tend the FDI Congress in New Delhi, in 2004, as a representative of the British Dental Association. I wasn’t sure what to make of it at first, it seemed very complex. But after this experience, I reflected on the opportunities FDI involvement presented and quite liked it—the complexity of it, it was something completely new, I wanted to understand stand FDI, what we could do, how I could help raise the profile of my home association there. There is a symbiotic relationship, representing BDA at FDI and bringing benefits back to dentists in the UK.

You were recently invited to join FDI Dental Amalgam Task Team (DATT). What is the rationale behind the formation of DATT? It is fascinating work—the way these colleagues have communicated with one another around the world, all cooperating, & the quality of debate is superb. The FDI Council mandated that a Dental Amalgam Task Team be established to ensure that the international dental community & issues regarding dental amalgam were properly & accurately represented in United Nations discussions regarding mercury and would be based on the best available science. For details see UNEP Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee www.unep.org/hazardous-substances/Mercury/Negotiations/NG1/tahinf/5524/languag/en-US/Default.aspx.

The DATT consists of a representative from each of the FDI standing committees, three Council representatives & where required he supplemented with subject matter experts.

Where does the DATT stand now and what role does it play in FDI overall mission? At the UNEP meeting in Stockholm, 7-11 June 2010, I was privileged to represent FDI Dental Amalgam Task Team. This meeting saw a continuation of the process begun in November and we had the opportunity to lobby delegates to our position to avoid an all-out amalgam ban. DATT is looking to develop in formation for member NDA’s to take back to their countries to communicate with their governments directly. It will be governments who vote on this, so we require a team effort to achieve the desired result.

In regards to dental amalgam, it is not a health issue because the dental profession has a significant body of evidence that the use of amalgam as a restorative material is safe with respect to human health. However it is the broader considerations with regards to mercury that the intergovernmental negotiating committee is addressing.

Is FDI developing a position on environmental waste? We must be seen as doing everything we can, including:

- Make sure all waste is collected properly in dental surgery & properly disposed of & recycled wherever possible, to avoid contamination
- Move away from bulk mercury, which can be misappropriated for small scale gold mining, towards capsule mercury, which avoids spillage.

What does the FDI World Dental Federation offer to the dentist? The world is changing and FDI helps us to understand this change at international or global level. For example, amalgam is prime issue. FDI can represent this at the world level for the dental profession. Another example is GCI and how it fits together, there is serendipity—the strategy for dealing with caries sees a reduction in need for amalgam.

There is a huge opportunity to make a real difference through FDI. For some associations from more advanced countries, part of FDI’s work is the duty to help colleagues in developing areas. There is a global responsibility which is enhanced now by amalgam issue—this shows that we are one world, working together for better oral health.

What plans does the FDI Dental Practice Committee (DPC) have for 2010? I have been a Member of DPI for just over a year. It is nice to meet with colleagues and see how we approach problems differently. It can be difficult to produce the consensus statements due to different legal systems and philosophies of care, so when we produce a statement it is even more satisfying. Benefits of being part of the DPC include meeting more of the people involved in FDI work, and feeling more that I am part of the team.

Looking at purpose of the committee, there will be fewer but more focus projects with the DPC collaborating with other committees to contribute to FDI strategic objectives. We are looking at the dental team, risk management in dental practice, indemnity, infection control and waste management.

Also we have been approached by colleagues at the Indian Dental Association, which is a positive development.

Where do you see your work taking you with FDI? I am enjoying what I am doing now. It means a juggling act with FDI involvement, the BDA where I am chair of the Representative Body, running dental practice, and European work.

Dr Stuart Johnston qualified in 1972 from Cardiff Dental School and has worked in his own practice for the last 52 years. He is the DPC member on the FDI Dental Amalgam Task Team (DATT).

FDI Revisits Suntec Center, Singapore

Eight months after the successful 2009 FDI Annual World Dental Congress at the Suntec International Convention & Exhibition Centre, Singapore, FDI returned to Singapore to participate in the biennial International Dental Exhibition and Meeting (IDEM) that took place from 16 to 18 April 2010.

Dr Roberto Vianna, FDI President, was present at IDEM Singapore to promote FDI and to extend FDI’s spirit of partner ship among participating stake holders.

“IDEM Singapore brings together many facets of FDI’s work towards improving oral and general health. Together with the Singapore Dental Association, FDI develops outstanding Continuing Education programmes — based on relevant and timely topics for the profession—which not only play an important role in the development of dentistry & dental professionals, but also in advocating the importance of oral healthcare to the population,” said Dr Vianna at the IDEM opening ceremony.

Organised by Koelmessene and the Singapore Dental Association (SDA), in cooperation with FDI World Dental Federation, the 2010 edition of IDEM Singapore delivered cutting-edge insights into the very latest in dental technology, techniques and patient treatment. The 2010 Scientific Conference at IDEM Singapore, which featured 18 international thought leaders in their respective fields, brought to the fore new protocols in patient treatment. Moreover, the most recent innovations that help dentists minimize the risks involved in advanced
Grand opening of FDI head office in Geneva, Switzerland

Friday 23 April 2010 saw the official opening of the new FDI World Dental Federation head office and the start of a new chapter in FDI’s evolution. FDI secretariat has been settling in to the new location since the move from Ferney Voltaire, France, last Sept. immediately following Congress.

The move from France to Switzerland reflects the diversity of FDI membership. Geneva is international crossroads with its multicultural population, in a country with four official languages, located in heart of Europe and well connected to rest of the world. Also significant is the fact that Geneva is a Capital of Health, with FDI neighbours including the World Health Organization, World Heart Federation, International Federation of Red Cross, and Medecins san frontiers. Furthermore the consolidation of FDI businesses under a single entity provides more simplified management & a favourable taxation environment.

Attending the ceremony were FDI Council members and staff, FDI members, corporate sponsors, partners and other NGOs. Mr Stéphane Graher, Délégué au Service de la Promotion Economique du Canton de Genève, and Mr André Kloppmann, Chargé des ONG internationales, Canton de Genève, represented the Canton de Genève.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony was performed by FDI President, Roberto Vianna; FDI Executive Director, David Alexander; and for the Canton de Genève, André Kloppmann. Guests enjoyed a brief tour of the ofﬁce on the 5th ﬂoor having a sneak peak of FDI’s new “home” and FDI’s colourful windows.

The Grand Opening ceremony coincided with FDI Council meeting. Despite the Iceland volcanic ash incident which made traveling difficult, a good number of guests could still attend the ceremony. However, some aspects of the event were postponed, such as the bidding for the 2015 congress. This has now has been scheduled to take place in September in Salvador.

Excerpt from FDI President’s speech

Roberto Vianna: “I feel proud that FDI World Dental Federation—one of the world’s oldest international health profession organizations—has found a new home in this city, with neighbours including the World Health Organization, United Nations, and World Trade Organization.”

“...From our new home in Geneva, we are well positioned to collaborate with our many partners in health, continuing to serve as the worldwide, uniform voice for oral health; to promote oral health globally; & to deliver excellence in continuing professional education & access to care to communities worldwide.”

Social Events Schedule for FDI 2010 Congress now available

The social programme for the 2010 FDI Annual World Dental Congress which will be held from 2–5 September in Salvador, Brazil is now accessible for participants to familiarise themselves of what awaits them in the exotic Bahia state. The programme has been carefully developed to show the various aspects of the local culture.

Visit the FDI website to access the social programme.

Successful Live.Learn. Laugh. project

Initiative pilots adoption of a province-wide oral health programme in the Philippines

During the 1 March 2010 ceremony marking the end of the 3 year Live.Learn.Laugh Philippines demonstration project, Governor of the province of Batangas, Viñeta Santos-Recto, affirmed her plans to expand the Batang May K (BMK) project to ten more municipalities of the Province of Batangas.

Batang May K—Empowering children to Healthy Habits, was a project under the Live.Learn. laugh partnership of FDI World Dental Federation and Unilever Oral Health in association with the Philippine Pediatric Dental Society and Philippines Dental Association (PDA).

The BMK project aimed at improving the oral and overall health status of pre-school children in day care centres in Batangas through tooth brushing, hand-washing, finger nail cutting, healthy diet, mass de-worming and waste management.

Looking forward, the theme and speakers for IDEM 2012 Scientific conference have been chosen. IDEM 2012 will focus on ‘Advances and Controversies’. It will have the following personalities as keynote speakers: Dennis Tarnow from the Columbia School of Medicine, New York; and Dr Michel Magne and Dr Pascal Magne from the University of Southern California, Los Angeles.

As a catalyst for the 5 year Live.Learn.Laugh Philippines project, following a National Oral Health Survey reported that 97.1% of six year old children suffered from dental caries and 84.7% from dental infections, the Philippine Pediatric Dental Society instigated a project to empower children to healthy habits.