

“WE NEED TO BUILD ON ANYTHING THAT OFFERS US A FINAL PASSWORD OUT OF POVERTY” – UNITED VOICE FROM YOUNG VETERINARIANS-IN-TRAINING REGARDING EVER INCREASINGLY MORE PIVOTAL ROLE OF VETERINARIANS IN INTERFACE BETWEEN ECOSYSTEM, HUMAN HEALTH, AND ANIMAL HEALTH TO ADDRESS MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOAL FOR ERADICATION OF EXTREME POVERTY AND HUNGER – WORLD VETERINARY CONGRESS 2011

[SOUTH AFRICA – Cape Town] It was with an united voice that young veterinarians in training spoke at the World Veterinary Association-hosted Closing Ceremony of the 30th World Veterinary Congress held at the Cape Town International Convention Centre yesterday afternoon on the essentially make or break pivotal role that the profession must ever increasingly play in the interface between the ecosystem, human health, and animal health. Now more than ever previously, veterinarians are best placed to help address the Millennium Development Goal of the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger.

2,000-strong delegates – veterinarians, para-veterinarians and other animal healthcare professionals from over 150 nations – attended what has been described as an “immensely successful” Congress – especially as the Congress theme tied in well with the One Health initiative, which was unpacked in certain sessions. One Health is a worldwide strategy for expanding interdisciplinary collaborations and communications in all aspects of healthcare for humans, animals and the environment, in a bid to sustainably manage our collective global survival. The programme explores in-depth the triangle formed by the Human / Animal (both domestic and wild) / Ecosystem interface, with the veterinarian central to this relationship.

Among comments made by those about to enter the profession that demonstrates a solid grasp of their role in the global dimension:

- “I am optimistic that the profession is evolving to contribute all the required skills and technology to satisfy local needs and to address the Millennium Development Goal of eradicating extreme poverty and hunger.”
- “We need to build on anything that offers us a final password out of poverty. In my home country, Ethiopia, new veterinary faculties opened in recent years. This is so important as here livestock mean everything to every member of the community, whether you look at their importance from an economic, a social, or a cultural perspective.”
- “Here in Denmark we’ve just merged the two largest veterinary faculties, in line with the spirit of the One Health initiative. I notice an ever increasing number of specialisations in the veterinary field. One may remain a classically trained vet yet work in a mixed practice. In Denmark we act as advisors rather than purely ‘doctors’; we help farmers optimise his production potential. Globally, we must work as a team, helping one another through a system based on trust. We should listen to one another when advice is given based on our specialised skills.”
- “In Calgary, Alberta in Canada, where I’m based, we spend time with farmers and producers to see how we can best service their needs.”

The 2011 World Veterinary Day Award was presented at the 30th World Veterinary Congress Closing Ceremony to the Myanmar Veterinary Association for their submission which clearly demonstrated co-operation with the government and through tapping into media networks to help combat Rabies.

World Veterinary Day, held annually in April, offers an opportunity for the profession to celebrate with members of the public the extensive and crucially pivotal role of the profession not only in terms of providing for the health and welfare of companion animals but also to raise awareness of the increasingly important contribution of veterinarians in terms of food security and food safety and to the sustainability of our environment.

2011 holds much significance for the veterinary profession as the Congress took place during World Veterinary Year, with the related theme of “Vet for health, vet for food, vet for the planet!” In this regard, the Congress played host to the closing event for the global World Veterinary Year celebrations. 2011 furthermore represents the 250th anniversary of veterinary education and of the veterinary profession. It is also 250 years since the concept of ‘comparative pathobiology’ first came into being. The World Veterinary Association celebrates its 150th anniversary in 2013, while Onderstepoort held their Centenary celebrations in 2008. The South African Veterinary Association (SAVA) is 108 years old.

The 30th World Veterinary Congress was declared officially closed by World Veterinary Association (WVA) President Dr Tjeerd Jorna.

The World Veterinary Association served as the Custodian of the 30th World Veterinary Congress 2011. Among those organisations that also dispatched delegates were: OIE (the World Organisation for Animal Health, formerly known as the Office International des Épizooties); FAO (the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations); WHO (the United Nations World Health Organisation); the WMA (World Medical Association); University of Pretoria (UP), Faculty of Veterinary Science, Onderstepoort; World Aquatic Veterinary Medical Association (WAVMA); International Veterinary Behaviour Meeting (IVBM); Federation for Animal Health (IFAH); World Veterinary Dental Association (WVDA).

The Congress Secretariat was SAVETCON Event Management.

Websites relevant to the Congress and related issues are as follows:

- www.worldvetcongress2011.com
- www.worldvet.org
- www.onehealthinitiative.com
- www.vet2011.org

E N D S

Issued by Greta Wilson Publicity
 PO Box 340
 Melkbosstrand
 7437
 Cape Town
 South Africa

On behalf of World Veterinary Association (WVA)
 Rue Defacqz, 1
 8-1000 Brussels
 Belgium

For media interviews or images, please contact:
Greta Wilson – Greta Wilson Publicity
E-mail: greta@wam.co.za
Mobile: (083) 491 7236