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ICMDA CEO's E-newsletter March 2023

Dear friend,

Thank you for keeping in touch with ICMDA, especially if you've joined us at one of our recent webinars. I hope you are keeping well and knowing the Lord's presence and blessing. Below are a few highlights from ICMDA's ministry over the last month.

ICMDA World Congress Update – book now for 'early bird' rates



ICMDA 2023
ARUSHA TANZANIA
20-25 JUNE

The 17th ICMDA World Congress in Arusha, Tanzania (20-25 June 2023) draws ever closer and 'early bird' rates (10% discount) will continue until 31 March so please book soon if you have not already done so. The Congress theme is 'Serving with love in a hurting world' (video [here](#)) and we are expecting around 1,000 doctors, dentists and students from over 100 countries to attend. Ten [Preconference streams](#) including Family Medicine, Bioethics, Leadership, Saline Process and Advocacy will run on 20-22 June in parallel with the [Student Conference](#) followed by the main event on 22-25 June. We encourage attendees to come for the whole six days. There are also pre and post conference trips available to game parks, Mt Kilimanjaro and Christian mission/teaching hospitals. There is a wide variety of [accommodation](#) available in Arusha from budget (\$10-20 per night) up to five star (\$200 per night). If not traveling overland, you are best to fly to Kilimanjaro International Airport which is just 90 minutes from Arusha. Thus far almost 1,000 people have registered but we have so far been able to grant only 200 bursaries to the over 500 requesting them (see below). Please keep praying for Augustin Lutakwa, the congress director, and the regional and national organising teams.

World Congress Bursaries – less than halfway to our target

We are expecting 1,000 people from 100 countries to attend the World Congress in Arusha on 20-25 June (see above). Many of them will be coming from low- and middle-income countries, and earn less than \$1,000 per month, some less than half that. Most students, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa, have no income at all. It is therefore impossible for them to come without financial help. We are hoping to raise at least GBP £200,000 (USD \$250,000) to provide bursaries to 300 key individuals. In the main these will cover only registration fees with applicants left to cover their own travel and accommodation. So far, we have raised only £90,000 of this total – and have already allocated this to pay the registration costs (but not yet the travel costs) of 200 leaders from over 60 resource-poor countries. But this money has come from just three national organisations and about 30 individuals. Might you help us? (please see video [here](#) and give [here](#)) The ICMDA World Congress is only held every four years and could be a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for many. We also know that it provides a major boost to strengthening national movements in the world region it is held. We also know from the powerful testimonies of those who have gone before that it can be a life-changing event. All bursaries granted will be carefully prioritised for those in resource-poor settings – especially speakers, national leaders, ICMDA fieldworkers, emerging leaders and students. You can give via the website [here](#) or by other routes [here](#).



Ukraine Update – more and more for less and less



Even though our £450,000 appeal fund is now spent we can send more and more supplies for less and less money due to the generosity of public and private donations of drugs, consumables and equipment and our partnerships with commercial logistics companies. The remaining 43 anaesthetic machines of the 53 donated by The Royal London Hospital will be going out in the next few weeks having been

fitted with new vaporisers and gas hoses. This week a shipment of low molecular weight heparin and protamine with a UK retail value of £97,000 arrived in Lviv – the total cost to ICMDA was £0 as the drugs were donated through IHP and shipped by BioPort. We have already shipped 20 paramedic backpacks (each worth £1,000) for use by doctors tending to casualties on the frontline but a further grant of \$75,000 from partners [Heart of Evangelism](#) in Sweden is going to enable us to send a further 60. Members of CMF UK in Oxford will be packing them over the next few weeks. Almost all our supplies go via our Ukraine member organisation CMAU, in Lviv, which, under the inspirational leadership of Rudi Migovich, will distribute them to hospitals throughout Ukraine. God is good!

Belarus Blessings

The Belarussian Christian Medical Society (CMS) is one of four national movements in Eurasia (former USSR) which we expect to formally affiliate with ICMDA this year. Leader Arstom writes, 'Warm greetings from Belarus! CMS has now been running for 24 years but the last two have been extremely difficult for us because of covid, political



instability and the Russian-Ukrainian war near our borders. For more than two years we have had online communication only and about 50% of our leaders and many other doctors have had to leave the country. But this month we held a national board meeting and invited new members and God blessed us abundantly. We had a wonderful meeting where we worshipped God together, read the Bible and prayed a lot. After a presentation of the Christian medical movement history in Belarus we discussed our resources, difficulties and obstacles for our future and were blessed by several really good ideas. The discovery of the day was that in some places in our country our Christian colleagues had organised several events and meetings by themselves which we as a board did not even know about. It was a sign from God for me that this is the action of His Holy Spirit and the work of His hands. It was a real encouragement for all of us. Please continue to pray for your colleagues, brothers and sisters from Belarus, as we face all these challenges. Pray for God's wisdom, strength and vision from him for our future ministry.'

More New Movements



The Middle East North Africa Region (MENA) has been one of ICMDA's least developed and is a stronghold of Islam. But over the last year there have been some amazing breakthroughs and several visits by ICMDA AEO Nurgul Mamyrova have led to the establishment of new groups of Christian doctors and medical students in Oman, Morocco and Saudi Arabia. Nurgul's latest trip

in February was to Bahrain. She writes, 'By God's grace we had the first meeting of CMF Bahrain at American Mission Hospital (AMH) in the capital city Manama. Praise the Lord for the doctors who were willing to gather together! The American Mission Hospital in Bahrain has been an excellent witness to Jesus Christ for the last 120 years! We thank God for pastor Paul - a chaplain in AMH who played a great role in connecting me with the doctors in that hospital. I had online discussions with the pastor before our face-to-face meeting. ICMDA's vision and mission were presented and we have dreams to see CMF Bahrain flourishing for His glory.' At the last ICMDA World Congress in 2018 several countries in Francophone Africa officially joined ICMDA – including Benin, Togo, DRC, Togo, Burundi, Mali, Burkina Faso and Madagascar. In 2020 the ICMDA board established [Francophone Africa](#) as an official region with Jean Paul Dansou from Togo as regional secretary. On 10 February I met online with Jean Paul and the leaders of seven new national groups in Francophone Africa which have formed over the last two years and are now seeking to join ICMDA. It is extraordinary to see what God is doing as he works out his plans to gather people from every nation into his Kingdom.

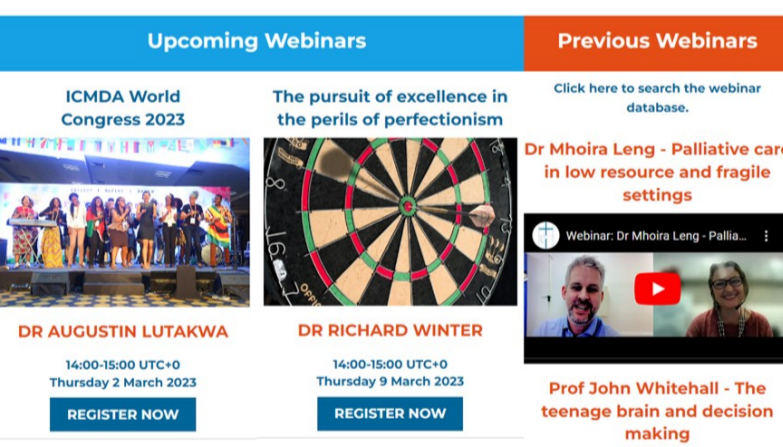
Upcoming Events

The founder of CMF UK, Dr Douglas Johnson, once said that if you look after the students and the literature then the whole organisation will thrive. The annual CMF UK national student conference has been one of the main foundations of CMF's success and last month over 400 attended the weekend event for a



rich time of worship, teaching, fellowship and prayer. Students are the lifeblood of ICMDA and are tomorrow's leaders. Three more ICMDA member organisations in Europe hold student conferences in March – Netherlands (10-12 March), Hungary (11) and Romania (17-19). In addition there will be national conferences for doctors in Norway (10-12) and Czechia (24-26) and there will be a training conference for European national leaders and fieldworkers hosted by CMA Romania in Cluj Napoca on 24-26 March. CMF Pakistan holds its annual conference at Muree on 31 March to 2 April and the first national conference for Christian doctors/dentists will take place in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) on 5-8 March. This latter event is the fruit of contacts made at the ICMDA fieldworkers' summit in Dubai last November. These and other upcoming national and regional events are listed on the [ICMDA website](#). Our [January 2023 video series](#) is now available online or write to us at [info@icmda.org](#) to receive a hard copy. You can sign up for the daily Doctor's Life Support 4 email on the [ICMDA website](#) – a great way of starting the day. There is also information about how you can support ICMDA in [Europe](#) and giving [whereas, what, how often, online](#).

ICMDA Webinars



Our [ICMDA webinar series](#) continues to attract a wide following with four more presentations held in January including ["Using a spiritual history to uncover religious struggle"](#) (Walt Larimore), ["Evolution: A theory in crisis?"](#) (John Lennox), ["The teenage brain and decision making"](#) (John Whitehall) and ["Palliative care in Low Resource and Fragile Settings"](#)

(Mhoira Leng). Next up are 'ICMDA World Congress 2023' (Augustin Lutakwa), 'The pursuit of excellence in the perils of perfectionism' (Richard Winter), 'Success: Secular versus Christian' (Pablo Martinez), 'Going on mission without leaving home' (Shari Falkenhimer) and 'Spiritual warfare and the mind' (Chris Jenkins). Usually, between 50 and 150 doctors, dentists and students from 40 to 60 countries watch each week live on Zoom or Facebook and there have been over 60,000 views live or on YouTube since we first launched the series in April 2020. Webinars are held at 1400 GMT (UTC) on a Thursday and you can access all past webinars on our [searchable database](#) (140 so far) and book free for future events on our [website](#). Each webinar is published along with links to relevant resources so they can fill a helpful session for regional, national or local groups wanting to engage with the issues. Almost 60 webinars are also available on Spotify Anchor as [podcasts](#) (or search for ICMDA in your podcast provider).

Family News

February has been a contrast of great joy and deep sadness. Kirsty and I are currently in New Zealand for our niece Zoe's wedding which took place on 25 February. Zoe is a neurology registrar and her husband Avinash a rocket scientist. Kirsty is pictured with Zoe and her mother Margaret (Kirsty's sister) just before the wedding. We are now taking some time to catch up with friends and family and especially my



mother, Jan (88), who has made a good recovery from her recent falls and fractures but has steadily progressive dementia. Tragically, our third son Jonno's best friend and best man Pete Bartdoo (pic) tragically collapsed and died while playing basketball at MIT, Boston on 15 February. He was only 29 and a brilliant mathematician (obituary [here](#)) who was due to be married in one month's time with Jonno as best man. Jonno and his wife Jessa flew to Boston for a week to help support Pete's family and fiancée Yuna during the funeral and just returned to Vancouver yesterday. The event has rekindled memories for us as a family of the sudden death of Kirsty's brother (and my best friend) Ian at the age of 37 back in 1995. Life is full of often painful mysteries – we don't understand why these things happen, but we know that God understands all mysteries and is with us through them all (Deuteronomy 33:27). Pete and his parents, two sisters and fiancée are all committed believers. Please do pray for them at this time. Although our nuclear family is currently spread across four countries, we have all felt very close.

Thank you for your prayers and support. It's a joy to hear from you too, do get in touch. May you know God's grace and peace in full measure over this coming month.

Sincerely in Christ Jesus,

Peter Saunders
ICMDA Chief Executive

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