



15th South African Psychology Congress, Cape Town, South Africa

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The 15th **South African Psychology Congress** of the Psychological Society of South Africa (PsySSA) was hosted at the International Convention Centre in Cape Town (CTICC), South Africa. The congress, under the theme *Psychology: Past, Present and Future*, took place from 11 to 14 August 2009. The first day was taken up by workshops that focused on, amongst other topics, forensic and neuropsychology, early interventions of alcohol, and ethics.

The authors feel that the theme of the congress was captured appropriately by the various presentations delivered at the event. Presentations which left their mark on them were those that focused on HIV/AIDS; HIV interventions aimed at high risk groups; xenophobia and racism in South Africa; suicide behaviours; hypnosis; parent-child attachment and relationship patterns; identity formation in South Africa; risk and resilience in South African children; gender and health; indigenous healing ceremonies; ethics in western and African healing systems; and challenges in psychology. The authors contributed to the conference by making three co-authored presentations concerning (i) risk factors to premature male mortality; (ii) gender-based violence in the form of witch hunts; and (iii) the changes in South African Indian identities.

The congress was well attended by local as well as international psychologists, including delegates from the United States of America and United Kingdom in particular. Prof. Norman Duncan, the outgoing President of PsySSA introduced and welcomed all the delegates to the congress. He stated that the 15th congress was intended to show that the Society was interested in the past of contemporary psychology and its future potential in the country. He remarked on the challenges that the Society is currently facing, amongst which were relatively low membership numbers compared to the number of psychology masters and doctoral graduates in the country. Prof. Duncan also thanked the Executive of PsySSA for their support and their contribution to the advancement of psychology in South Africa over the past 15 years. He also introduced and wished the best to the incoming President of the Society, Prof. Kopano Ratele, who hopes to take the society to even higher heights, which will include hosting the 30th International Congress of Psychology in Cape Town, in 2012.

The opening address was delivered by Prof. Rainer Silbereisen, President of the International Union of Psychological Science, who mentioned that he was interested in the manner in which psychology is to be further developed. He asserted that international collaboration in research is crucial in furthering psychology, and that this has been the pursuit of PsySSA for the past 15 years. He stated further that the 15th congress was a step towards furthering that development.

Each of the presentations by the three invited keynote speakers captured in various ways the state and future of the art of psychology, the need for cross-national collaborations, and the importance of psychology in the public good of a developing society. They also commended PsySSA for the exceptional work it has done over the past 15 years.

The authors feel that the congress was a success. It ended on a high note with all delegates ignited to do more work in the furthering of psychology, not only in South Africa, but across the African continent and abroad.