ADIs Premiere at the 18th Dubai International Humanitarian & Aid Development Conference & Exhibition

The 18th Meeting of the Dubai International Humanitarian & Aid Development Conference & Exhibition, DIHAD was held from March 14th to 16th, 2022. The theme for this year’s edition has been: SDG 17 – Partnerships and Cooperation for Sustainable Development.

DIHAD Conference & Exhibition is organized by INDEX Conference & Exhibitions, the same company, which organizes also the United Arab Emirates Dental Exhibition & Conference, AEEDC. The Academy of Dentistry International, due to its longstanding collaboration with AEEDC had the privilege to participate for the first time and received the honor to be one of the VIP Guests of DIHAD. This unique event has seen more than 6000 dignitaries, exhibitors and participants from all over gathering in Dubai. The Meeting is proudly supported by the Vice-president and Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates and Ruler of Dubai Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, the founder of Dubai International Humanitarian City (IHC), the largest humanitarian hub in the world. IHC is in close collaboration with DIHAD.

The Opening Ceremony was started by H.E. Dr. Hamad Al Sheikh Ahmed Al Shaibani, the Director General of the Islamic Affairs and Charitable Activities Department, followed by H.E. Dr. Janez Lenarcic, European Commissioner for Crisis Management, H.E. Mr. Jagan Chapagain, Secretary General of International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, H.E. Mr. Gennaro Migliore, President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean, and Mr. Mohammad Ahmed Al Yammahi, the Representative of the Emirates Red Crescent Authorities.

Thanks to the Chairman of DIHAD H.E. Ambassador of Gulf Cooperation Council Dr. Abdul Salam Al Madani, Group-CEO of INDEX Holding Eng. Anas Al Madani and Mr. Paul Wilson Executive Director of INDEX for Planning & Business Development the ADI Delegation represented by
Immediate Past-president Dr. Gerhard Konrad Seeberger and President of the ADI UAE Chapter and Vice-regent of the Middle East Section, Dr. Dilip Kumar, had the chance to visit the booths of the bigger players in the DIHAD Exhibition including Red Crescent and Red Cross. We had the chance to talk to Mr. Giuseppe Saba the CEO of a big contributor from the UAE, the Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Foundation engaging in safe water supply and our booth neighbor. Dr. Seeberger had also the pleasure to talk with the Executive Director of Medecins sans Frontieres (Doctors without Borders), Mr. Mario Stephan from Geneva. They discussed about the possibility of joint projects involving dentists. The ADI Booth was handled by Drs. Seeberger and Kumar for three days with the outstanding support of one of Dr. Kumar’s friends, Mr. Dinu Kavagem.

Dr. Gerhard Konrad Seeberger, Dr. Dilip Kumar

DIHAD Conference & Exhibition is organised annually by INDEX Conference and Exhibitions Organization Est., and proudly supported by Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Global Initiatives (MBRGI), the Dubai Future Council on Humanitarian Aid, the Mohammed Bin Rashid al Maktoum Humanitarian and Charity Establishment, the UAE Red Crescent Authority, the United Nations, and International Humanitarian City.

Dr. Seeberger had also the chance to interact with high representatives of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean President, Mr. Gennaro Migliore and Secretary General, Ambassador Dr. Sergio Piazza, Former Vice-president of Israeli Parliament and Member of Knesseth, and Ambassador Abdul Salam Al Madani.
With Dr. Dilip Kumar we collected more than 40 contacts of visitors of our booth where PAUL, Portable Aqua Unit for Lifesaving was set up to demonstrate live its filtering capacity, which results in filtering 99,99999% of bacteria and viruses from contaminated water. PAUL is essential for safe water to maintain health and we have promoted our slogan: No oral health without safe water! We managed to simulate a situation like in a natural water source mixing soil with the water to be filtered. For that process not easily to be set up we received utmost support from the DIHAD staff. To them goes our heartfelt gratitude. Dr. Seeberger was the first one to drink from the filtered water. He enjoys best of life!
Besides many interested from the Middle-East & Northern Africa Area, there was also interest shown by other exhibitors and visitors from high income countries like Germany with the Gesellschaft für international Zusammenarbeit, the British Embassy in Berne, Switzerland, the International Congress of Health Specialties, ICHS, London, UK, the World Food Program, Rome, Italy, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean, Republic of San Marino, the Al Kheir Foundation, London, UK, and many others. It was found exceptional that dentists are looking into the safe water issue. Dr. Seeberger supported by Dr. Kumar made clear that, besides the risk of communicable diseases through contaminated water, there exists also the risk of non-communicable oral and general diseases due to dehydration, which goes from excessive tooth wear to an increased risk of heart attacks even in the younger population.
On the 3rd day of the event Dr. Gerhard K. Seeberger had lectured about *Safe Water for Crisis Management: making lifesaving sustainable* at the Innovation Workshop of DIHAD. During the lecture and the Q&A Session the participants were able to understand the simple concept of how making safe water delivery sustainable for more than a decade. This is the period, during which the PAUL fleet in the world could grow up to more than 3000 units in Low & Middle-Income Countries and crisis areas operating without any form of consumable energy and the need for extra maintenance nor spare parts. PAUL works worldwide with the force of gravity for any kind of medical doctors and their staff.

In a final talk with Chairman Al Madani and Mr. Wilson we considered to have a higher visibility also for the ADI Foundation at the future DIHAD events. Solutions might be found during future leadership talks with ADI and ADIF.

All in all, it has been an exciting experience to be the only representative of the oral health profession per definition, the dentist, in the humanitarian and charity world in the world hub for charity, Dubai.

Humbly delivered, April 2022:

Dr. Gerhard Konrad Seeberger