

# Birth of SAFOMS

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We in South Asia share similar culture, social habits, economic status and have similar political backgrounds. We also face similar problems regarding health matters. So, it is helpful that the South Asian countries get together and work in union to share the knowledge and experiences and benefit from each other's resources. The South Asian Federation of Menopause Societies (SAFOMS) was born with this objective in mind.

We are very grateful to Dr Behram Anklesaria who initiated this process and requested Sri Lanka to organize the preliminary meeting to establish SAFOMS. He also wanted us to organize the first Scientific Congress of SAFOMS in Sri Lanka. Dr MDP Gunaratne, Dr Hemantha Perera and myself along with other members of the Sri Lanka Menopause Society undertook the task and we were able to have the preliminary meeting in Colombo on 1st of October 2010, with the participation of members from Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka Menopause Societies. At this meeting, the constitution was adopted unanimously and signed by a representative from each country. Dr Behram Anklesaria was elected as the Founder President and the other office bearers were also appointed and Sri Lanka was selected as the headquarter with the secretariat in Colombo. Dr Behram Anklesaria spelt out his vision for the next 2 years. His enthusiasm, the words coming from his heart and the commitment encouraged everybody to work with commitment to get the newly formed federation of the ground. But, unfortunately, we lost him before the end of his term even at the most unexpected moment, and his loss came as a big blow and is an irreplaceable one to the federation which was beginning to rise. We all in the federation miss a very sincere dear friend.



We are fortunate to have Dr MDP Gunaratne from Sri Lanka, equally committed to the cause of menopause to take up the presidency. Dr Gunaratne is the founder President of the Sri Lanka Menopause Society.

We are thankful to Dr Rubina Hussain the Vice President of SAFOMS and President of Pakistan Menopause Society for coming forward to host the second SAFOMS conference in Karachi.

We are happy to learn that Nepal has formed a menopause society this year with Prof Kanti Giri as the President. We hope that Nepal will participate and join us in the council this year.

We are very grateful to our editor Dr Jaideep Malhotra for all her efforts in getting the Journal of the federation which is not easy task and we congratulate her for getting it before the end of the first term of the council.

We have been able to develop our own web site due to the commitment of our web master Dr Maninder Ahuja.

SAFOMS will have a major role in time to come as the elderly population is gradually increasing in our region. But, the attitude toward menopause in the South Asian countries is poor at present, with very little attention given to it. The knowledge about menopause, the awareness about the consequences of menopause and how to prevent them are also low not only among the public but also among the health personnel in our region. So SAFOMS should take the lead and organize programs to overcome the adverse attitudes and misbeliefs regarding menopause and educate the health personnel and in turn the public regarding menopause to prevent the complications of it and help them to lead a healthy active postmenopausal life.

Furthermore, statistics regarding basic data related to menopause is lacking in the South Asian countries and we depend on the data of the developed countries. So, we should do research projects in collaboration with regard to menopause to get a better insight to the problem of menopause in South Asia.

I am certain that, with the enthusiasm of the founder members, the federation will achieve its goals easily and become one of the most recognized federations in the near future and be of much service to the aging population of South Asia.

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