

Brief on the XII General Conference, IFCC 19-21st March 2016; Madrid; Spain

By Dr Imran Siddiqui (PSCP; Pakistan)

Following is a brief report on the XII General Conference, IFCC held in Madrid; Spain (19-21st March 2016). I was nominated by PSCP (Pakistan Society of Chemical Pathologist) as a National representative to the above meeting. This meeting was attended by 270 participants across the Globe with 59 accompanying persons. 71 representatives from National societies were present (only 8 last minutes cancellation) and 14 corporate members. There were 33 closed working group meetings with 13 interactive sessions were held during 3 days.

Day 1: March 19, 2016

The General Conference Session 1; day started at 08:30 am. Session was chaired by Dr Sergio Bernardini (Secretary: IFCC GC Madrid 2016).

Dr. Bernard Gouget (Chair: IFCC GC Madrid 2016) gave the welcome address to all the participants. This was followed by presentations by the IFCC Executive Board. Professor Maurizio Ferrari (President: IFCC GC Madrid 2016), presented the strategic plan for the IFCC (2016-2017); followed by the Treasurer's report by Tomris Ozben (IFCC Treasurer) and then the Corporate Members' report was presented by Rolf Hinzmann (Corporate Representative at IFCC Executive Board). This was followed by Q&A and open discussion.

After the coffee break; the other IFCC Federations reports were presented including the AFCCB, AFCC, APFCB, COLABIOCLI, EFLM and NAFCC. These reports were presented by their respective heads.

The 2nd session of the General Conference was chaired by Dr. Leaslie Lai (President APFCB, Malaysia) who presented the executive summary on EMD (Education & Management Division). During this session; presentations on the mentoring program for developing quality competency in Medical Laboratories, cancer genomics, crossing science and education on HbA1c, were delivered. This was followed by Q&A and open discussion and later there was EMD-CPD (Education & Management Division -Education & Publication Division) joint interactive session on IFCC E-Academy – the new tool for implementation of distance learning Programme in Laboratory medicine.

The 3rd session of the General Conference was chaired by the Chair of CPD (Communication & Publication Division) Dr. Khosrow Adeli. There were few other presentations related to this topic (eg IFCC PR Activities, Digital Future of IFCC Communications: an IFCC Taskforce Report, digital publishing in Academia and a guided Tour of IFCC Website). The day was finished with keynote address on the "Protective role of Mediterranean Diet on Cardiovascular Diseases, risk in the Environmental Health Perspectives" by the invited speaker; Professor Demosthenes Panagiotakos, from Harakopio University, Athens, over a formal dinner.

Day 2: March 20, 2016

The General Conference Session 4; day 2 started at 09:00 am. Session was chaired by Rolf Hinzmann (Corporate Representative at IFCC Executive Board). He started with the introduction of Corporate members and their role at IFCC. It was followed by presentation by Prof. Graham Beastall (Past

president IFCC) on strengthening partnership between IFCC and its Corporate Members. Patrick Bugeon (Senior Vice President, International Govt affairs, Bio-Rad Laboratories) delivered keynote lecture on serving patients, physicians and payers and the challenges faced by the industry.

After the coffee break; General Conference Session 5; was chaired by Dr. Ian Young who also gave an executive summary on Scientific Division (SD) of IFCC. Dr. Professor Graham Beastall gave a talk on the importance of Standardization of laboratory tests. The other 2 talks by Dr. Greg Miller and Dr. Linda Thienpont were on same topic but with different perspective.

Post lunch; continuation of Session 5; was chaired by Dr. Philippe Gillery. Keynote address on “Emerging and disruptive technologies” by Dr. Larry Kricka (Department of Pathology & Lab Medicine, U.Pen, Philadelphia USA). Measurement and Clinical Utility of CSF proteins by Dr. Kaj Blennow and in last by Dr. Joanna Sheldon gave her thoughts on “standardization of autoimmune tests: successes and challenges”.

After the evening coffee break; General Conference Session 6; there were simultaneous Interactive workshops which were suggested by IFCC Functional units, National Societies and Regions. These were conducted at the same time in different venues.

This evening ended with a Gala Dinner.

Day 3: March 21, 2016

On the last day; General Conference Session 7; chaired by Dr. Tomas Zima who is a member of C-CC (Congress & Conferences Committee); presented an Executive Summary on the emergent hybrid Lab Med Conference and the future vision of IFCC congresses and meetings. Peng Yin C-CC corporate member; gave a talk on “Evolution of the IVD Industry’s ongoing support for congresses according the business ethics codes”.

In the last; 6 brief presentation on the forthcoming IFCC congresses were given by respective Congress Presidents. The XIV APFCB Asia Pacific Federation Clinical Biochemistry (Tapei, Taiwan - November 26-29, 2016); XXII IFCC-EFLM EuroMedlab 2017 (Athens, Greece – June 11-15 2017), XXXIII COLABLIIOCLI Congress 2017 (Punta del Este, UY- 17-22 Sept 2017); XXIII IFCC Worldlab 2017 (Durban, Oct 22-25, 2017); XXIII IFCC-EFLM EuroMedLab 2019 (May 19-23, 2019 Barcelona); XXIV IFCC WorldLab 2020 (Seoul, Korea, May 24-28, 2020).

So there are three events which are expected to be held in 2017 and in 2016 there is one further event which will be held on AFCB.

There was lot of discussion on having more than one IFCC events in the same year. Since it is a huge financial burden on different attendees and corporate sector; it was suggested that in future IFCC would prefer to have only one meeting per year. There was also suggested to put extra effort on the scientific content of different meetings.

Finally, Professor Maurizio Ferrari (President IFCC) gave closing remarks. He thanked all the participants. Also at this point; he introduced, recognized and praised the efforts of all the National representatives. He also gave the outcome of the Madrid conference with a way to move forward in future with the new

perspective for IFCC; this included value of promoting laboratories medicine, promoting accessibility to laboratory medicine in the emerging countries, innovation and models for hybrid congresses and conference. In addition, communications among all the societies to improve corporate collaboration while sticking to the ethics.

President also emphasized that IFCC should look forward to bring “change” – from Clinical Chemistry to laboratory medicine; from health care to the well-being of the patient; from specimen specific or specimen-centric to patient-centric; and rather than going for the cost per test IFCC should look at the cost per patient. In addition, Professor Ferrari assured all the National societies that IFCC will always be on their side to promote their efforts in improving quality and education. In the end, President again thanked all the members on behalf of IFCC.

There were many “closed meetings” and “WG (working group meetings)” during the conference at different venues where the relevant members participated.

The last afternoon was kept free where a 3 hour city tour was arranged; this was sponsored by the “Spanish Society of Clinical Biochemistry and Molecular Pathology” -Sociedad Espanola de Bioquimica Clinica y Pathologia Molecular (SEQC)- This day and meeting concluded on a dinner at the meeting venue.

On a personal level; made 3 new friends over the Gala dinner: Dr. Cas Weykamp (MCA Lab-Netherlands); Dr Adil Khan (Asst Prof of Pathology; Temple University; USA) and Mr. Joseph Passarelli (Senior Director - Scientific Relations - Roche Diagnostics Corporation; USA). I had an opportunity to talk on issues and views of our respective countries; a future professional liaison and a commitment to regroup at AACC in Philadelphia, USA in August 2016.



L - R (Drs Adil; Imran; Weykamp & Mr. Passarelli)

Few other Glimpses of the event



Session in progress



Dr B Yadav- Nepal, a previous acquaintance