



ISL Travel Grants  
SA ICSU National Committees  
National Research Foundation

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Dear Ms Masela Pillay

## **REPORT OF IOSP MEETING AND AFRICAN SUMMIT IN EGYPT**

I received an ISL grant from the NRF to attend several important meetings in Cairo, Egypt from 12 to 15 March 2009 between the South African Society for Basic and Clinical Pharmacology (SASBCP), the Executive Committee of the International Union for Basic and Clinical Pharmacology (IUPHAR) and African pharmacologists. Hereby I wish to convey the sincere gratitude of the Society towards the NRF for their generous support to make this possible, including their support of a capacity building person (Ms Mokoena), and to report on the positive and valuable outcomes of the meetings.

### **Objectives**

The following four objectives were set for the visit to Egypt:

1. Networking with IUPHAR and African pharmacologist, representing the South African society (SASBCP) and the Organising Committee of the 17<sup>th</sup> World Congress of Pharmacology (WCP2014) to be held in Cape Town, South Africa in 2014.
2. Signing the finalised contract to host WCP2014 ([www.iuphar2014.org](http://www.iuphar2014.org)) in Cape Town, South Africa.
3. Furthering the objectives of the Integrative and Organ Systems Pharmacology (IOSP) committee of IUPHAR and planning to hold capacity building schools in Africa in experimental pharmacology for young scientists, supported by an ICSU grant of 30,000 €.
4. Discussing and planning future strategies during an African Summit of the Pharmacology for Africa initiative (PharfA – [www.iuphar-africa.org](http://www.iuphar-africa.org)) with African pharmacologists and the Executive Committee of IUPHAR.

### **Networking**

The following courtesy meetings and social events were held during the visit to Egypt:

1. A courtesy meeting with Prof Mohamed Khayyal, African councillor for IUPHAR and past-president of the Egyptian Society for Experimental Pharmacology and Therapeutics, were held on Thursday 12 March 2009.

During the meeting he was informed about the latest developments with the Pharmacology for Africa initiative, to be discussed during upcoming meetings on the Sunday.

2. Prof Khayyal hosted a social event with the IUPHAR Executive Committee and South African delegates on Friday 13 March 2009. This was an excellent opportunity for networking and pre-meeting discussions with members of the IUPHAR Executive Committee.
3. The Egyptian Society for Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics held a reception with all IUPHAR and African delegates on Saturday evening 14 March 2009. This was an opportunity to meet Egyptian colleagues to discuss opportunities to collaborate in efforts to participate in the Pharmacology for Africa initiative, steered by South Africa. Egypt can also contribute and will arrange an IOSP school for Africa in December 2009.

### **Official Meetings**

The following official meetings were attended:

- Signing of the WCP2014 contract on Saturday 14 March 2009 at 17:30:  
The negotiated contract between IUPHAR and the SASBCP to host the WCP2014 in Cape Town, South Africa in 2014 was signed by representatives of both parties following brief final discussions. Representing the SASBCP was Prof Douglas Oliver (president of the congress) and Prof Christiaan Brink (secretary-general of the congress), and Ms Mokoena observed as capacity building person from South Africa.
- IOSP meeting and capacity building schools in Africa:  
The IOSP committee of IUPHAR, chaired by Dr David Bylund, met on Sunday 15 March 2009, from 09:00 to 11:00. The meeting was also attended by Prof Gabrielle Hawksworth (UK), Prof Mohamed Khayyal (Egypt), Prof Urs Ruegg (Switzerland), Prof Anastasia Guantai (Kenya), Prof Douglas Oliver (South Africa), Prof Christiaan Brink (South Africa) and Ms Lilly Mokoena (South Africa). Dr Bylund reported on a recent survey of the IOSP committee of the needs regarding IOSP, with a good response from primarily Africa. The need for workshops and other resources was emphasised. The IOSP committee of IUPHAR received a grant of 30,000 € for one year from ICSU to hold capacity building school of IOSP experimental pharmacology in Africa. The application was with the support from ICSU Regional Office for Africa, and with three partners being the International Brain Research Organization (IBRO), the International Union of Toxicology (IUTOX) and the International Union of Physiology Sciences (IUPS). The committee members discussed the needs and challenges in context of the African continent, as well as strategies to address these with the intended IOSP schools. When taking Kenya as example, it became clear that in light of the general overall status of infrastructure, funding, expertise and leadership, it may necessary to invest at

all levels. For example, there may be a need to inform and motivate the policy makers, train the trainers, train the young scientists, educate the supporting staff and investigate infrastructure and funding. It became apparent that proper, focused investment in one or two countries may be more valuable than superficial investment in many. It was decided therefore to focus on building capacity in Kenya who has now already started with a new national society of pharmacology (KESoBAP) in 2009, and to build a long-term mentoring programme. Another country, such as Nigeria, with a large number of pharmacologists, may also be included. South Africa will host the first school as a pre-conference satellite meeting to their annual [ICPPS meeting](#) in September 2009, with the focus on bringing in pharmacologists from Kenya for a first exposure and capacity building (trainer, student and animal housing staff). The second meeting by mid December 2009 will be held in Egypt, where Kenyan pharmacologists will be sponsored again, continuing the capacity building and networking in this country. This will then build up toward the third school to be held in Kenya in May 2010, to be organised by the group of Prof Guantai. Most of the funding will be spent for attendance of the meeting by African young scientists in Kenya.

- *African Summit:*

The African summit was held on Sunday 15 March 2009 from 11:00 to 17:00, chaired by Prof Douglas Oliver and co-chaired by Prof Christiaan Brink, attended by the full executive committee of IUPHAR and African representatives (total ± 25 delegates), and took the form of a brain storming session. Ms Mokoena attended as observer and capacity building person. Prof Oliver started the summit by provided some background to the Pharmacology for Africa initiative. Thereafter Prof Guantai and Prof Khayyal gave talk on the status of pharmacology in Kenya and Egypt, respectively, followed by discussions. The talk of Prof Brink presented the status of pharmacology in South Africa, but also reported on the status of the African initiative, the role of the World Congress of Pharmacology in 2014, capacity building and mentorship programmes, responsibilities and the road ahead, from a global perspective. This was in the format of a brain storming session with discussions, debate, comments, suggestions and strategic decisions taken. It became clear again that IUPHAR was fully supportive of the Pharmacology for Africa initiative and pleased to see the progress. Strategies of how to support and ensure active participation of Africa in WCP2014 was also discussed. It was highlighted that leaders in various countries, such as Prof Guantai in Kenya, has to be identified and pharmacologists with and excellent track record in pharmacology and leadership were identified. Discussions with Governments will also have to take place. Prof Oliver explained his discussions with ICSU ROA and NRF SA and their support, as well as suggestions to work with African government policies in this regard. IUPHAR was overall grateful for the support, initiatives, hard work and leadership from South Africa.

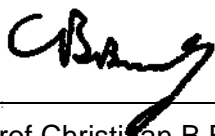
## Outcomes - Capacity building

The following aspects of capacity building were addressed during the visit in Egypt:

- Capacity building person:  
Ms Lilly Mokoena attended all networking and official meetings as observer. She turned out to be a star, a true ambassador, and gained a lot of experience from her attendances. She has an exceptional ability to socialise and communicate easily, and also to have meaningful discussions about scientific issues related to her own research. In fact, she had several invitations to visit laboratories. She also indicated that the meetings were meaningful to her, as this demonstrated to her the basis on which many policy decisions in the scientific community are based. A whole new world opened to her; one in which she is very interested to build her career. I believe that she should be given the opportunity to further her career in this field, as she shows great potential also as a future leader in the scientific community. As a new PhD student she should be given the opportunity to grow and mature, and also protected against exploitation of her potential.
- IOSP and WCP2014 in Africa:  
The meeting established opportunities for capacity building in Africa with IOSP workshops, as well as opportunities with the World Congress of Pharmacology in 2014 in Cape Town, South Africa.
- KESoBAP (Kenya):  
The Kenyan Society for Basic and Applied Pharmacology, established and registered in 2009, is now a first and example of more envisaged to follow in Africa, north of South Africa.

On behalf of the South African Society of Basic and Clinical Pharmacology, and personally, I would like to thank the NRF for their support of this worthy cause. The meeting was indeed a great success and serves the objectives of the NRF, ICSU ROA, the SASBCB and PharfA. It also contributed towards current and future capacity building in South Africa and the rest of the continent. It was a privilege to have had the opportunity to be part of this great, ongoing and fruitful strategy.

Yours sincerely



Prof Christian B Brink  
(Vice-President)