



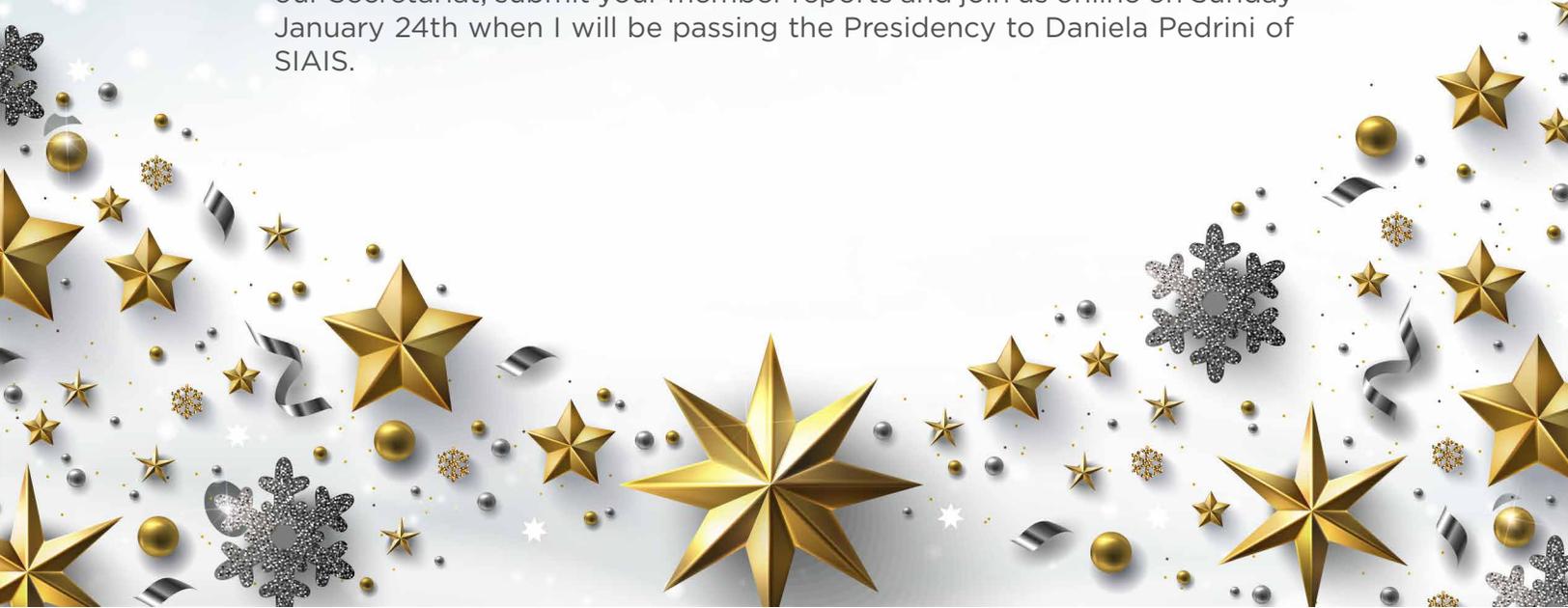
INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF HEALTHCARE ENGINEERING

IFHE President's 2020 Christmas Greeting

How does the global healthcare engineering community reflect on a year like 2020? To say it has been a year of massive change seems such an understatement. It has been a year that has demanded a monumental response for our sector in every corner of the globe. Nobody has been spared the pressure and tension of the health crisis that COVID-19 has brought to us, yet in a strange way it has also demanded, and created, a degree of flexibility. The response to this crisis has demanded that we think very differently, as a new pandemic threat, has challenged us at so many levels.

Sadly, any face-to-face meeting was impossible, and the deferral of the much-anticipated 2020 Rome Congress has been disappointing for the IFHE community. We were anticipating the celebration of 50 years at the birthplace of IFHE in Rome, and with it the opportunity to bring together many of the office holders of previous years. As a fitting replacement to a physical gathering a very special virtual event will be convened in January 2021.

I would encourage everybody to register to be involved in the online events from January 24-26th which are being hosted by SIAIS in Rome. The website (www.ifhe2020.com) is now live and able to take registrations. The theme is "Global Climate Action in Pandemic Times" – and whilst many of us have been very focussed on pandemic related issues, the climate emergency continues around us, so the themes for this Congress are particularly relevant and worthy of attention and action. I look forward to seeing you there. We will also be hosting our Council meetings as a virtual event, so please respond to the communication from our Secretariat, submit your member reports and join us online on Sunday January 24th when I will be passing the Presidency to Daniela Pedrini of SIAIS.



As a side note, if any who registered for the Rome event in May 2020 have not been reimbursed for registration or accommodation fees paid to the Conference Organiser (Triumph Italy), please reply to the confirmation email to obtain a refund.

As I reflect on 2020, I have been proud to be part of the IFHE community which responded to the call from the World Health Organisation to support an appropriate response to the COVID-19 disaster in developing countries. I am especially grateful to Walt Vernon (and his team), Douwe Kiestra, Paul Merlevede and Pete Sellars (and all the IHEEM team) for the coordination to the request for information and action. IFHE members around the globe responded to projects in Burkina Faso, Tchad, Haiti, Yemen, Ethiopia, Brazil and Ghana and this encapsulates the ambition of IFHE - to support improved healthcare worldwide. As healthcare engineering professionals there is much we need to learn, but there is also much that can be shared and the ambition of IFHE is to support this sharing of knowledge. Thank you to those who contributed to the joint IHEEM/IFHE/IFHE-EU newsletters during the height of the COVID-19 crisis and to the teams of architects and engineers who supported the WHO projects. A summary of this activity is provided on the IFHE website (www.ifhe.info)

As 2020 closes, I wish all our colleagues a safe and happy festive season, with the anticipation that emerging solutions will support the reduction of the impact of COVID-19 on our communities and allow us to get back together soon. I especially thank the IFHE Executive Committee for their support during my term as President and for all the efforts of our member organisations in contributing to the provision of safe and sustainable healthcare around our world.



Until we meet again.

Darryl Pitcher
President, IFHE