

## PREFACE

The 4<sup>th</sup> Workshop on Fluorosis Prevention and Defluoridation of Drinking Water gave whoever participated in the event of **March 2-6, Colombo, Sri Lanka 2004**, a genuine impression of the research and the mitigation work going on around the world. This Proceedings is a humble attempt to share and disseminate the exchanged knowledge and experiences. It is meant as another landmark in the “F & Def” landscape, hopefully worth to read for all researchers, health workers and administrators dealing with fluorosis. There is no need to rediscover the wheel, nor to repeat former mistakes.

The first International Workshop was held in **Arusha, Tanzania 1995**, the second in **Nazareth, Ethiopia 1997** and the third in **Chiang Mai, Thailand 2000**. For those of us who have been participating in all four “F & Def Workshops” it was a special pleasure and enrichment to participate in this Workshop. One could observe the development and the overall trends in fluorosis prevention and defluoridation of water:

Firstly, it is noticeable that the numbers of participants and contributors from developing countries has been successively increasing, in compare to those from the industrialised countries.

Secondly, due to the fact that workers from new countries are showing up and reporting about their areas, it is now possible to make steady more proper estimates of the widespread and the seriousness of the fluorosis problem. Our pervious conservative estimates on how many people do suffer from fluorosis have been revised, unfortunately upwards, stepwise for each Workshop.

Thirdly, more research and mitigation are reported with direct reference to actual field conditions and human suffering, less from laboratory and purely academic issues. Committed workers and institutions are no longer just waiting for the authorities to take actions like setting up a new guideline or provision of safe water; They are going ahead with their work in direct interaction with the affected people.

On behalf of the **International Organising Committee** I would like to address our thanks to the **National Organising Committee**, in particular the **Chairman Dr. K.D.G. Saparmadu**, who, in spite of difficult odds, could put Sri Lanka Professionals, the Authorities and press of the Country and an Overseas Donor Organisation (JICA) together, and in this way arrange for an impressive workshop. Thanks to the **Co-Chairman Dr. Adly Mohammed**, the **Scientific-Session Chairperson Dr. Siromani Abayaratna** and the **College of Community Dentistry of Sri Lanka**, who took their lion-share of the organisation of the workshop. Last but not least a special thank to the **Honorary Secretary Mr. J. P. Padmasiri**, who was at first to invite the event to Sri Lanka.

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