

## AASNS President's Report

Kate Drummond

Melbourne, Australia

It was an honour to begin my service as President of the Asian Australasian Society of Neurological Surgeons (AASNS) at the 16<sup>th</sup> AASNS Congress in September 2022 in Israel (and what a lifetime ago that seems!).



The theme of the Congress was “Where History Meets Science” and Jerusalem hosted more than 800 delegates from over 80 countries. The feedback was

overwhelmingly positive, particularly the quality of the faculty and the interactive discussions at each session. Conference President Yigal Shoshan, Conference Chair Schlomi Constantini and Scientific Program Chair Andrew Kaye (photo) are to be congratulated for an outstanding event which brought many of us back together for the first time in more than 2 years. Since then, the AASNS has launched a year of renewed activity in 2023. I have been very grateful to my colleague members of the Administrative Council (AC) for their tireless work and would like to acknowledge them as follows:

Vice Presidents - Iddo Paldor (Israel), Akio Morita (Japan)  
Secretary - V D Sinha (India); Assistant Secretary - Vincent Ng (Singapore)  
Treasurer - Mohammed Al-Olama (United Arab Emirates)  
Neurotrauma Chair - Lynne Lucena (Philippines)  
Education Chair - Yigal Shoshan (Israel); On-line Education Chair - Girish Nair (Australia)  
Congress President - Yung Hsiao Chiang (Taiwan)  
Past Presidents - Wan Tew Seow (Singapore), Andrew Kaye (Israel), Basant Misra (India), Yong Kwang Tu (Taiwan)

The major governance considerations of the AC have been a clarification of some aspects of the Constitutions and By-Laws, including the term of the President and consideration of a President-Elect position. We have also considered creation of a Nominating Committee, chaired by the immediate Past President, to ensure a representative and inclusive slate of candidates is presented for voting at the next elections and a Scientific Advisory Committee, to advise each Congress. These would both be new committees for the AASNS that would add much value. The AASNS website continues to be improved and the AASNS logo has been updated to include New Zealand, which seemed to have inadvertently “fallen off” the edge of the logo map!

Our chief activity, however, has been the post-COVID reinvigoration of our educational activities, which are vital in a region with many low- and middle-income countries who are enthusiastic for local professional development opportunities, especially for training and young neurosurgeons. This program has been energetically coordinated by Prof Yigal Shoshan for in-person events and Dr Girish Nair for on-line events (largely targeted at residents and young neurosurgeons). Controversies In Neurosurgery was a very successful meeting combined with The Royal Melbourne Hospital and The University of Melbourne in December 2022. Two

webinars on spinal surgery topics have been well attended. Very successful in-person 2- or 3-day Education Seminars with both international and local faculty include those in Bangkok, August 2023 in conjunction with ASEAN Congress of Neurological Surgery and the Royal College of Neurological Surgeons of Thailand, in Katmandu in September 2023 in conjunction with the South Asian Neurosurgical Congress (SANC) and Nepalese Society of Neurosurgeons (NESON), and in Hanoi in associated with the Vietnamese Neurosurgical Society. In addition, a Trauma Bootcamp meeting in the Philippines was attended by hundreds of participants under the organisation of Dr Lynne Lucena. Educational seminars are planned for March 2024 in Bhubaneswar, in conjunction with the East Indian Neurosurgical Society and then joined with the immediately following International Conference on Recent Advances in Neurotraumatology (ICRAN) in Jaipur, under the auspices of Prof. V D Sinha. Educational seminars in the planning stages include the United Arab Emirates, Indonesia, and the Philippines. Of course, planning is well under way for our Biannual Congress in Taiwan in November 2024.

It is an honor to serve as the first woman President of the Asian Australasian Neurological Surgeons. Our society perhaps encompasses the most varied of all continents in a vast and diverse region – which includes two thirds of the world’s population and two thirds of the world’s neurosurgeons. Asia-Australasia spans prosperous nations with an adequate or oversupplied neurosurgical workforce, populous low- and middle-income countries with inadequate cover and tiny island nations with no specialist neurosurgeons at all. The role of the AASNS revolves around advocacy and education and the resumption of in-person educational seminars, designed in partnership with a local host society, has brought a revitalization of our purpose. Personally, it is incredible to serve alongside my friends and colleagues Dr Najia El Abbadi, President of the WFNS and Wirginia Maixner, President of the Asian-Australasian Society of Pediatric Neurosurgery (AASPN). Gail Rosseau has called 2024 the year of “Madam President” and I am excited for us all! I look forward to seeing you all in Kaohsiung, Taiwan November 7-10, 2024, for our biannual Congress.



## CAANS President's Report

Bello B. Shehu Sokoto, Nigeria

Since the coming into existence of the Continental Association of African Neurosurgical societies (CAANS) and its recognition by WFNS as the umbrella body representing neurosurgeons in the African continent, a great deal of progress has been made in increasing the neurosurgical manpower in the continent through the various national and regional training centers - thus increasing neurosurgical services in the continent.

The enormous neurosurgical manpower and infrastructural disparity between Northern Africa and South Africa when compared to the rest of the sub-Saharan African (SSA) countries presented significant challenges for CAANS: limited manpower, significant shortage of infrastructure, equipment, and access to specialized neurosurgical services for the population. These challenges obliged CAANS to focus on increasing training opportunities within the continent and encouraging exchanges between different regions of Africa.

The objective is to bridge this gap and contribute to the long-term advancement of neurosurgical practice in the subregions by training African neurosurgeons, establishing specialized centers, and advocating for improved resources and infrastructure. To address the issue of limited access to surgical instruments and implants required for spinal surgery, for example, partnerships have been developed with other LMICs like China, Pakistan, and India, which are known for providing good quality, affordable equipment.

The growth of human resources development in neurosurgery in SSA has been promising, with the number of African neurosurgeons increasing from 182 in 1982 to 1160 in 2023, particularly in SSA. The introduction of innovative techniques in spinal surgery, such as minimally invasive surgery, spinal deformity surgery, and endoscopic spinal surgery, in some African reference centers is a testimony to the progress being made. The result followed increased educational activities that include both hands-on training and didactic lectures through many national and continental webinars and congresses.

In the francophone SSA countries, the stories of progressive collaboration with WFNS and the anglophone countries has continued over the recent years. The WFNS's Spine Committee (2021-2023) has conducted training courses on spine surgery in several locations in the sub-Saharan Africa: in Bingerville, Cote d'Ivoire (June 2022), Nairobi, Kenya (November 2022), Lomé, Togo (February 2023), and, most recently, Kinshasa, Congo DR (June 2023), and Dakar, Senegal (September 2023).

Except for the course in Kinshasa, all were organized as pre-congress courses of national neurosurgical society meetings. The course in Kinshasa was in collaboration with the CAANS Young African Neurosurgeons Forum (YANF) and, for the first time, brought together participants from all regions of the African continent. These courses in SSA were attended by at least 352 resident and young neurosurgeons from 35 African countries.

### Kinshasa Congress June 2023

June 22: The session kicked off with the UpSurgeOn Neurosimulation Course facilitated by our immediate past Chair, Dr Ignatius Esene. We had the Opening Address by Prof Ntsambi, the Vice President of the Congolese Society of Neurosurgeons. We had other addresses by the WFNS President-elect Prof Najia El-Abaddi, the CAANS President Prof BB Shehu, our sponsor Dr Jeff Ntalanja, Dr Edwin Mogere, and Dr Ignatius Esene. We had a great attendance: medical students, residents and neurosurgeons from other countries. We had the anatomy box, ACDF box, subtemporal approach box, trans-sphenoidal surgery box, vascular box, and also a demonstration of the use of the exoscope.

We had a total attendance of 105 persons with 16 of these being females. Dr Ignatius Esene gave a lecture on the beginnings of the YANF(also known as Young CAANS). The YANF started in 2018 at the CAANS Congress in Abuja, Nigeria. Dr. Esene became the first Chair of the YANF - he built up a team of young neurosurgeons from across the continent. The YANF since inception has been focused on Education and Research as these are the tools needed to build the future of African Neurosurgery. We are also set to improve on Mentorship and Advocacy for neurosurgery.

In the evening we had a robust session with 8 young neurosurgeons from across the continent discussing their research work.

June 24: In the afternoon, we had the remaining paper presentations from young neurosurgeons. The best 10 presentations were selected and given awards in the evening. The presenters were also given the opportunity to present their research work at the WFNS 2023 Congress in Cape Town and received book gifts from Prof Qureshi as well. The dinner had the Honourable Minister of Health of the Democratic Republic of Congo in attendance.

June 25: We set out early to visit the National Animal Parc. We saw rhinos, hippopotamuses, lions, zebras, crocodiles etc. It was an amazing time. The day rounded up with dinner in the Airplane Restaurant situated at the top of the hills in the Animal Parc.

Kinshasa, DRC, will be hosting the CAANS Conference 2024.

### Other Major Events 2023

The Ethiopian Society of Neurosurgery met in Addis Ababa with CAANS providing part of the hands-on session on use of ultrasound in neurosurgery plus special pediatric neurosurgery and neurotrauma sessions from the neurosurgeons of east and southern Africa.

The 13<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting and Scientific Conference of the Nigerian Academy of Neurological Sciences was held in Kano 21-23 November; the theme being the Business of Neurosurgery with Public-Private Partnership as the future of Neurosurgery in Nigeria.

This theme addressed the particular challenges of neurosurgical practice in Nigeria, including the challenges faced by the young neurosurgeon in establishing neurosurgical units in the parts of the country that had no neurosurgery hitherto. The faculty had a blend of both National and International practitioners with emphasis on minimally invasive and endoscopic neurosurgery to cheer the young neurosurgeon into the new frontiers of neurosurgery. The conference featured a quiz competition among medical students to get them focused early in their careers towards our noble specialty.

The conference, held at Bristol Royal Palace Hotel, was marked with a pre-conference Workshop at National Orthopaedic Hospital Dala Kano, a cadaveric demonstration of basic spinal surgical techniques at the Anatomy department of Bayero University Kano, and an arrival Cocktail Dinner on day one followed by the Scientific Conference/Annual General Meeting on days two and three.

Day two witnessed outstanding lectures: on “becoming a neurosurgeon” by Prof BB Shehu, and the guest lecture by Prof Nasiru Jinjiri Ismail on the theme of the conference with remarkable rhetoric and practical solutions for setting up a successful neurosurgical practice.

Day two also witnessed various scientific presentations and a plenary on minimally invasive and endoscopic neurosurgery. Day two culminated with the Annual General Meeting and election of new officials for the Association: President - Prof Femi Bankole of Lagos University Teaching Hospital; President Elect/Vice President - Prof Nasiru Jinjiri Ismail of Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto.

The conference ended with a sumptuous dinner reflecting Kano’s hospitality and greatness.

## Training

There was an increase in both the WFNS training centers and the national training centers, particularly in SSA countries including Niger Republic, Togo, Mali, Chad, Uganda, and Rwanda to mention a few. The regional colleges of WACS and COSECESA have equally increased the number of qualifying specialists in Neurosurgery for the SSA region.

The WFNS Congress in South Africa ended 2023 with one of most well attended WFNS Congresses with representatives from all five continents. At the WFNS Congress CAANS launched the African Pediatric Neurosurgery Section (AfPNS) with the aim to prioritise the health and wellbeing of all children with neurosurgical disease. The AfPNS is a pioneering development under the umbrella of CAANS which will provide support and structure to this joint initiative, purposefully sowing the seeds of growth for further development of sub-speciality groups within the parent organisation CAANS. To achieve this goal, several senior pediatric neurosurgeons from across Africa have committed time, energy and resources to support, advance and co-ordinate educational and research activities within Africa, thereby also presenting a unified structure to improve interaction and collaboration with our international sister societies, including the ISPN, ESPN, AASPN, AANS/CNS Peds Section.

The AfPNS is privileged to already have received overwhelming support from leaders in these international bodies, support which was underscored by the tremendous enthusiasm displayed at the historic gathering of pediatric neurosurgeons in South Africa during the recent 18<sup>th</sup> WFNS World Congress of Neurosurgery.

Growth of this initiative will include members from all representative regions across Africa who have an interest in pediatric neurosurgery. While the core structure of this group will be formed by trained pediatric neurosurgeons, it has a broader vision to embrace and include neurosurgeons who treat children as a part of their practice, with a specific focus to developing the multidisciplinary team approach. We look forward to the growth of the AfPNS as it develops and unites pediatric neurosurgery in Africa and abroad.

For the year 2024, CAANS is welcoming the society of Lusophone countries in Africa joining the CAANS family, and so many national society meetings including the Association of Francophone Countries in Africa (ANSA) coming up this February in Niger Republic and the CAANS Congress coming in November 2024 in Kinshasa, Congo DR. The Congress will be a unique one, where part of its scientific activities will be in the neighbouring capital city of The Congo, Brazzaville, across the beautiful river Congo.

**WE LOOK FORWARD TO MEETING YOU ALL IN KINSHASA, CONGO DR!**







## Precongress Workshop STNC & WFNS Spine Committee 1st Congress of the Togolese Society of Neurosurgery Lome, Togo 8-9th February 2023



WFNS Congress, Cape Town, December 2023



Young CAANS members and Honourable Minister of Health, Congo, Kinshasa, June 2023



## EANS President's Report

Torstein R. Meling

Copenhagen, Denmark

Dear Colleagues of the World Federation of Neurosurgical Societies (WFNS),

I am honored to present the latest developments and aspirations of the European Association of Neurosurgical Societies (EANS) as we collectively shape the future of neurosurgery on both continental and global fronts. EANS remains steadfast in its commitment to advancing neurosurgical training, education, and research with a particular emphasis on hands-on learning experiences. Our organization is at the forefront of theoretical training initiatives, offering a comprehensive understanding of the theoretical foundations of neurosurgery. These courses, facilitated by renowned faculty and experts in the field, are designed to shape the knowledge base of aspiring neurosurgeons, covering essential aspects from diagnostic principles to cutting-edge advancements. The combination of practical and theoretical education ensures a well-rounded learning experience for our members, preparing them to excel in the complexities of modern neurosurgical practice. As we evolve, the enhancement and expansion of our theoretical training courses remain integral to our mission of fostering excellence in neurosurgical education. The success of our practical hands-on courses across Europe underscores the value of interactive learning. These courses have flourished due to the unwavering dedication of both participants and organizers. Looking ahead, EANS is committed to further expanding our hands-on course portfolio, ensuring that the next generation of neurosurgeons is equipped with the essential skills demanded by the ever-evolving landscape of our field. Moreover, our organization is poised to broaden its scope in the field of interventional neurosurgery, recognizing its increasing significance.

In a groundbreaking collaboration between EANS and the European Association of Neuroradiology (ESNR), the European Board of Neuroradiology (EBNR) has opened the doors of the European Diploma in Interventional Neuroradiology (EDiINR) to neurosurgeons. This accredited diploma by the Union of European Medical Specialists (UEMS) marks a paradigm shift, fostering cross-disciplinary knowledge exchange between neurosurgery and interventional neuroradiology in Europe. The initiative aims to cultivate a new generation of neurosurgeons proficient in both diagnostic neuroradiology and interventional techniques, as highlighted in our recent publication (<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2772529423010251>).

Expanding on our commitment to collaboration, EANS is actively strengthening connections with national societies. Initiatives such as the National Member Society Calendar and a Monthly Newsletter for National Member Societies have been introduced to enhance communication and cooperation. These platforms serve as centralized hubs, fostering robust information exchange within the EANS community. We firmly believe that increased collaboration among neurosurgical societies globally will drive advancements and innovation in our field. Our very successful journal, *Brain and Spine*, stands as a testament to our commitment to advancing neurosurgical knowledge. The journal serves as a valuable platform for disseminating cutting-edge research, fostering dialogue, and promoting the exchange of ideas within the neurosurgical community. We envision further expanding the reach and impact of *Brain and Spine*, reinforcing its role as a key resource in the field. As we look ahead, the planning for our EANS2024 Congress in Sofia is well underway. Centered around the theme "Innovation, Education, and

Leadership”, this Congress reflects our dedication to advancing neurosurgical knowledge and practice. We anticipate that these pillars will shape sessions, discussions, and workshops, providing a holistic experience that fosters innovation, enhances educational opportunities, and develops leadership skills within the global neurosurgical community. In conclusion, I express my gratitude to the WFNS for providing a platform to share our perspectives and aspirations. As EANS President, I am confident that our collaborative efforts will significantly contribute to the advancement of neurosurgery within Europe and on the global stage. Together, let us shape a future where the boundaries of neurosurgical practice are continually pushed, and innovation thrives. We warmly invite every colleague from all corners of the world to join us at EANS2024 in Sofia, where the boundaries of neurosurgical practice will be continually pushed, and innovation will thrive.

Best regards,  
Torstein R. Meling  
EANS President







## FLANC President's Report

**Federación Latinoamericana  
de Sociedades de  
Neurocirugía  
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The Latin American Federation of Neurosurgery Societies (FLANC) in coordination with its President, Prof Dr Luis A.B. and his Executive Committee (EC), have carried out, in the last 6 months, 3 exclusive courses for residents and students in different countries. The objective of each course was to provide eminently practical training to the student, allowing them to improve the learning curve of basic, moderate, and high complexity surgical techniques, as well as understand delicate and detailed microsurgical anatomy from a 3D perspective, as is applied in real surgical procedures. Under the coordination of the President, Ecuadorian Society of Neurosurgery, Dr Byron Salazar, the pre-congress course on neuroanatomy and skull base neurosurgery in 3D was implemented as part of the XII International Congress of Neurosurgery, with approximately 70 people registered. Dr Julio Pozuelos, President, Guatemalan Association of Neurological Surgery, organized the 1st Latin American course for neurosurgery residents June 15-17, 2023, in Guatemala City. The course included didactic talks and laboratories with simulators for both the skull and spine. Dr Tito Perilla, Honorary Member of FLANC, coordinated the 3D Neurosurgery course: anatomy of the skull base, surgical approaches and techniques, held August 18-20, 2023, in the city of Bogotá. The course used new 3D technology.

The current vision of the EC in relation to teaching, academic activities, education and research, is global, as we seek to develop the capabilities of students and residents, guide the construction of knowledge, ensure the development of skills, and promote values and ethical attitudes.

Regarding other academy activities, we have scheduled every two weeks scientific webinars of different surgical specialties, bringing experts from all over the world and promoting the participation of young neurosurgeons during the discussions.

FLANC has approached neurological student associations worldwide and has invited them to become members of our society. This has been a success.

We have established new alliances with a variety of hospitals and new neurological departments with the inauguration, until now, of two new cadaveric labs in Latin America.

Sincerely,

**Dr. Luis Borba**  
Presidente

**Dr. Byron Salazar**  
Secretario General