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Report on the Pre-Conference Course "Epilepsy Surgery" Held in Conjunction with International Neurosurgical Events in the United Republic of Tanzania

As part of the lead-up to the 2nd WFNS International Conference in Neurosurgery and the 1st International Conference of the International Society for Global Neurosurgery (ISGNS) (14-17 April 2026), a specialized pre-conference course entitled "Epilepsy Surgery" was conducted.

The course was led by:

Dr. Nico Enslin — Neurosurgeon (Cape Town, South Africa), Chair of the Epilepsy Surgery Expert Group of the International League Against Epilepsy (ILAE);

Dr. Igor Trifonov — Neurosurgeon (Russia), Member of the Epilepsy Surgery Expert Group of the International League Against Epilepsy (ILAE).

The significance of the 2nd WFNS International Conference in Neurosurgery and the 1st International Conference of the International Society for Global Neurosurgery (ISGNS) was underscored by the personal participation of Her Excellency Samia Suluhu Hassan, President of the United Republic of Tanzania, who officially opened the conference. In her address, the Head of State emphasized that the development of the neurosurgical community in Africa and worldwide is an unequivocal priority. The President stressed that access to high-quality neurosurgical care must not remain a privilege of the few, and that effective treatment of brain and spine disorders is fundamental to the full and productive lives of millions. Her Excellency called for strengthened international cooperation, robust exchange of knowledge and technology, and dedicated training of the next generation of African specialists. "Collaborative effort, education, and confident forward momentum are essential," was the core message delivered by the African leader to the global neurosurgical community. This unprecedented gesture of attention highlights that neurosurgery is now firmly positioned among state-level priorities and has become a key component of global public health.

The course agenda addressed the following topics:

- Management strategies for patients with drug-resistant epilepsy.
- The role of high-field MRI and invasive monitoring in preoperative evaluation.
- Preoperative assessment protocols for epilepsy patients.
- Setting Up an Epilepsy Surgery Service.
- ILAE Core Curriculum Vitae, Local Mentorship, and Support Systems.
- Support from the Rest of the World for Africa.
- The Need for Epilepsy Surgery in Africa.
- Discussion of surgical treatment approaches for temporal and extratemporal lobe epilepsy.

The course was attended by 44 participants from 5 countries worldwide.

The feedback from the attendees was encouraging and the discussions and goal delineation for epilepsy surgery in Africa was well received.

The trainees and consultants who joined all found the discussions stimulating.

In the week following the Tanzania conference Nico Enslin travelled to Mbale, in Uganda. This is a collaboration with Dr Sandi Lam (Chair of the taskforce for new epilepsy surgery centre setup in the ILAE) from Lurie Children's Hospital in Chicago, USA, where we support and mentor a epilepsy surgery service at the CURE neurosurgical hospital for children in Mbale.

Over the past 10 years we have been training neurosurgeons from this site in South Africa and Dr Lam has been supporting them to set up an epilepsy surgery service here. The team is independent in performing basic epilepsy surgery operations and even hemispherotomies in post stroke infants with refractory epilepsy.

We went there now to support them with a 10 day surgery series to do more complex cases: hemispherotomies: x3; posterior quadrantectomies x 2; Anterior temporal lobectomy x 1 in dominant left hemisphere.

The week went very well and the team benefitted very much from the support. The EEG technicians are also busy completing their ILAE EEG accreditation with the help of DR Bieber from Chicago.

On my way back I also visited Kampala and the large Muhimbile academic hospital in Dar Es Salaam with the view of supporting epilepsy surgery teams here in the next few years.

I have met with the hospital managers and team in Dar Es Salaam and they have equipment and manpower required already. We will start collaborating soon.

Regards

Igor Trivonof

Associate Professor of the Department of Neurosurgery of the Russian University of Medicine, neurosurgeon at the Scientific and Educational Institute "Higher School of Clinical Medicine named after N.A. Semashko", Candidate of Medical Sciences,

and

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