Welcome Note from Conference-Chair

Welcome...!!!

On behalf of the Organizing Committee, it is an honor for me to extend a heartfelt invitation for you to join this very worthy 3rd International Conference and Expo on HIV & AIDS which will be held in February 25-26, 2019, in Durban, South Africa. The Committee has worked very hard to bring together a group of talented and dedicated researchers, educators, policymakers, and experts in various aspects of HIV/AIDS to tackle this major pandemic. This gathering of passionate experts promises to broaden our global perspectives, advance dialogue among delegates, and promote global networking. Additionally, the Conference is expected to empower new generations of scholars, educators, and decision makers with knowledge related to the epidemiological, biological, therapeutical, cultural, and advocacy aspects of the disease that still continues to devastate individuals, families, communities, and resources.

As we all know, HIV/AIDS continues to be a major public health problem and yet its severity varies by regions due to the level of education, availability of resources, cultural/religious barriers, political will of the leaders, and many other factors. According to the report from the World Health Organization (WHO), over 35 million people have so far died globally due to HIV. In 2017, almost a million people died from HIV-related causes. In the same year, almost 37 million people were living with HIV. What is more alarming globally, almost two million people became newly infected in 2017.

For the 21st century, this level of devastation is absolutely unacceptable and has not received the worldwide attention that this pandemic deserves. As we all know, in some parts of the world, this disease still has its very negative stigma which has not helped to deal with it like any other communicable disease. The stigma not only sends the problem underground, but also prevents certain governments from investing the resources needed to prevent it from being further spread.

Additionally, there are many myths that have not been dealt with. Some of the myths that still exist about HIV/AIDS is a disease of homosexuals and it is a punishment from God to the sinners. The new emerging myth is the common belief that HIV/AIDS now is a curable disease and, consequently, people from some regions have relaxed the safe sex practice. This myth, if not corrected, will only increase the rate of new infections worldwide. As mentioned above, the prevalence of and severity of HIV infection varies by region. Based on the WHO, the African Region is the most affected part of the world. Almost 26 million people living with HIV and over two-thirds of the worldwide new HIV infections were in this region in 2017. The reality is that diseases, in general, and HIV/AIDS in specific, neither discriminate nor recognize any geographical/political boundaries. This high rate of infection in the African Region should alarm every member of our world citizens. What Saadi, a Persian Poet of the 13th century said which is inscribed on the wall of the United Nations summarizes our responsibility to other fellow human beings:

Translation by M. Aryanpoor:
“Human beings are members of a whole,
In creation of one essence and soul.
If one member is afflicted with pain,
Other members uneasy will remain.
If you’ve no sympathy for human pain,
The name of human you cannot retain!”

So, it is a real honor for me to serve as a Chair of this Conference. I strongly encourage you to attend this gathering of extraordinary committed leaders in the beautiful country of South Africa. We look forward to seeing you then.

Respectfully,
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