



Message from the President

Dear Colleagues,

I hope this message finds you safe and well as we start a New Year - 2021. While 2020 was an unforgettable year from a global public health perspective, it was a very memorable and unexpected year for the International Alliance for Biological Standardization (IABS).

Last January, we were busy putting the final touches on the plans for the 65th Anniversary of the founding our Alliance, as well as finalizing plans for the accompanying scientific conference *New Paths for Sustainable Solutions to Tackle Global and Emerging Infectious Threats*. As the meeting and a potential pandemic approached, we found ourselves adapting and adjusting as the celebration and meeting date approached. Little did we know that such adaptability would be required in all aspects of our professional and personal lives for the next 12 months. In the end, the Anniversary celebration was a huge success and our meeting evolved to deal with scientific questions for the control of COVID-19. This foundational meeting also proved to be a preamble and a strong reference to IABS' subsequent webinars on COVID-19. I was honored to represent the Alliance as the Master of Ceremonies of the event and present remarks on your behalf. For your information, my introductory remarks may be found at [President's Speech, 65th Anniversary](#).

Following the pandemic declaration, the world stayed at home and quarantined and IABS followed suit and canceled or postponed most of our planned meetings, conferences, and workshops. At the same time, our Scientific Committees quickly adapted to the new world and have since sponsored multiple COVID-19 webinars and held a very successful 4-day virtual meeting, the 6th *IABS Statistics Workshop: Approaches for Improving Statistical Partnership in CMC Development, Manufacturing, and Regulation of Biologicals*. My thanks go out to the Human vaccine Committee and Dr. Pieter Neels, the Biotherapeutics Committee and Dr. Tim Schofield, and the Scientific Secretariate for all their hard work and efforts to make these new ventures successful.

While the virtual events have not allowed us to meet, they have allowed us to bring upwards of 500 people together for important global biological issues and topics. Who would have guessed that we would hold meetings in the middle of a pandemic that allowed for more attendees than any other IABS Conference, Meeting, or Workshop! Historically, the most powerful aspect of IABS' work was to bring people together, face-to-face, at conferences for both interpersonal and

professional collaborations. Until we can meet in-person again we will continue to “see” you via webinars and videoconferencing at virtual events. I remain ever-optimistic that the Board of Directors will be able to meet in Ottawa, Canada in June in conjunction with the conference *Maintaining the Quality of Vaccines Through the Use of Reference Standards: Current Challenges and Future Opportunities*. This will be a foundational meeting that builds on the Alliance’s long history of involvement in standards development and standardization; the “S” in IABS. It would be tremendous if this meeting can continue as either a virtual, in-person, or “hybrid” event.

It has been our honor to work all with you this past year, and the Board of Directors and I look forward to our continued association in 2021. I am hopeful that the challenges of 2020 are behind us; and the New Year will bring new connections and opportunities.



Dr. Joris Vandeputte, DVM
President
Rue de la Vallée, 9
CH- 1204 Geneva
Switzerland
joris.vandeputte@iabs.org
www.iabs.org
Tel: +32 65755285 Cell: +32 473528392