



Dear IASP member,

End of May the Executive Committee spent a couple of days of intensive meetings with the purpose of evaluating activities and planning for the time to come. Nearly half way into the IASP strategy period for the years 2003-08 (see www.med.uio.no/iasp/html/about_iasp.html for more information) we feel that we are on the right track. Among current strategic priorities of IASP is to make more visible the problem of suicide and the need for prevention at a global level. Essential to this is a need to make IASP itself more visible to the worldwide community in which it serves. To do this we have promoted the World Suicide Prevention Day; we have increased the number of international congresses hosted by IASP; we have worked to broaden our collaborative relationship with the WHO and we have (hopefully) increased our communication with you - the membership - and external audiences on issues related to suicide prevention. Furthermore, the Executive Committee has several projects under development to promote systematic knowledge transfer in suicide prevention, to combat pesticide suicides and to strengthen support for suicide survivors. Additionally, several of our task forces have been working very well, and there is considerable interest in establishing new TFs in new and important fields.

An association like IASP depends on a large and resourceful membership to have a sufficiently strong impact within its fields of interest. There is no doubt about the issue of resourcefulness. Indeed, we count among our members the world's leading suicidologists; researchers, clinicians, volunteers and survivors. Furthermore, the membership is growing. But we should rightfully be many more than the current 400! We therefore encourage all of our members to consider their opportunities to recruit colleagues and associates. Consult our webpages or our Central Administrative Office for information on different membership opportunities, discount memberships etc.

The Executive Committee will fully present the state of affairs in IASP in a series of reports which will be submitted at the General Assembly meeting at the XXIII IASP World Conference in Durban middle of September this year. We hope to see many of our members there - new and old!

Lars Mehlum
President

Pesticides and suicide



The International Association of Suicide Prevention (IASP) is strongly concerned about the problem of pesticide suicide in the third world. Several reports have drawn our attention to the fact that more than 300 000 lives are lost to suicide with this method each year. It is likely that a

large proportion of this huge number of deaths could be prevented if dangerous pesticides were not as easily available as currently is the situation in many third world countries.

WHO has been involved in discussing this important health problem, and it has been suggested that pesticides should be stored more centralized. Furthermore, it has been proposed to make a minimum pesticides list, recommending governments to allow only less dangerous compounds to be sold in their country.

The board of IASP will be most interested in promoting initiatives that could reduce the number of pesticide suicides, and we consider it very likely that removal of the most dangerous compounds will have great impact on suicide mortality in the third world. WHO have planned a project: **The impact of pesticides on health: Preventing intentional and unintentional death from pesticide poisoning.** IASP welcomes this project and hope to be able to support it by providing a forum at our conferences. At the IASP congress in Durban there will be two special sessions on pesticides and suicide and the theme will also be discussed at the upcoming Second Asia Pacific regional conference in Singapore.

Merete Nordentoft
General Secretary

In memoriam Professor dr Slavica Selaković-Buršić

IASP has received the very sad news of the sudden and unexpected death of dr Slavica Selaković-Buršić MD.

Dr Slavica Selaković-Buršić passed away on June 17th after a heart attack.

We are all shocked and in grief after receiving these news.

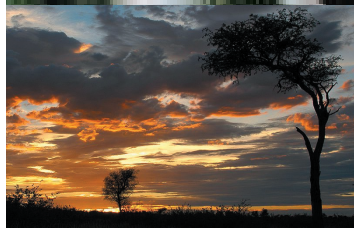
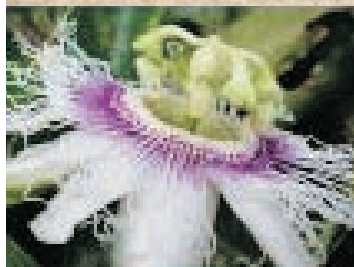
A professor of psychiatry at the Institute of Neurology, Psychiatry & Mental Health at the University of Novi Sad in Serbia, Slavica was for many years committed to all aspects of suicide prevention through her important scientific, clinical and volunteer contributions, nationally as well as internationally. Her ability to continue her important work even through times of war, political crisis and hardship in her home country impressed us all. Slavica served for a number of years on the Executive Committee of IASP as the Chair of the Council of Organisational Representatives, where she did an excellent job. In IASP she won herself many friends through her hard and dedicated work, high professional standards and warm and friendly personality. These days our thoughts are with Slavica's husband and two daughters. Her death is a tragic and profound loss to the world of suicide prevention and to our organisation where she will be deeply missed.

Lars Mehlum
President

Message from the Chair of Council of National Representatives

Dear Colleagues,

It gives me great pleasure to bring news of some developments in our Association. As you are no doubt aware we had a very successful 1st Asia-Pacific Regional Conference on Suicide Prevention in Bangkok last year. Now we are planning the **2nd Regional Conference in Singapore in March 2006**, in collaboration with our colleagues in the Institute of Mental Health, Singapore. Singapore is a developed city-nation, at the crossroads of Southeast Asia, an important transportation and trading hub. It has a reputation for good organization of meetings with great facilities (besides shopping!). Please watch for news of this conference in coming issues of the Newsletter. Dr. Alex Su who is involved in organizing this meeting will be in Durban to publicize it. We hope many international delegates will attend, especially those in Asia and the Pacific Rim.



The World Congress in Durban is barely 3 months away and our Council of National Reps meeting will be held on 14th September. There are a number of important decisions that will be taken, besides tabling of reports and elections. You would have received the notice of the IASP General Meeting by now, and would have noticed that important amendments to the IASP constitution have been proposed. This was worked out with the help of the Executive Committee in line with the wishes of the last General Meeting held in Stockholm. Since these amendments concern the issue of National Representatives I would urge you to study these carefully so as to contribute to the discussion prior to voting on them.



WSPD 2005 is approaching. Last year was highly successful.

In Malaysia we plan to hold prevention related activities for a whole month and our Minister of Health has expressed interest. May I request National Representatives to report

your country's WSPD plans and activities to us, so that these could be carried in the Newsletter.

This would encourage others. You may use the suggestions in the WSPD pamphlet that has already been sent out, and give us new ideas as well.



Looking forward to meeting you in Durban,
Maniam

Reporting of global suicide rates

The Executive Committee has had a lot of positive feedback on the new IASP initiative on improved reporting of global suicide rates. In our short message for the last News Bulletin we may, however, inadvertently have given the impression that very few countries report any data at all on suicide rates to the WHO. In fact, nearly 100 countries do report some data in this field to the WHO.



The problem, however, as we see it, is that there is a substantial lack of updated information available on national and regional suicide rates. Less than 50 countries provide data that are less than 5 years old and for many countries data are more than 10 years old. We strongly believe that IASP and its members can help alter this state of affairs through supporting the important work of the WHO in this field.

July and August is vacation time for many of us.



Next bulletin will appear in September.

If you have anything you would like to have posted here for information to other members, please contact us.