

The 34th National Congress of the South African Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists



The 34th National Congress of the South African Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, to be hosted at Sun City on 31 October - 3 November 2010, continues a well-established tradition which began in 1948 (two years after the establishment of SASOG in 1946). Initially these meetings were held annually, but for the past 48 years they have taken place regularly every two years in various venues throughout the country, the exception being last year, because South Africa had the honour of hosting the XIX World FIGO Congress in Cape Town in 2009.

The *South African Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology* has kindly agreed to publish in this copy of the journal, and make available to each and every delegate, the abstracts of most of the presentations emanating from the Congress. (The oncology abstracts appear in the *SASGO* journal.)

This 34th Congress has been very proficiently and competently organised by a committee under the chairmanship of Professor Gerhard Lindeque and his colleagues from the University of Pretoria. The Congress secretariat is the well-known Londocor Public Relations and Event Management Company, ably led by Sonja du Plessis.

There is a saying: 'a camel is a horse designed by a committee'! Nothing could be further from the truth where this Congress is concerned. The various sub-committees that have organised this meeting have, I assure you, produced a wonderfully authentic horse – in fact a Thoroughbred!

As you may know, the Thoroughbred is one of the so-called 'hot-blooded' horse breeds, and it is said to exhibit more sensitivity and energy than other 'colder' breeds, which are often classified as draft or work-horses. The Thoroughbred performs with maximum exertion and is known for its spirit and boldness. This Congress will, I am convinced, prove in due course to be symbolised by the Thoroughbred.

Some 15 overseas visitors, all specialists in their field, together with all the recognised local experts from across the country, have been invited to address you. There is also ample time for 'free communications'.

In addition to the pre-congress workshops dealing with foeto-maternal medicine, urogynaecology, laparoscopic

surgery, colposcopy and a section on litigation, the Congress itself covers an eclectic range of O&G topics including:

- a 1½ hour mini-symposium on the place of 'fire drills' in maintaining skills in obstetrics
- the menopause
- gynae-oncology, including carcinoma of the endometrium, breast, ovary and gestational trophoblastic neoplasia
- pelvic floor imaging
- endocrinology
- infertility
- ultrasound in both gynaecology and obstetrics
- HIV and other infections – which are so relevant to us all in South Africa at the present time
- urogynaecology
- adolescent gynaecology
- medico-legal matters.
- Finally, in what I am sure will prove to be a most fascinating session, three lectures will look into the future of medicine, with Lord Naren Patel discussing genomic medicine, Dr Mark Slack from Cambridge speaking on the impact of new technology on training of the next generation of surgeons, and Professor Gerhard Lindeque looking ahead more generally to the future of medicine in South Africa.

Apart from the purely academic activities, a very well-planned social programme has been put together to enable you to relax and enjoy the beautiful weather and surroundings of Sun City.

Finally, a word of thanks to the pharmaceutical industry for their magnificent support. You will be presented with a modern very high-level exhibition by the pharmaceutical companies, without whose backing congresses of this nature would not be possible.

I trust that you will find the 34th National SASOG Congress a meaningful, enjoyable and memorable experience.

Tony Koller
President, SASOG