

# P R E S I D E N T ' S P E R S P E C T I V E



By  
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WAIMH will have its 11th International Congress in Yokohama, Japan on the 1st – 5th of August, 2008. So, in about six months we will have our biennial main meetings and important opportunities to work together once again. The Yokohama Congress will be exceptionally rich and inspiring and from WAIMH's point of view it will offer new occasions to develop WAIMH as a world wide organization.

As all members of WAIMH hopefully know by now, there are two processes of transition going on in WAIMH. First, the AIMH board has started to develop the organizational structure of WAIMH in order to increase the role of Affiliate Associations in our governance. If the majority of the WAIMH members so agree, the recommended changes in our bylaws will take place and Yokohama will be a new turning point in WAIMH's development.

## LOOKING FORWARD TO YOKOHAMA

One of the most important changes will be to create an Affiliate Council, consisting of all Affiliate Presidents. This new body will have its very first meeting during the congress in Yokohama. All of the Affiliate Presidents will be invited together with the WAIMH board to this historical meeting so that the new structure will immediately be set in action.

The second transition process is also huge but in a different way. For two years preparations for moving the WAIMH Central Office from USA to Finland have been gradually taking place and after Yokohama the WAIMH Finland Office (WFO) will start to operate from the University of Tampere. This is also a historical step since Professor Hiram Fitzgerald and the Michigan State University have really offered a secure home base for WAIMH for some many years..

In WFO there will be a team of Executive Director, Dr Palvi Kaukonen, Associate Executive Director, Dr Kaija Puura and full-time Research Co-ordinator Minna Sorsa to continue and further develop the activities of WAIMH central office. We believe here in Finland that together with members of WAIMH and Affiliate Associations WAIMH will continue its global growth and successful progress.

The Yokohama Congress will be a remarkable meeting also because it will be the first international infant mental health congress in Asia. This means two valuable things: On the one hand the promotion of infant mental health will become clearly more global and on the other hand the cultural diversity will enrich our field in a fundamental way. Hopefully all participants will enjoy looking at the world from new perspectives.

The scientific program in Yokohama will be extra ordinarily interesting and there will be more high quality plenaries that ever before. The program will again also include the plenary interfaces which were so successfully introduced to the participants of our Paris Congress in 2006. The Program Committee, chaired by Professor Hiram Fitzgerald and the Local Organizing Committee, chaired by Dr Hisako Watanabe have done the very best to create an unforgettable congress! Japanese people are the best hosts in the whole world, so there are many reasons to look forward to Yokohama!

I am looking forward to seeing you in Japan!