



Editorial

The 1st Libyan National Infectious and Endemic Diseases Scientific Conference was held on 4 - 7 May 2007 in Dat-Al-Emad Complex in Tripoli. The Conference was organised and hosted by the Libyan National Centre for Infectious Diseases Prevention and Control (NIDCC) under the auspices of the General People's Committee for Health and Environment. The conference attracted more than 1000 of participants from all parts of Libya and 19 invited speakers and contributors from UK, USA, Brazil, Egypt, Ireland and Malta. Besides English, the second working language at the conference was Arabic, which contributed to the attraction of a high number of non-medical professionals. The Conference brought together the «Infectious Diseases and Public Health Community» of clinicians, epidemiologists, laboratory experts, public health professionals, and clinical researchers to share the latest advances in the field of infectious diseases. This broad representation enabled the participants to learn more about different peculiarities and challenges based on local epidemiology and culture in the field of infectious diseases and, as a result, to generate solutions for the problems of diagnosis, management, control and prevention of infectious diseases in Libya in the context of increasing globalization with increasing travel and immigration.

The conference objectives were to exchange the latest advances and research in the management and control of infectious diseases, address the current epidemiological situation of infectious diseases in Libya and recommend proper prevention and control policies for both infectious diseases and hospital acquired infections and increase awareness and the profile of infectious diseases in Libya.

In his keynote address, the director of NIDCC; the conference's president, stated that the conference, the first of its kind, represents a milestone in the development of the NIDCC. The opening ceremony was attended by the secretary of health and a number of distinguished guests. This was followed by informative and interesting three-day program. The main themes of the conference were vaccinology, tuberculosis, HIV / AIDS, STDs and viral hepatitis, hospital acquired infections, parasitology and vector

control and Avian Flu. These themes were addressed through different streams: 6 plenary sessions were followed by 28 wide range parallel sessions, which were divided by themes and delivering languages and around 15 posters. The participants could also enjoy 7 interesting round table discussions, three expert meetings (meet the expert sessions) and one workshop on surveillance systems conducted by NICDD, Centre of Disease Control in the USA (CDC) and Health Protection Agency in the UK (HPA). A great attraction for the conference program was the number of social events offered to the participants. They included sightseeing tour to the magnificent Leptis Magna and gala dinner.

This conference has reflected the commitment of the Libyan authorities, through the efforts of NICDD, to reduce the burden of infectious diseases. The conference established the NIDCC academic and research significant contribution. Other important recommendations of the conference were to make the conference a regular event once every two years, implement the ID Diploma, establish the necessary infrastructure to combat hospital acquired infections, strength and enhance comprehensive strategies to combat Avian flu, TB, HIV/AIDS and STDs, Hepatitis B and C, parasitic diseases and vector control, Bilharziasis, further strength the highly successful vaccination programme and develop further the collaboration with the CDC in the USA and HPA in UK on developing surveillance, biosafety and biosecurity systems in Libya and take advantage of the training opportunities offered by the regional Naval Medical Research Unit 3 (NAMRU) in Cairo and the CDC and HPA institutions.

We think the conference was an exciting, informative and interesting event. We wish to thank all of the speakers and participants and extend our appreciation to the Organizing Committee and Scientific Committee for their efforts and commitment to ensure the success of the conference.

We hope to see you all in the 2nd Libyan infectious diseases conference in 2009.

Abdulhafid Abdulsalam Abudher
Chairman of the Editorial Board