Message from Dr David McCoy, Chair

I am delighted to welcome you to the Medact Relaunch Conference, filled with inspirational, knowledgeable and thought-provoking speakers and sessions.

Medact is now twenty-one years old.

Since forming at the end of the Cold War, Medact has witnessed an increase in intra-state conflict; severe environmental degradation and a worsening climate; a global economic recession; and the continuing threat of Nuclear War.

Medact speaks out against unjust wars and opposes both state and non-state acts of ‘terrorism’. Medact’s research and reports have consistently provided a principled and scientific counterweight to the delusional and unsafe thinking behind nuclear deterrence, and challenged the limited and narrow conceptualisation of national security in terms of military security.

As Medact has evolved, it has developed interests and expertise in other areas too. These include concerns about the threat of global warming and the prevailing structures and systems of economic injustice. Medact has worked to stop medical complicity in the practice of torture and advocates on behalf of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers whose rights to health are currently under attack. Such a broad scope of issues is deliberate and important – these issues are inter-connected, and share many common root causes.

Medact exists to harness the expertise, passion and principled integrity of health professionals to speak out and campaign on these non-clinical determinants of health – building on many historical examples of progressive health professionals who have driven forward social and political change. Health professionals have not only a professional mandate to do so; the high level of public trust and scientific credibility they enjoy gives them added responsibility to do so.

As part of its ‘Relaunch’, Medact is exploring how it can support and enable the wider health community to speak with a less atomised, better informed, and more empowered voice. This will involve growing Medact as an organisation, building networks and alliances with other organisations and initiatives, and developing simple and quick ways to enable busy individuals to campaign and lobby.

You can be part of this journey in various ways: by joining as a member; donating to Medact; participating in one of our various ‘activity groups’; or supporting our campaigns, educational activities and research projects. You can also offer to sit on the Board of Medact, or one of its four councils, to help shape and steer Medact’s development.

I hope this Conference will inspire you to help develop Medact as an organisation – as a means of working towards a safer, fairer and better world.

Medact Conference

Economics, Politics, Ecology, Violence …

The Wider Role of Health Professionals in Global Health

A one-day high-level conference examining urgent issues and solutions concerning major health and medical human rights flashpoints across the globe

Saturday 9 November 2013 from 09:30 to 17:00 (GMT)
Queen Mary University London, EC1A 7BE London
West Smithfield, Robin Brook Centre
Programme

0930 – 1100: Session 1
Welcome – Dr June Crown
The Global Health Crises: Poverty, Inequality, Global Warming and War – Professor Sir Andy Haines
The Global Health Crises: What’s to be Done? – Dr David McCoy
Plenary discussion

1100 – 1130 Tea

1130 – 1300: Session 2:
Working Upstream, Confronting Power and Vested Interests
Social Medicine and Health Activism: Building on a Fine Tradition – Dr Richard Horton
Facilitated Panel Discussion: Mobilising health professionals, acting upstream and challenging vested interests and power.
Panellists:
John Hillary – War on Want and Progressive Development Forum
Tamasin Cave – Spinwatch
Professor Sir Iain Chalmers – James Lind Library
Patti Rundall – Baby Milk Action
John Lister – London Health Emergency
Allyson Pollock – Queen Mary University London
Cameron Stocks – President of Medsin

1300 – 1400: Lunch

1400 – 1545: Parallel Sessions (see opposite for details)

1545 – 1615: Tea

1615 – 1700: Plenary session
Brief feedback from each of four parallel sessions
Closing speech: Dr Jacky Davis – NHS Consultants Association

Parallel Sessions

Torture, Detention and Human Rights Abuses
Chair: Jim Welsh, Amnesty International
Speakers
• Cornelius Katona, Clinical Director, Helen Bamber Foundation
• Maya Foa, Reprieve
• Jim Welsh, Amnesty International
• Frank Arnold, Medact

The Enduring Threat of Nuclear Weapons
Chair: Elizabeth Waterston, Medact
Speakers
• Frank Boulton, Medact
• Peter Burt, Nuclear Information Service
• Patricia Lewis, Chatham House
• Xanthe Hall, IPPNW Germany
• Lynn Barnet, Medact

Climate, Ecology and Health
Chair: Dr Robin Stott and Dr Nikki Scott, Medact
Speakers
• Charlie Kronick, Senior Policy Advisor, Greenpeace.
• Prof Jeremy Wight, Director of Public Health, Sheffield.
• Guppi Bola, Campaigner
• Isobel Braithwaite, Climate and Health Council

Corporate Capture of Health
Chair: Dr Miran Epstein, QMUL & Dr Sunil Bhopal, Medact
Speakers
• Dr Ben Goldacre, doctor and author
• Professor David Miller, Department of Social and Policy Sciences, University of Bath
• Geof Rayner, Honorary Research Fellow, City University London

Political Economy
Chair: Gay Lee, Medact
Speakers
• David Woodward, Peoples Health Movement
• John Hillary, War on Want
• Celine Tan, Warwick University