



# MEDICAL WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION

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Medical Women Association of South Africa (MWASA)  
c/o Dr. Gwendoline Ramokgopa

Dear Dr. Ramokgopa and all the future members of MWASA and MWIA:

Jambo to the Medical Women Association of South Africa! It is with tremendous pleasure that I send greetings to the newly forming association of women physicians of South Africa on the occasion of your launch.

Having been a member the Medical Women's International Association (MWIA) since 1975, I can remember when South Africa was a very active member of MWIA. I attended a regional meeting of the Near East and Africa Region in Kenya in the early 1990's, organized by Dr. Florence Manguyu. At that time, Dr. Hannah Reeve Sanders from South Africa was the Vice President for the region.

Medical women's associations in the past were interested in getting more women into medical school. At least in the developed world, this goal has been achieved where the enrolment in medical schools is over 50% female. This does not mean that medical women's organizations are any less needed. In fact, as more women assume the role of practising physicians we need to make sure we are training women to be medical leaders. Leadership is learned in women's associations where the environment is safe and supportive.

Women in medicine have changed the face of medicine. There is more emphasis on home life – work life balance which has benefited both the female and the male physicians. However, we need to remember the reason that we went into medicine was to provide service our patients and we must ensure that we honour that professionalism.

MWIA has been known in the past for its work on gender mainstreaming. For this current triennium, we are focusing on developing a manual on domestic and sexual violence, which is an extension of gender and health. We have been collecting typical cases from our member countries and would welcome classic examples of cases of domestic and/or sexual violence from your country.

I hope you have an excellent launch of your association and I look forward to some pictures for the website. I look forward to learning the names and emails of your newly appointed officers.



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Once again, welcome back to MWIA. We are glad to have you back with us!

Sincerely,

Shelley Ross, MD  
Secretary General  
Medical Women's International Association