

11th MASEAN Conference

Strengthening Professional Medical Education

Reported by Dr Wong Chiang Yin, SMA 1st Vice President and MASEAN Secretary General, and Krysania Tan, MASEAN Secretariat Officer



Delegates of the 11th MASEAN Conference.



(L-R) Dr Tan Sze Wee, Dr Wong Chiang Yin, Dr Achmad Sujudi (Health Minister of Indonesia), Prof F A Moeloek (President of Indonesian Medical Association), and Dr Toh Han Chong.

After an eventful 2003, during which several scheduled conferences were postponed due to health concerns arising from the SARS Outbreak, the 11th MASEAN Conference was finally held from 28 to 31 July 2004, at the Discovery Kartika Plaza Hotel, in Bali, Indonesia. The Conference brought together medical leaders from seven ASEAN countries; Myanmar and Philippines did not send representatives this year. The Singapore Medical Association was represented by Dr Tan Sze Wee and Dr Toh Han Chong.

This year's theme was on "Strengthening Professional Medical Education in the Context of Regional Health Development".

OPENING CEREMONY

The Guest-of-Honour at the Opening Ceremony on the morning of 29 July 2004 was the Indonesian Minister of Health, Dr Achmad Sujudi.

The Opening Speech was delivered by the Outgoing Chairman of MASEAN and current President of the Cambodian

Medical Association, Prof Sau Sok Khonn. This was followed by the handover of his MASEAN office to the Incoming Chairman, Prof F A Moeloek, who is also the President of the Indonesian Medical Association.

In his Inaugural Address, Prof Moeloek spoke on the development and training of human resources, which is a critical component in the region's health development efforts. With increasing globalisation in the trade of services and professionals, it is also important to work towards establishing regional standards for medical training and practice.

STANDARDS FOR MEDICAL EDUCATION

The objective of the 11th MASEAN Conference was to study the medical education systems in each ASEAN country, with the focus on the current situation and progress achieved, constraints faced, and future prospects, so as to formulate a strategy towards developing regional standards for medical education. Three symposiums were thus held in the areas of General Medical Education, Specialist Medical Education and General Practitioner Education. The SMA presented papers on the medical education systems in Singapore for specialists and general practitioners.

Arising from these presentations and the subsequent discussions, a MASEAN Resolution on "Strengthening Professional Medical Education in Support of Health Development in the ASEAN Region" was drawn up. To achieve this vision, three missions were identified:

1. To promote basic medical education, through developing educational standards in the ASEAN region;
2. To strengthen specialist medical education; and
3. To strengthen family medicine education programmes, either via basic medical education or post-graduate training.

The Indonesian Medical Association would form an ad-hoc Medical Education Committee for the formulation, support and monitoring of the implementation of missions and actions, while the MASEAN Secretariat would facilitate by collecting and disseminating relevant information and evaluating progress in the reform process.

The presentation of country reports continues to be a regular feature, and delegates gave updates on the healthcare developments in their respective countries.

Finally, MASEAN associations welcomed a new member:

the Lao Medical Association, which has been established since 18 June 2003. Member associations also unanimously agreed that the SMA, which has been hosting the MASEAN Secretariat for the last four years, would continue to do so for another four-year term.

NEXT MASEAN MEETING

The Medical Association of Thailand would host the 11th Mid-Term Meeting in 2005.

The full versions of speeches, symposium presentations, country reports and the MASEAN Resolution can be viewed at <http://www.masean.org> ■