting, which attracted more than 60 military dentists from 18 countries, provided a forum for military dental officers to discuss scientific and military dental issues.

In his opening address, Brig. Gen. (Dr) Benjamin Seet emphasised the relevance of this year’s theme: Dental Healthcare for the Next Generation of Armed Forces. With healthcare services of many armed forces transforming to meet a wider spectrum of geopolitical and military challenges, this meeting offered participants an opportunity to network and share knowledge about advancing military dentistry and providing better oral care for soldiers and servicemen.

Among the speakers present at the congress were Colonel (Dr) Tan Peng Hui, Commander of the Singapore Armed Forces Military Medicine Institute; Major General Zhao Yimin, Vice-Dean of the School of Stomatology, China Fourth Military Medical University; Colonel Robert Hale of the US Army Institute of Surgical Research; and Police Colonel Peter Sahelangi. A wide range of topics were discussed during the two-day Military Programme, including facial trauma care, forensic remains identification, field dentistry and dental fitness of soldiers.