The 7th international conference of the Sudanese Society of Anaesthesiologists (SSA) and the 4th conference of the African Society of Regional Anaesthesia (AFSRA) summary, 24\textsuperscript{th} to 27\textsuperscript{th} January 2016

Opening Session. From right to left Prof. Ahmed El Safi, president of SSA, Mr. HasabuAbdelrahman, deputy president of Sudan, Mr. Bahar Idris, federal minister of health

Introduction:
The 7th international conference of the Sudanese Society of Anaesthesiologists (SSA) was held in conjunction with the 4th conference of the African Society of Regional Anaesthesia (AFSRA) and the European Resuscitation Council (ERC) conference in the period from the 24\textsuperscript{th} to 27\textsuperscript{th} of January 2016.

The conference witnessed the presentation, demonstration and discussion of the most recent advances in the science and technologies of anaesthesia, intensive care and pain management, with the attendance and participation of a considerable number of doctors and experts from many countries and continents. This presented a great opportunity for our anaesthesia specialists and residents to benefit from the vastness of their knowledge and expertise and to form a platform for exchange of opinions and experiences. Regional and international speakers presented original research, cutting edge technologies, hands-on training workshops, and new strategies that addressed various issues in the practice of anaesthesia.

The scientific programme:
The scientific programme of the conference was enriched with valuable presentations from 33 speakers from many countries and continents who shared with us their valuable knowledge and experience in different aspects of anaesthesia intensive care and pain medicine. The programme at glance included comprehensive talks and discussion about different practical issues of anaesthesia, the basic principles of ultrasound, regional anaesthesia, acute and chronic pain management and intensive care medicine. In addition to talks, four comprehensive workshops were conducted to residents and junior anaesthesitist, covering
the basics of ultrasound, pain management interventions, peripheral nerve blocks and ultrasound uses in anaesthesia.

**Guest speakers:**

Sixteen guest speakers from Ireland, South Africa, Germany, Canada, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates contributed energetically through their valuable talks and discussion about various issues related to anaesthetic practice, in addition to various workshops delivered to residents.

**Conclusion and recommendations of the conference:**

Our conference is a part of the continuous medical education system which is expected to have a strong impact on the quality of care we provide for our patients in the near future. We believe that the organization of such conferences infuses considerable advanced knowledge and experience into our health sector, and supports the focus on scientific research.

This conference was rich in scientific debates and in-depth discussions which resulted in the formulation of a number of recommendations the implementation of which is expected to enhance the health care system by raising the level of anaesthetic service.
Below are the most important recommendations of the conference:

1. Raising the level of anaesthesia services throughout the country, through a systematic scientific approach, is essential for the re-establishment of the missing trust. The provision of high level surgical services necessitates the provision of quality anaesthesia through increasing the competence of anaesthetist and technicians in an attempt to reduce surgical and anaesthetic hazards and complications. This goal can be achieved via concentrating on quality training on state of the art technologies and techniques, because a competent doctor is the cornerstone in any distinguished health care system. However, the maintenance of these newly acquired skills needs regular application and practice. Unfortunately, this is not going to be possible without the availability of the necessary equipment and supplies that are currently abundant in the exhibitions of medical equipment companies, but lacking in our hospitals.

2. We only demand what is both possible and reasonable when we demand that the anaesthetist should have the say when it comes to devising plans and policies for anaesthesia services, at all levels from the hospital up to the level of the ministry of health, through the available channels. It is not logical that our ambitions in improving anaesthesia and intensive care services should be limited by hospitals administrations through claims of lacking resources and the need for prioritization. The anaesthetist is the one who knows best what should be considered a priority in the provision of anaesthesia and in the care for critically ill patients. In this regard, our society has taken steps in the revision of the Safe Anaesthesia Guide by reviewing the most recent international guidelines and the most recent scientific advances. This guide includes the minimum acceptable anaesthesia setup regarding drugs, equipment, procedures, and the specialized trained cadre. With your support, we hope that the recommendations included in this guide will come to be applied in all our hospitals. The current status of anaesthesia services needs attention from an administration that believes in the importance of continuous development and application of guidelines. This conference comes as a major step in this direction.

3. With accelerated expansion witnessed in the field of anaesthesiology that has resulted in the development of innovative advanced methods for caring for patients under anaesthesia, in the intensive care units and in the emergency rooms, many of the old methods and techniques previously used in anaesthesia were abandoned. In this regard, our society has started revising many of the treatment policies previously applied in our practice. This activity ranges from
rewriting the Safe Anaesthesia Guide to the revision of the list of essential drugs for anaesthesia, intensive care and resuscitation, to be in accordance with the most recent advances and guidelines. We hope that our project will be successfully executed with the support of the specialized authorities in creating a partnership between the SSA and the Authority of the Central Medical Supplies Corporation, and the Pharmacy Administration.

4. We totally believe that the well-trained and experienced staff is the spearhead in the development of health services. Accordingly, our society has organized a number of periodical scientific lectures and workshops; and we have opened up communication and cooperation channels with our members inside and outside the country for the purpose of founding a Continuous Anaesthesia Skills Training Centre for our specialists, registrars and technicians, as an essential aid for their training within the official setup. This huge project is beyond the financial abilities of our society which may be limited by the lack of finances but never by the lack of ambition for continuous development. We are not going to stop working hard to achieve these ends but we also need the support of the government by providing us with all the facilitations and finances necessary for the completion of our project.

5. We suffer from a severe shortage in the number of anaesthetists in Sudan. This has had a negative impact on the available anaesthesia cadre, due to an increased workload, and increasing pressures placed on them, which can negatively impact the quality of health care they provide. This situation necessitates the formulation of plans to prevent the continuous drain of anaesthesia personnel through emigration. The sensitive nature of this specialty has caused most doctors to opt to enroll in other specialties for fear of facing stressful situations where patients suffer serious complications or even die under anaesthesia. Therefore we would like that anaesthetists should receive moral and financial incentives that would attract more doctors to this sensitive yet vital specialty.

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