

DR KAMAL K MIDHA, Address
Pharmaceutical Sciences World Congress (PSWC)
Amsterdam
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Your Excellency Dr Plasterk, Dear Colleagues, Friends, Ladies and Gentlemen.

As President of FIP, I am honoured and delighted to warmly welcome you – more than 2,000 strong, to this 3rd Pharmaceutical Sciences World Congress chaired so ably by Professor Crommelin. It is now three years since many of us last met together at the 2nd PSWC in Kyoto, Japan under the Chairmanship of Professor Sugiyama, which was another successful congress like the 1st PSWC in San Francisco under the Chairmanship of Professor Benet. Both Professor Sugiyama & Professor Benet are in this meeting and I hope they would continue to provide advice and guidance in future PSWC. Our meetings are great opportunities for us to celebrate and share together our common professional expertise, concerns, fellowship and commitments to world health care.

This 3rd Pharmaceutical Sciences World Congress represents our global interests and concerns as Pharmaceutical Scientists. Appropriately the Congress this year is focused on the theme of *Optimising Drug Therapy: An Imperative for World Health*. For many of us, medicinal therapy represents a relatively standard, taken-for-granted health care intervention that involves diagnosis and treatment. Supporting this personal and public orientation toward health care and wellness is the enormous research and development activity involved in bringing new health care strategies to successful practice. In the experience of most persons who are consumers, medicinal therapy is a very focused and limited activity in their lives, available as needed for chronic diseases and quality of life concerns.

For us as pharmaceutical scientists, medicinal therapy represents a huge investment of our time and resources, personal and financial, not only in the development of treatment strategies, but also in translating these strategies into effective practices which are affordable, deliverable, and available to consumers based on need and demand.

What I have said, however, is true for only part of the world and some of its people. The developing nations and their people still suffer immensely from the double jeopardy of acute infectious diseases as well as chronic illnesses. These nations and their people lack the critical medicinal therapies to control and find cures for these diseases. They also lack the basic infrastructure of personal and financial resources to even begin the process of helping the needy. These nations and their people carry an intolerable disease burden without affordable and available medical interventions for effective health care. This situation must not be accepted by any one of us.

In this year's World Congress, we, the Pharmaceutical Scientists, have the opportunity and the responsibility to commit ourselves to discovering and developing approaches which directly address these global challenges of rampant infectious diseases – and more precisely "Neglected Diseases" which I believe affects neglected populations. All these are threats to millions of people and to world health itself. We must individually and collectively ask ourselves what should be done now, and in the future. We must seek creative ways of financing such developments and delivery of treatments which bring together public and private collaboration through partnerships to deal with Neglected Diseases (such as Malaria, TB and others) These creative approaches of public and private

partnerships could save millions of people from death and destruction. We should also be most vigilant of the counterfeit medicines as their potential use can have frightening consequences for patients and divert them from the controlled market.

The 20th century witnessed the tremendous growth in the Physical Sciences:

- The shrinking of the world into what McLuhan called the “global village”
- In the birth and daily reality of truly global communications,
- In the spread of and dependence on global knowledge
- In international transportation of millions of people daily.

The 21st century will become the century of the Life Sciences where people will live longer and healthier lives. In less than one hundred years, we have seen a doubling of the average life expectancy – with a greater emphasis on and expectation of “quality of life” issues. In the developed nations, chronic illness is still our greatest challenge, while we spend an inordinate amount of our resources on “quality of life” medicines. Meanwhile in developing and neglected regions of the world where more than half the people of the world live, the daily struggle continues to even to get essential care. Their struggle continues to control devastating infectious and neglected diseases for some of which effective medicines may be known but in reality are unavailable. FIP supports the enormous and critical challenge through advocacy of the competencies put forward in WHO’s publications as well as by working with our other Health Alliance Partners. The competencies supported by FIP include:

- Patient centered care,
- Partnering,
- Quality improvement of health and health care delivery,
- Information and communication, and
- Public health perspectives of moving from a single patient to populations.

This PSWC will provide information and platforms for discussion of all five of these competencies. The efforts of the “Friends of PSWC2007” have directly attempted to address a number of these competencies by providing financial scholarships to some of you from all parts of the world with the hope that you the young generation of Pharmaceutical Scientists are able to contribute, network and learn. We and our world need your knowledge and commitment from early on in your scientific careers.

I believe that although drug discovery may be largely confined to certain regions of the world, the process of drug development is a GLOBAL activity and that Pharmaceutical Scientists have been able to mount an international platform and forum, such as this World Congress, in order to explore the issues and concerns. This is why since 2000 we began to hold Pharmaceutical Sciences World Congresses to promote both the values and the practices involved in establishing and strengthening global networks. This should foster and facilitate effective dialogue, hopefully leading us to be more creative in discovery and development to achieve our cherished goals. With all of these efforts and hopes in mind, I welcome you once again to Amsterdam, to the 3rd PSWC, and to the challenges and opportunities you will have. Make the most of your four days and enjoy the beautiful city of Amsterdam and the fellowship of your friends and colleagues.