



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Friends and fellow FOGSIANS,

*All your dreams can come true if you have the courage to pursue them.*

I consider myself truly blessed to have served as the 60th President of FOGSI, taking office in Hyderabad amongst friends, family, well-wishers, and federation members present at the ceremony on June 27, 2021 at HICC. My team and friends from all over India and the world had come together to share my pride and joy. The journey as President of FOGSI has been a wonderful experience. It has assisted me in evolving and becoming capable of dealing with advocacy and leadership issues involving Women's Health as a priority. My presidency has been a unique experience, beginning with the COVID Pandemic and gradually returning to normalcy. Adversity brings out our best qualities.

I am also happy to inform you, with a great sense of responsibility and humility, that all activities promised by Team FOGSI 2021-2022 have been completed under my leadership with my fantastic team of office bearers. My gratitude goes out to President-elect Dr. Hrishikesh Pai, Immediate Past President Dr. Alpesh Gandhi, my vice presidents Dr. Archana Verma, Dr. Basab Mukherjee, Dr. Bipin Pandit, Dr. Fessy Louis, and Dr. Kawita Bapat, Secretary General Dr. Madhuri Patel, Deputy Secretary General Dr. Suvarna Khadikar, Treasurer Dr. Parikshit Tank, Dr. Aruna Suman, Jt Secretary. The team has worked tirelessly to successfully implement all of the programmes. Special thanks to my Hyderabad team, which was led by Dr. Vindhya, Dr. Jamuna Devi, Dr. Krishna Kumari, Dr.

Kiranmai, and was guided by Dr. P. Indira Devi.

My theme and my vision and mission for the year was **FOGSI FOR ALL ALWAYS, DHEERA STOP VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN.**

As the medical profession becomes more physically, mentally, and emotionally stressful, our motto is FOGSI For ALL FOGSIans. The violence against health care workers has added to the stress, and the pandemic has caused physician fatigue. We must prioritise mental health, financial prudence, insurance, and investment matters. We must also maintain regular contact with one another and maintain our health.

*Opportunities don't happen, you create them.*

During my installation address, I presented key programmes, initiatives, and important events on the academic and social calendar that would be implemented during my tenure. We attempted to blend the old and the new by bringing together teams, individuals, and organisations working for the same causes on one stage and platform to discuss strategies and move forward in all important issues concerning women's health, such as cancer prevention, violence against women, and nutritional deficiencies, particularly anaemia.

The confluence of Committee Chairpersons to collaborate in rolling out programmes was well worth the effort in achieving the best results in delivering our FOGSI Vision and Mission to our FOGSIANS. All 27 Chairpersons worked hard during my tenure, which is admirable.

During my term, I was honoured and humbled to be unanimously elected Treasurer of FIGO in 2021. I'd like to



express my gratitude to all of my FOGSI mentors, including Prof. C.N. Purandare, Dr. Sanjay Gupte, Dr. Narendra Malhotra, Dr. Jaideep Malhotra, and Dr. Hrishikesh Pai. Dr. Rishma Pai and Dr. P.C.Mahapatra Dr. Prakash Trivedi, Dr. Alka Kriplani, Dr. Nandita Palshetkar, Dr. Krishnendu Gupta, Dr. Pratap Kumar, and Dr. Muralidhar Pai have all helped me in my mission to serve women around the world.

International collaborations and partnerships were a priority in the year of relationship building. FOGSI collaborated virtually with AFOG and SAFOG to organise the WISDOM 2021 Conference. The theme was 'Blending Evidence and Experience into Practice,' and the presentation was excellent. WISDOM, in addition to widely acclaimed academics, professional and meticulous organisation, has opened important doors for collaboration on critical issues with the involvement of AFOG and SAFOG.

FOGSI and FIGO collaborated on a number of initiatives, including the FOGSI - FIGO 2021 Hybrid Conference in Hyderabad, with the theme 'Impact of COVID on Women's Health Globally.'

The Cervical Cancer Mukht Bharat programme also highlighted FOGSI and FIGO's advocacy role with the government and other non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working in the field and with similar interests. Every woman has the right to expect respectful maternity care (RMC). Where are we currently lacking in RMC today? Women are given "too much, too soon" or "too little, too late." In collaboration with WHO, FOGSI launched the RMC project. This was done to show that we care about the women we serve in ways other than their medical needs.

We celebrated FOGSI PUSHPUTSAV, a floral festival. The first day of Bathukamma is mostly celebrated predominantly in Telangana and some parts of Andhra Pradesh, where the Goddess Maha Gauri - 'Life Giver' - is worshipped as a beautiful tapestry of floral arrangements in pairs of mother and daughter. It was celebrated for nine days to represent the nine months of foetal life. This is synchronous with our theme logo, which features five natural elements - Earth, Fire, Water, Sky, and Air - to represent the importance of the environment in women's lives. Every woman and child has the right to a safe and healthy environment.

The COVID Pandemic had led us from an online platform to a hybrid model to fully physical academic programmes. Tough times necessitate tough decisions, and we were forced to postpone our ACOG Indore event for the first time just four days before the event due to the third wave hitting us in January 2022. Fortunately, the third wave was not as severe as the second, and we were able to quickly return to the physical programmes. All physical conferences announced in the Presidential Program for 2022 were executed flawlessly.

The physical events kick started in March 2022 with the North Zonal Conference with Yuva 2022 in Ludhiana. The 64th ACOG 2022 (All India Congress of Obstetrics and Gynaecology) was held in Indore from April 4th to April 8th, 2022. This was a huge success, with a huge turnout of Faculty and Delegates from all over the country. More than 1500 delegates attended the South Zonal Conference with the Yuva 2022 in Salem, which featured excellent scientific deliberations.

The 'Controversies in Obstetrics and Gynaecology' conference was held in Jaipur on June 22, and the 'FOGSI Conference on Obstetric Dilemmas' was held in Allahabad in August. Both were well-attended and successful. We also

had the FOGSI Vice Presidents Conference on 'Fertility Enhancement - Current Trends' in Goa in August 2022. The subsequent Yuva East Zonal Conference in Ranchi and Yuva West Zonal Conference in Jabalpur were well organised.

The EMIRATES-FOGSI-FIGO Congress in September in DUBAI saw the conglomeration of FOGSI with THE African and Arab federation, where we forged our relations for Scientific and Academic partnership that will help the two continents collaborate for better Women's Health.

Hysterectomy rates in our country are rising at an alarming rate. At FOGSI, we believe that conservative methods should be used first and surgery should be used only when those methods fail. To address the issue, the 'Preserve The Uterus' Campaign was launched.

Our primary goal is to reduce maternal mortality and morbidity, but we must also address the issue of rising C-section rates, particularly among low-risk primigravida women. This has become a social and pressing issue, with the government, society at large, and non-governmental organisations questioning the integrity of obstetricians. The governments of Kashmir and Telangana have recently met with FOGSI to discuss these issues. We were invited to deliberate on these issues with MOH officials in Srinagar on June 6th, at an MCH Conclave of the Govt of Kashmir MMR and Caesarean Section was discussed with FOGSI. To address this issue further, the Presidential Conference on 'Global Conference on Updates in Obgyn' was held in Hyderabad on July 22. We held the Robson Symposium on Caesarean Section Audit, to which Prof Mike Robson personally came to discuss this critical subject.

The 'National Family Planning Summit 2030' was held in New Delhi to focus on the Family Planning Program's success. The FOGSI leadership was invited to speak about our experiences and perspectives on the issue.

FOGSI went on to update the PPH Guidelines for dissemination to members on the management of PPH and to advocate for heat stable Carbetocin, which plays an important role in the prevention of PPH, in order to save our mothers from dying from PPH.

#### *FIGO is The Global Voice of Women*

As FIGO Treasurer, I was able to attend the FIGO Advocacy in Prague on the topic of 'Sustainable Implementation of Vaccination Programs for Women.' In India, as FOGSI President, I met with Dr. Vinod K Paul, Member of NITI AYOJ, and Shri. Rajesh Bhushan, Secretary Health MOHFW, at AIIMS in Delhi, to urge them to implement universal HPV vaccination for girls and women in the country. In addition, I focused on our country's 'screen and treat all' approach to cervical cancer prevention. I presented the FIGO perspective on legal obligations under international human rights law regarding the prohibition of racial discrimination and the right to health, and how states parties should incorporate structural discrimination lessons into their policies to effectively prohibit and eliminate racial discrimination. At this meeting, I urged the UN to address the issue of women's sexual and reproductive rights, citing how the Roe vs Wade decision in the United States has jeopardised women's health.

#### *The Dheera Project - FOGSI & UNICEF India*

Dheera is a Sanskrit word that means "courageous." Dheera is the President's flagship programme to end violence against women by harnessing the power of unity to combat this social scourge. To take Dheera to the next level, I formed a partnership with UNICEF India, which funded the programme in order to reach the greatest number of schools and provide an online School Certification Program for students and fellow ObGyns. Through this collaboration, I



negotiated that each trainer and each society that completes Dheera receive an honorarium, and that each participant receive a UNICEF - FOGSI special certificate. Each participating society receives Rs 15,000.

I am pleased to inform you that Dheera has reached over 300 schools, 50,000 students, 8,000 teachers, and 5,000 fellow OBGYNs. In addition, through our efforts, I have formed a partnership with the Telangana government to reach 2775 schools in the next four months. It is my sincere request to all of you to please promote Dheera in your local schools and society, and to ensure that boys and girls grow up with gender neutral principles.

**The Respectful Abortion Care Project (RAC) – FOGSI & WHO**

The Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Act of 1971 was passed in India. On therapeutic, eugenic, humanitarian, and social grounds, the new MTP (Amendment) Act 2021 aims to make a significant contribution to ending preventable maternal mortality and expanding access to safe and legal abortion services. It will also contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Through my perseverance, I was able to form a partnership with the MOHFW Government of India and the WHO India Country Office to disseminate this information amongst fellow ObGyns, ensuring they are aware of the new laws and are able to consistently protect themselves while providing the desired healthcare services to those in need.

We were able to train 690+ master trainers through whom we reached 8000+ fellow ObGyns in 136 societies. We conducted 58 training sessions comprising of 135 hours of capacity building.

The Naipunya programme, which includes teaching modules, was created to help our paramedics improve their skills. The Ikshna disease screening and caregiving programme for our care givers was meticulously planned, with national and international organisations and partners joining us as stakeholders.

Honoured to represent FIGO at World Health Summit Together with WHO at Berlin Germany 16-18 oct 2022. An innovative political partnership led by Olaf Scholz Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany & Emmanuel Macron President of the Republic of France with Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus Director General of the WHO.

They join forces to host the World’s leading International inclusive and inter sectorial global health.

Making the Choice for Health is the theme As Figo focus was on Sexual and Reproductive Health of Women as a priority.

It will be a momentous occasion when every Obstetrician and Gynecologist in India becomes a FOGSI member, making it easier for us as an organisation to communicate FOGSI advocacy on Women’s Health, protocols, guidelines, and ethical practise to all ObGyn doctors in the country. Accountability will be improved. One Nation - One FOGSI for ALL.

I’d like to take this opportunity to thank all of you, my friends and fellow FOGSIans, for your trust and support in my endeavour to serve the women of our country as your FOGSI President.

With your support and advice and blessings, I wish to continue serving women around the world.

*The woods are lovely, dark and deep, But I have promises to keep, And miles to go before I sleep, And miles to go before I sleep*

Robert Frost

*S. Shantha Kumari*

**Dr. S. Shantha Kumari**

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President FOGSI 2021-2022

Treasurer FIGO 2021-23

