

STI Global Update

Newsletter of the International Union against Sexually Transmitted Infections

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President's Column

Dear members of IUSTI and colleagues interested in STIs!

The start of a new year is always a reason to look back at the last one and even more, to look forward to the new one. We all think about personal priorities for the next several months or the upcoming year as well as considering new plans for the progress of our work.

It is only appropriate and even expected that there are ideas, wishes, plans, and future visions in order to keep our union active and dynamic. In this newsletter I want to take the opportunity to inform you about some successful events in 2006, and new developments and changes for IUSTI planned for 2007.

We have active regions!

We look back to two very successfully organized Regional IUSTI meetings in 2006: one organized in the summer by the Asian Pacific Branch in Kuala Lumpur and the second one organized in October by the European Branch in Versailles. Both meetings achieved their objectives, both in terms of participants and scientific quality, so that attendees had an excellent chance to exchange and thereby enlarge their knowledge of STI while also enjoying the social activities. Our African Branch has already started to consolidate and to cooperate with different national groups to increase the IUSTI-Africa network.



Versailles - M. Janier, the local organizer and W. van der Meijden, the Chair of the Scientific Committee, are enjoying the successful meeting together with A. Poder, K. Radcliffe, and A. Stary

In this newsletter you will be able to read about new plans, activities, and developments in the different regions. IUSTI is a global union and we are happy to have very active regional branches. Although the structures of the branches differ according to their needs, the goals and ideals of IUSTI are the same. Diversity is our strength!

A new Regional Director for the Asia-Pacific Branch.

At the end of 2006, IUSTI was confronted with the sudden and unexpected resignation of Dr. Verapol Chandeying as the Regional Director of the Asian-Pacific Region. This was due to new obligations as the Head of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology in his university and as the Chair of the Asia Oceania Federation of Sexology. Dr Verapol has been an extremely active Regional Director since 1999 and has given fantastic effort to IUSTI. On behalf of the Executive Committee and all members, especially from the Asian Pacific Region, I thank him for his contributions to IUSTI, and wish him all the best for his future. In order to ensure a smooth transition in the region, Dr. Verapol has suggested Dr. Roy Chan as acting regional director following local consultations. I am happy to announce that both Prof. Roy Chan and the Members of the Executive Committee have agreed to his installation as the acting interim Regional Director of the Asian Pacific Region. I am confident this will be confirmed by the next General Assembly in Seattle 2007.



Regional Meeting in Kuala Lumpur. Dr Chevalit Mangkalaviraj surpasses his duty as the Regional Chair of the Asian-Pacific Branch to Dr. HH Doshi, the present Chair of the Asian-Pacific Branch

ISSTD-IUSTI-World Conference.

In 2007 the ISSTD-IUSTI World Congress will take place from July 29 to August 1 in Seattle and will certainly be an exciting and challenging highlight for all scientists and colleagues working in the field of STI. Together with Prof. Hunter Handsfield, the president of ISSTD and Chair of the conference, I

want to invite all members of IUSTI to attend the meeting and to actively participate by submitting abstracts on the results of their most recent research or studies in their own countries in order to have a global representation of all aspects of STI.



Hunter Handsfield, president of ISSTD and chair of the ISSTD-IUSTI world conference in Seattle 2007, and Angelika Stary, president of IUSTI

We have a new logo!

It took several months to develop the new logo but I am sure it will act as a symbol for the global ideals of IUSTI and of the 5 regional Branches. The logo was approved at the last meeting of the Executive Committee in Versailles. I am happy to present the new logo for IUSTI worldwide, which you will have already seen on the top of this newsletter. There are similar logos delineating each of the 5 regions of IUSTI. I hope you like them.

We are developing a new IUSTI website!

The IUSTI website will be modernized over the next few months. Prof. Michael Ward, webmaster of www.chlamydiae.com, has agreed to work as a co-opted member of the IUSTI Executive Committee and, together with his team, will rearrange the website and enlarge it with new ideas. I want to express my thanks to him and to all those who are and will be involved. I am also deeply grateful to Dr Somesh Gupta, our former webmaster, who made many important developments to the IUSTI website. Prof. Ward provide an outline of his plans in more detail within this edition of *STI Global Review*.

Membership

Although there are several benefits of becoming a full member of IUSTI, our membership is still relatively low considering the number of colleagues dealing with STI. There are several ideas being considered on how to enlarge our membership. All those who are not yet members, are cordially invited to join! Everybody who wishes to contribute to the concept of a global Union against Sexually Transmitted Infections, irrespective of whether they are a clinician or a scientist, is most welcome.

Angelika Stary

IUSTI world president

IUSTI News

Changes to www.iusti.org Website

At the IUSTI meeting in Versailles, the IUSTI executive meeting considered the future role of the organisation's website, www.iusti.org. Two factors were pertinent to this consideration. First, the organisation's joint webmaster and membership secretary Dr Somesh Gupta wished to focus on the increasingly demanding role of membership secretary. Second, the new IUSTI logo (as shown below) provides an obvious framework for reconsidering the visual appearance and functionality of the web site. Apparently the old IUSTI logo was taken from the logo of an STD meeting held nearly 60 years ago.



IUSTI Logo

Dr Michael Ward, webmaster of www.chlamydiae.com and an emeritus professor of medical microbiology of Southampton University Medical School, in the UK, was invited to the executive committee meeting to present an external view of the site. He has subsequently agreed to become the new IUSTI webmaster. It was noted that the IUSTI website has served the organisation well over the years as a portal of information on its activities. Particularly commended was the secure-server based on-line application system for IUSTI membership. There was scope to enhance IUSTI regional information and services for members but the most important thing was to decide what the purpose of the IUSTI website is.

In the ensuing discussion, the committee agreed that the new logo provided an opportunity for establishing, both on and off the web, an IUSTI-specific visual identity. It was noted that there are several excellent web sites on sexually transmitted infections. The IUSTI web site should provide web links to existing excellence but not attempt to reinvent it. The focus for the website should be services useful for IUSTI members, rather than information on IUSTI for the public. A number of IUSTI members who would be willing to work with the new webmaster on the content of the site were identified, including the editor of this newsletter!

By the time that this newsletter is published, the redesign of the IUSTI site with the new IUSTI visual identity should be apparent. A key priority will be to keep the site relatively simple so that users in the developing world with narrow bandwidth links will not

be unduly disadvantaged. Text based content of the site will be radically reviewed, with a view to making it less indigestible. Web-based templates are planned to enable IUSTI officers to directly post material to the web without having to go through the webmaster. Links to external sites will be strengthened and it is hoped to develop a new search engine to the STI research literature via PubMed. At some point the website will be transferred to a different web server, hopefully without significant interruptions to service in the process.

The new webmaster will be delighted to hear from members regarding what services they would like on the IUSTI site. Please contact him by email at mew1@soton.ac.uk.

Michael Ward

Research Review

Fritz Richard Schaudinn, the Discoverer of *Treponema pallidum*

It was Fritz R. Schaudinn who was the first person in human history to see the pathogenic agent of syphilis under the microscope on March 5, 1905.

Fritz R. Schaudinn was born on September 19, 1871 in Eastern Prussia. Although his father was an administrator of a large farm he decided to devote his life to science. He started his studies of zoology in 1890 at the University of Berlin and wrote his PhD thesis about foraminifera in 1894, soon acquiring an excellent international scientific reputation. From 1901 to 1904 he was head of a German-Austrian malaria station in Rovinj, Dalmacia which is nowadays Croatia. At this time he studied malaria, but also *Coccidia*, *Entamoeba coli* and *Entamoeba histolytica*. He even performed experiments on himself with *Entamoeba coli*.

In 1904 Schaudinn returned to Berlin and became head of the new laboratory on protozoa at the Prussian Institute. However, he was not very happy with this position within the National Health Institute as he could not pursue his scientific endeavours, but was instead forced to perform public health studies.

It was in this environment that he was asked to examine what another zoologist, John Siegel, at the Health Institute falsely claimed to have discovered. John Siegel said that he detected a flagellated protozoa, which he called *Cytorrhycles luis*, as the pathogenic agent of syphilis. He detected similar agents for scarlatina, variola and for foot and mouth disease. The clinical material necessary for Schaudinn's studies was supplied by Erich Hoffmann (1868-1959) who was a dermatologist at the Charité University Department of Dermatology and Venereology, which was at that time under the guidance of Edmund Lesser (1852-1918).

It was on March 3, 1905 that Schaudinn saw for the first time under the microscope, the latest model of a Zeiss apochromate, a tremendously pale, wiggling and twisting little screw. In the following weeks Schaudinn differentiated the *Spirochaeta pallida* (as

he called the little screw) from *Spirochaeta refringend* which had been previously identified.

Schaudinn and Hoffmann published within a few weeks a preliminary report including a somewhat cautious description of what they had found, describing the presence of *Spirochaeta* in syphilitic exudates and in papillomas. On May 17, 1905 there was a noteworthy session of the Berlin Medical Society where Schaudinn and Hoffmann presented their results. Their observations were met with great scepticism. The chairman of the session, the surgeon Ernst von Bergmann, closed the session with the words: "Hereby I close the session until a new syphilitic germ will be found". Schaudinn was very upset about this and later at the dinner of the society said: "All this does not affect me, what I found is correct".

In the coming months and years a great number of scientific publications appeared in the international literature which all confirmed the detection of Schaudinn and Hoffmann. Among those reporters were Metschnikow, Castellani, Giemsa and Herxheimer, and over 100 other scientists.

Fritz Schaudinn's growing international scientific reputation led to offers of academic positions in biology and protozoa science in Cambridge and London. But Fritz Schaudinn preferred to move to Hamburg where in 1906 he became director of the protozoa laboratory of the newly erected Institute of Naval and Tropical Diseases. Schaudinn hoped that this would lead to his making further scientific breakthroughs, although regrettably these never came to fruition.

On the suggestion of the German Kaiser, Schaudinn was invited to the Second International Medical Congress in Lisbon in April 1906. His presentation was received with great enthusiasm and he was nominated for the Grand Prix of the Congress with a value of 5,000 French francs. But the Berlin Medical Society intervened and the Grand Prix was given to Alphonse Laveran, the discoverer of *Plasmodium malariae*.

On the way home from Lisbon Schaudinn became very ill, a consequence of the self experimentation with *Entamoeba*, and was operated on in Hamburg but died of sepsis on June 26, 1906 at the age 34. His grave is in the city of Berlin, where it is maintained by the city authorities.

Fritz Schaudinn remains a famous figure in medical history due to his discovery of *Treponema pallidum*, and as a biologist and protozoa scientist. His work illustrates the successful collaboration between microbiologists and clinicians in exploring disease pathogenesis and translating research into improved clinical management.

Schaudinn's seminal publications included:

Schaudinn F, Hoffmann E (1905) Vorläufiger Bericht über das Vorkommen von Spirochaeten in syphilitischen Krankheitsprodukten und bei Papillomen. Arb Kaiserlich Gesundheitsamt XXII:527-534

Schaudinn F, Hoffmann E (1905) Über Spirochaetenbefunde im Lymphdrüsensaft Syphilitischer. Dtsch Med Wochenschr 31:711-714
 Schaudinn F, Hoffmann E (1905) Über Spirochaeta pallida bei Syphilis und die Unterschiede dieser Form gegenüber anderen Arten dieser Gattung. Berl Klin Wochenschr 42:673-682
 Peter K. Kohl

Regional Reports

Europe

Those of us fortunate enough to attend the 22nd IUSTI-Europe conference on sexually transmitted infections in Versailles, France in October 2006, enjoyed a truly tremendous meeting. The scientific programme was as good as any I have attended in many years of conference going, and was of a truly global standard. The attendance by delegates from many European countries, and indeed from outside Europe, was extremely pleasing, and the delights of the town of Versailles and the neighbouring capital of Paris meant a very pleasant atmosphere and the ability to enjoy the social programme. On behalf of IUSTI-Europe I would like to express a deep debt of gratitude to all members of the scientific and organising committees, with particular mention being made of Dr Michel Janier, the conference chairman, and also to Dr Willem Van Der Meijden from Rotterdam in the Netherlands, who was the chairman of the international scientific committee.

They have certainly set a very high standard for the organisers of the next conference, the 23rd in the series, which will take place in Cavtat near Dubrovnik in Croatia, between 11-14 October 2007.

The old city of Dubrovnik (ancient Ragusa) is known as "the pearl of the Adriatic" and in 1979 it was designated a world heritage site by UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation). The conference President will be known to very many of you for his longstanding involvement in international professional activities, including as the Croatian national representative on the Board of IUSTI-Europe – he is of course Dr Mihael Skerlev. An International Scientific Committee has been established under the chairmanship of Dr Derek Freedman from Dublin in Ireland. Further information can be found at the website at: www.iustieurope2007.org.

The 24th IUSTI-Europe Conference on STI will take place in Milan in 2008. The local organiser will be Dr Marco Cusini, and the Chair of the International Scientific Committee is Dr Claudia Heller-Vitouch from Vienna in Austria.

I should also like to draw attention to another meeting, the 7th Congress of the Baltic Association of Dermatovenereology (BADV) which will take place in Riga 6-8 September 2007. The Congress President is Dr Andris Rubins, and further information can be found at the website: www.badv.lv.

On 27-28 February 2007 I shall be representing IUSTI-Europe at a Scientific Consultation Group

Conference in Stockholm, Sweden organised by the European Centres for Disease Control (ECDC). ECDC was set up in 2004 by the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union. It is responsible for facilitating co-operation between national disease control agencies and other organisations, and co-ordinating European action to meet the key health challenges of the 21st century.

Work continues on the IUSTI/WHO European STD guidelines. The original guidelines on syphilis, gonorrhoea and pelvic infection are in the process of being updated, and a new guideline on proctitis has been drafted and is now being revised into a final form. Once completed the new guidelines will be posted on the IUSTI website, and also submitted for publication in the *International Journal of STD and AIDS* which is the official organ of the IUSTI. Draft guidelines for consultation, and existing guidelines, can be viewed on the IUSTI website (www.iusti.org). Any suggestions for revision or development of new guidelines would be gladly received by myself.

Keith Radcliffe

Africa

Some important research was performed in and come out of the African Region in 2006. Africa is the site of several herpes trials, assessing the value of both episodic and suppressive therapy for genital herpes in preventing the transmission of HIV between discordant couples and in managing genital ulceration. In the November 2006 issue of *AIDS*, Ouedraogo et al. reported the results of a randomized controlled trial on the impact of suppressive herpes therapy on genital HIV-1 RNA among HIV-1/HSV-2 co-infected women taking antiretroviral therapy in Burkina Faso. They found that, overall, valacyclovir had no impact on the frequency or quantity of genital HIV-1 RNA, although valacyclovir did reduce the proportion of visits in which genital HSV-2 was detected. However, by restricting the analysis to those women who shed HIV-1 at least once during the baseline phase, the authors did observe a reduction in both the proportion of visits with detectable HIV-1 shedding and the quantity of genital HIV-1 RNA during these visits. In South Africa, December saw the completion a randomized double blind study assessing the effect of a 5 day course of acyclovir 400 mg tds (compared to placebo) on genital ulcer healing and HIV shedding from sores of HIV-infected patients. All patients were treated with the syndromic management for genital ulcers, using benzathine benzyl penicillin and a single 500mg dose of ciprofloxacin. The results of this study should be available by the end of 2007. Meanwhile in the Gambia, Schim van der Loeff et al. reported significant divergent epidemic trends for HIV-1 and HIV-2 based on 16 years of HIV surveillance. They reported that the prevalence of HIV-1 rose from 4.2% in 1988-91 to 17.5% in 2001-03, whilst the prevalence of HIV-2 declined from 7.0% in 1988-1991 to 4.0% in 2000-03.



Mrs Aulette Goliath welcoming Dr Pierre Yassa (Zambia) as a new full member for IUSTI-AFRICA

Mrs Aulette Goliath, Administrative Secretary for IUSTI-AFRICA, played an important role for the IUSTI organization, at the recent IUSTI-Europe meeting in Versailles, by staffing the IUSTI booth. This was a new idea to try and encourage members to join up. The IUSTI-Africa region also gained three new African recruits through this process from the Central African Republic, Nigeria and Zambia. Further requests for full or associate membership for IUSTI-AFRICA should be directed to Mrs Goliath at iusti-africa@nicd.ac.za. Mrs Goliath will be working one morning a week to assist the Regional Director, Professor David Lewis, to build up membership of the IUSTI-Africa network during the coming year.

Forthcoming conferences in Africa:

3rd South African AIDS Conference, 5-8 June 2007. This conference will be held in Durban, KZwaZulu Natal, in the International Convention Centre. For further information, contact sec@saidconference.com

International Conference on AIDS and STIs in Africa (ICASA), 9-14 December 2007. This conference will be held in Gabon and has the theme "Living better with HIV: African Leadership towards Universal Access". For further information, contact serviceatnela@yahoo.com

David Lewis

Conference Update

IUSTI Events:

17th ISSTD/10th IUSTI World Congress

Dates: July 29-August 01, 2007

Location: Seattle, WA, USA.

Website: <http://www.isstdr.org/index.php?id=38>

23rd Conference of IUSTI – Europe

Dates: October 11-14, 2007

Location: Dubrovnik, Croatia

Contact: Dr. Mihael Skerlev mskerlev@kbc-zagreb.hr

15th IUSTI-Asia-Pacific Congress

Dates: February 03-06, 2008

Location: Dubai, UAE

Website: <http://www.iusti.ae/>

Other STI or Related

Meetings/Congresses/Courses:

The 2nd World Congress on Gender-Specific Medicine

Dates: March 08-11, 2007

Location: Rome, Italy

Website: <http://www.gendermedicine.com>

ARV Drug Supply Management Training

Dates: March 11-24, 2007

Location: Pretoria, South Africa

Website: <http://www.aa4a.co.za>

3rd Thai-Lao Leadership Course on Gender, Sexuality and Sexual Health

Dates: March 19 - April 08, 2007

Location: Bangkok, Thailand

Website: <http://www.seaconsortium.org>

HIV Vaccines: From Basic Research to Clinical Trials

Dates: March 25-30, 2007

Location: Whistler Alberta Canada, Canada

Website:

<https://www.keystonesymposia.org/Meetings/ViewMeetings.cfm?MeetingID=856>

11th Annual BC Aboriginal HIV/AIDS Society

Dates: March 26-28, 2007

Location: Victoria, British Columbia, Canada

Website: <http://www.healingourspirit.org>

AIDS, Color and Equality: Removing Barriers to HIV Prevention

Dates: April 11-12, 2007

Location: Washington, District of Columbia, USA

Website: <http://www.abanet.org/AIDS/>

XVIII Congress of the World Association for Sexual Health, 1st World Congress for Sexual Health

Dates: April 15-19, 2007

Location: Sydney, Australia.

Website: <http://www.sexo-sydney-2007.com>

8th International Workshop on Clinical Pharmacology of HIV Therapy

Dates: April 16-18, 2007

Location: Budapest, Hungary

Website: <http://www.virology-education.com>

Thinking about a future with HIV/AIDS: Building Scenarios

Dates: April 26-27, 2007

Location: London, United Kingdom

Website: <http://www.scenariodevelopment.com>

4th SAHARA Conference on the Social Aspects of HIV/AIDS

Dates: April 29- May 03, 2007

Location: kisumu, Kenya

Website: <http://www.tichinafrica.org/>

HIV Management 2007: The New York Course

Dates: May 04-05, 2007

Location: New York, USA

Website: <http://www.newyorkcourse.com/>

Sex, Love and Intimacy: Working More Effectively with Individuals and Couples

Dates: May 13-19, 2007

Location: Sorrento, Italy

Website: <http://www.italyseminars.com>

16th European Academy of Dermatology and Venereology Congress

Dates: May 16-20, 2007

Location: Vienna, Austria

Website: <http://www.eadvvienna2007.com/>

Crucial Issues in HIV Diagnosis and Management in South-East Europe

Dates: May 23-25, 2007

Location: Belgrade, Serbia

Website: <http://www.partners-services.co.uk/belgrade/belgrade.html>

Beyond two decades of ART in Asia

Dates: June 02-03, 2007

Location: Shanghai, China

Website:

<http://www.seronosymposia.org/en/ReproductiveHealth/Symposia/BeyondtwodecadesofARTinAsia/page.html>

HIV/AIDS 2007

Dates: June 06-11, 2007

Location: Kololi, Gambia

Website: <http://www.mangosee.com/hivaids2007>

2nd Annual African HIV/AIDS Update and Church Leadership Development Conference

Dates: June 07-08, 2007

Location: Nairobi, Kenya

Website: <http://www.valleyaids.org>

3rd International Workshop on HIV and Hepatitis Coinfection

Dates: June 07-09, 2007

Location: Paris, France

Website: <http://www.virology-education.com>

Women's Health, Dermatology and Infectious Disease

Dates: July 02-13, 2007

Location: 11-Night Cruise Conference from Rome, Italy

Website:

http://www.continuingeducation.net/coursedetails.php?program_number=478

Gender Unbound: An International Conference in Law, Gender and Sexuality

Dates: July 09-11, 2007

Location: Keele, Staffordshire, United Kingdom

Website:

<http://www.kent.ac.uk/clqs/events/genderunbound.htm>

4th IAS Conference on HIV Pathogenesis, Treatment and Prevention

Date: July 22-25, 2007

Sydney, Australia

Website: <http://www.ias2007.org/>

Infectious Disease Society of America

Dates: October 04-07, 2007

Location: San Diego, CA, USA.

Website:

[http://www.idsociety.org/Content/NavigationMenu/Meetings/2007 Annual Meeting/2007 IDSA Annual Meeting.htm](http://www.idsociety.org/Content/NavigationMenu/Meetings/2007%20Annual%20Meeting/2007%20IDSA%20Annual%20Meeting.htm)

Infectious Disease Review 2007

Dates: October 13-20, 2007

Location: San Diego, CA, USA

Website:

http://www.continuingeducation.net/coursedetails.php?program_number=439

Somesh Gupta

STI Global Update is published by the International Union against Sexually Transmitted Infections. Its aims are to provide an international perspective on the management and control of sexually acquired infections. Regular contributions from the regional directors of IUSTI and feedback from conferences will be supplemented by short reviews of relevant topics and input from the Center for Disease Control (US), Health Protection Agency (UK) and the World Health Organisation.

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Further information on the activities of IUSTI available at
www.iusti.org