Dear IASP member,

Conferences play an important role in the life of organizations such as IASP. Without them, networks of researchers, clinicians, volunteers and survivors cannot work optimally. To organize world conferences has been a main raison d'être for the IASP since the founding in 1960 and remains a high priority to the present Executive Committee. Even though preparations for the upcoming conference in Durban in September is our current main focus, considerable attention is paid to the process of soliciting and assessing candidates for future world conferences. The IASP world congress 2011 is now up for decision – this decision will be made during the Durban conference by the Council of National Representatives. Should any of our members wish to bid for this conference, we would be glad to receive information about it as soon as possible. Guidelines for conference organizers are available from IASP upon request.

Over the last years IASP has emphasized the need to be on the move with regard to its world conferences – covering all continents. Since, however, only a limited number of countries and cities could ever organize one of these biennial congresses, IASP wishes to increase its conference activities through the development of regional conferences, in close collaboration with local partners. The hugely successful First Asia Pacific Regional Conference of the IASP in Bangkok October 2004 in collaboration with the Royal College of Psychiatrists of Thailand, was the first of these meetings. IASP also co-sponsored the International congress on Innovative practices for suicide prevention in Montreal, Canada, May 2004. These days, June 2-4 the 4th ‘International Meeting on Suicide: The Interplay of genes and environment’ is taking place in Ghent, Belgium, cosponsored by IASP. Currently, the IASP is planning a second regional conference in Asia to take place in Singapore March 2006 in collaboration with the Singapore Institute of Mental Health. We would encourage all of our members in general, and our national representatives and organizational members in particular, to consider what initiatives they might make in order to create more regional conferences like this under the auspices of IASP. We would certainly do our best to support good proposals and initiatives.

Lars Mehlum
President

Improved reporting of global suicide rates - new initiative from IASP

There is a lack of updated information on suicide rates for most countries of the world. Even though the WHO publishes important data on suicide rates on their website based on reports from member countries, only about 50 countries deliver such official information. Furthermore, there seems to be a delay of up to several years in the processing of this information in many countries. The IASP Executive Committee has decided to launch a new project with the aim of bringing forward more information on suicide rates – globally and in countries, regions and territories. Our national representatives, organizational members and other members of the organisation will be our important collaborators in this endeavour to collect as much data as possible.

Dr Danielle St-Laurent of the Institut national de santé publique du Québec in collaboration with professor Brian Mishara at the CRISE in Montréal and professor Lars Mehlum at the Suicide Research and Prevention Unit at the University of Oslo will coordinate the process of analysing and publishing the data on the IASP website. At a later stage the EC will investigate the possibility of establishing an “Atlas of suicide rates and suicide prevention resources” in collaboration with the WHO.
IAASP 2005:

The organising committee of IASP 2005 would like to thank all who have submitted abstracts, agreed to participate and assisted with the selection of the abstracts. The programme is now in its final stages and is incredible in its diversity. We have indeed succeeded in bringing together a wide range of topics covering our theme of preventing suicide in diverse cultures. It promises to be a unique experience, presented in a unique South African setting. Scaling the Summit implies overcoming fear, prejudice and requires a certain amount of effort. The reward is experiencing a new journey with a common goal and the view of new perspectives. We are ready to offer you the experience! Make the effort come to Durban and share it all!

Professor Schlebusch was guest of honour at a Love to Live event that attracted more than 10 000 people over the past weekend. It is one of the biggest Edufairs locally and the aim is to help children and the public deal with serious health issues including suicide prevention and HIV/AIDS. The programme of the Durban IASP Congress was enthusiastically welcomed by the organisers of this event. We also have been invited by the Provincial Government to address the Cabinet on our congress. All these efforts will ensure that the Durban IASP congress will live up to your expectations. See you at the congress!

Future IASP congresses:

- **XXIII IASP World Congress**
  - **Durban** 13-16 September 2005
  - Contact person: Professor L. Schlebusch

- **2nd Asia Pacific Conference of the IASP**
  - **Singapore** March 2006
  - Contact person: Professor T. Maniam

- **XXIV IASP World Congress**
  - **Ireland** August 2007
  - Contact person: Dr J. Connolly

- **XXV IASP World Congress**
  - **Montevideo** 2009
  - Contact person: Dra. S. Pelaez

Don’t miss this opportunity; submit your registration form by return of post. We hope to see you in September 2005.

Lourens Schlebusch
Sue Thönell

Welcome to
The IASP 2005 Congress,
Durban, South Africa
13 – 16 September 2005