doi: 10.5455/aim.2009.17.124-126

Received: 14 May 2009 • Accepted: 22 June 2009

CONFLICT OF INTEREST: NONE DECLARED

Medical Informatics in a United and Healthy Europe

Society of Medical Informatics of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BHS-MI) became a member of European Federation of Medical Informatics (EFMI) and International Medical Informatics Association (IMIA) in 1994, during terrible wartime in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Balkan region. During MIE '94 Conference in Lisbon, at my first participation at EFMI Council meeting, idea was born in my mind - to organize one of MIE Conferences in Bosnia and Herzegovina. I had many reasons for that. Candidature of BHSMI for one of MIE conferences to be organized in Sarajevo or any other part of Bosnia and Herzegovina became official in Sent Malo in 2003 at EFMI Council meeting. EFMI Board officially accepted nomination of Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina as co-organisers of MIE 2011. Just year after, in 2004, EFMI Board (from which majority are still members of the current Board) visited Sarajevo, spoke with most respectable political, scientific, cultural and other leaders and were assured that Sarajevo can be host one of MIE conferences. In 2005, in Athens, EFMI Council decided that MIE conference will be held in Sarajevo in 2009 (MIE 2009).

After that decision, five long years of preparations

started in order to organise the conference where participants from almost all medical-informatics community of Europe and the world will gather. Today, we arrived at the point of final preparation and soon realization of this highly rated scientific event, which I sometimes like to name as „Scientific Eurosong“.

EFMI Board, Scientific Programme Committee and Local Organizing Committee have put great effort to have this meeting as one of the best organized so far. Did we succeeded in that and did we achieve what we wanted? That is still up to our visitors and MIE 2009 participants to decide.

But, let us return to the begin-

ning. In 2003 I suggested that MIE 2009 Conference in Sarajevo should have two slogans: “Medical Informatics in a United and Healthy Europe” and “The Bridge over Troubled Water” - implying that Bosnia and Herzegovina is the center of Balkan region and as such one of the most restless political, economical and cultural areas, and that we can see it as a metaphor or allegory for the “conflict of civilizations and conflict of political interest”.

Today, 15 years after, Bosnia and Herzegovina Society of Medical Informatics became one professional scientific association acknowledged by Europe and the world, but unfortunately, only Bosnia and Albania

Figure 1. Reception of EFMI Council members at Embassy of BiH in Athens, Greece, held on 18 March 2005, according to the candidature of BHSMI as host of MIE 2009 (Ragnar Nordberg, Robert Baud, Bernd Blobel, John Bryden, Emira Fisekovic, Izet Masic, Arie Hasman, John Mantas, standing, from the left)

are not part of the “United and Healthy Europe”. We can add more to this paradox - that in Bosnia and Herzegovina - country constantly mentioned at meetings of most important European and World leaders (United Nations) - it is possible to gain and exchange professional and scientific experience with respectable people from Medical informatics and related fields. Many will be fascinated, impressed, even shocked, and maybe they will change their view and possible prejudices about the city and the country of which they heard a lot, but mostly disturbing and related to war and tragedy (from genocide in Srebrenica, to other related - horror like stories heard or read in the media in recent time). At the same time, there is the opportunity to see and feel the spirit and soul of people who lived through these terrible times and now, almost as after a catharsis, like Scilas and Haribdas, remain proud of their ancestors who are symbolised by the bogumile stećak (belonging to Bosniaks, Serbs, Croats and Jews) which stands on one of the first MIE 2009 posters and invites you to visit Bosnia and Sarajevo with your hearth and mind opened.

Dear Colleges and Friends

When EFMI Council at meeting held in Sant Malo (France) in the year of 2003 accepted candidature of Society for Medical Informatics of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Sarajevo as Capital city organizing of MIE 2009 Conference we offered motos: “The bridge over troubled water” and “Medical Informatics in a United and Healthy Europe” as invitation for Congress participation. What were the reasons for this?

The first reason was the fact that the Balkan Region and B&H as the central country in the Region, became synonyms for the bridge between two worlds: the Eastern and the Western world – undeveloped

and overdeveloped, a subject and a reason for concern over Europe’s future, and possibly the whole planet Earth, for it became the necessity to form new shape of «good citizenship». Besides, it was needed to build “global morality” and “planetary patriotism” – whose welfare needed to give a new insight on development, production and consumption, a more quality ranking of human-kind values, as well as providing maximal support for scientific research, especially in basic sciences, implementing new contents and technological innovations in all forms of education and upbringing, assuring support for all life matters information, especially health information, and a higher degree of culture and elimination of all aspects that could endanger mans right for quality and healthy living.

Secondly, human hand did not till now have greater economical and scientific-

technological potentials who could officiate peoples health promotion and protection in certain countries and globally in the world. With the expansion of mans technological power it became necessary that mans ethical responsibility also grows in order to preserve and promote their health. Quality health informa-

Figure 2. Izet Masic (LOC Chair), Klaus-Peter Adlassnig (SPC Chair), Jacob Hofdijk (EFMI President)

Figure 3. Poster of MIE 2009 conference (Sarajevo, Aug 30 - Sep 2 2009)

Figure 4. Cover page of the Proceedings of MIE 2009 (1064 pages)

tion, originated from generation of medical data on every work place, in every health system of every Europe's and world's country, especially without the doubt enable the realization of a philosophical principle which says "every single event that happens in the world is influenced by the prior events and has the equal influence on the future events", determining the maximum for us all in order to participate in final responsibility for distant past and distant future. Health informatics, as a sublimation of continuous important theoretical and applicative biomedical disciplines, for the past, current, and future is at the same time responsible and deserving for entropic view of the world which is based on the idea of perseverance of restricted

ment, in which we live, our culture, and our biological survival. The entropic law destroys our view over material progress, it destroys fundamental economical assumptions, revises the idea of time and culture understanding and demystifying the technology. As much as the technologies contribute to more quality diagnostics and therapy, they also dehumanize the medicines.

Medical informatics at this development stage belongs to highly specialized science. Simultaneously, this scientific discipline causes numerous dilemmas among experts who consequently experience insecure trust in science due to numerous divergences over different knowledge, various hypotheses, and

health resources, especially in undeveloped countries and countries undergoing transition, as well as in considerable number of Europeans countries. This view of the world needs to replace current mechanistically oriented worldview, which is mainly based on constant materialistic growth, and less fulfilling the humankind in the terms of spiritual development. Entropic worldview objects our most precious assumptions of environ-

various strivings while valuating information especially medical ones. The term "development crisis" has been occasionally brought up referring to the statement that the progress can not "happen" unrestrictedly within restricted natural resources in our planet, as well as to the fact that we as humankind living in the era of technical and technological empire have forgotten human soul. Even though, human knowledge and skills are constantly expanding, it is not clear if the current technological process will be able to accompany all kinds of existence and humankind as a whole.

Mentioned dilemmas and, let us call, previous philosophical thinking, have awakened our choice for the MIE 2009 Congress motto: "Medical Informatics in a United and Healthy Europe". The motto brought up the question over the role of medical Informatics as scientific, technological, philosophical and medical discipline underlying the question of what and to what extent does it have in creating new European scientific, cultural, social and political community in which potential citizens, with the health information upcoming from the members health system, can live safer and healthier without the anxiety that they will in near future, experience some biological catastrophe which is currently more intensively discussed and thought of.

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