

## Historical Perspectives

# Welcome Speech of the International Child Neurology Association (ICNA) Educational Meeting in Khartoum, Sudan (January 27-31, 2015)

Mustafa Abdalla M Salih, MD, Dr Med Sci, FRCPCH, FAAN  
International Editor, Sudanese Journal of Paediatrics

---

## EDITORIAL NOTE

The International Editor of the Sudanese Journal of Paediatrics was asked by his colleagues of the Sudanese Paediatric Neurologists to speak on their behalf and welcome the delegates of the International Child Neurology Association (ICNA) Educational Meeting, which was conducted in Khartoum, Sudan during January 27-31, 2015. The presentation included historic slides highlighting landmarks in the evolution of paediatrics, paediatric neurology, neurosciences, neurosurgery and psychiatry in Sudan. References were added to the speech for further documentation.

---

It gives me great pleasure and honor to be asked by my colleagues of the Sudanese Paediatric Neurologists to speak on their behalf and welcome you in Sudan, the land of one of the oldest civilizations worldwide. Khartoum City, where this educational meeting will take place, is one of the unique sites in geography where the White Nile meets the Blue Nile to form the Nile, the longest river of the World.

The International Child Neurology Association (ICNA) has gracefully chosen Khartoum this time for its educational meeting following the invitation of my colleague Prof Haydar El Hadi Babikir, Consultant Pediatric Neurologist and Dean, Faculty of Medicine, Gezira University. The preliminary logistics were discussed when I had the chance to meet with Prof Jo Wilmshurst, Secretary of ICNA, and Prof Harry Chugani, Ex-President in Brazil during the International ICNA Conference in May 2014. They first saw the photo of this impressive Corinthia Hotel, suggested as a meeting place, which is depicted in the front page of the online version of the Sudanese Journal of Paediatrics (<http://www.sudanjp.org/>). Following this, the Educational Meeting was announced in the Sudanese Journal of Paediatrics to be held as a joint venture involving the Sudanese Association of Paediatricians and the Sudanese Society of Neuroscience (Figure 1).

---

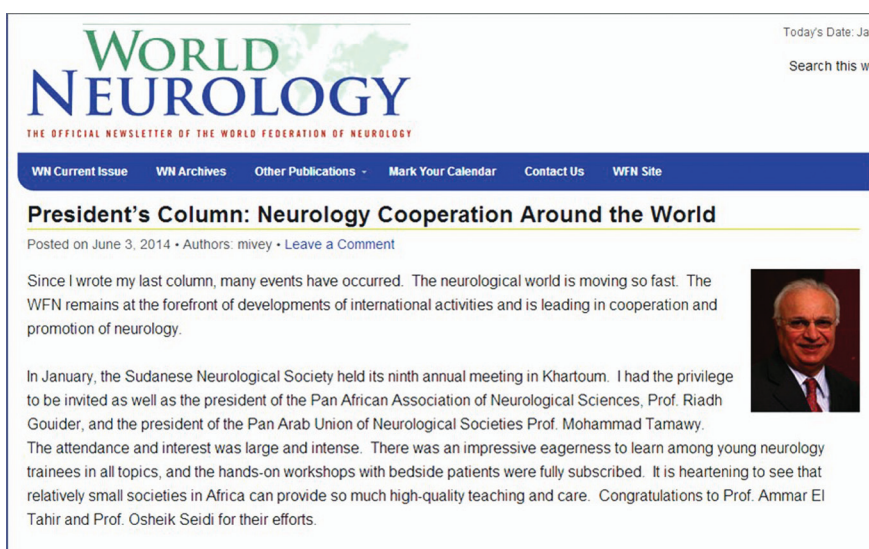
### How to cite this:

Salih MAM. Welcome Speech of the International Child Neurology Association (ICNA) Educational Meeting in Khartoum, Sudan (January 27-31, 2015). Sudan J Paediatr 2015; 15(1):79 - 87.



**Figure 1** – The brochure of the International Child Neurology Association (ICNA) Educational Meeting in Khartoum (28-30 January 2015) at Corinthia Hotel, which appears glowing in the top photo, near the meeting point of the Blue Nile and White Nile.

In this respect, it is a chance to commend on the regular teaching courses organized by the Sudanese Society of Neuroscience for the young neurology trainees. The last one was held in January 2014 and attended by Prof. Raad Shakir, the President of the World Federation of Neurology, as well as the President of the Pan African Association of Neurological Sciences (Prof Riadh Gouider) and Prof Mohammad Tamawy, the President of the Pan Arab Union of Neurological Societies (Figure 2).



**Figure 2** – Prof. Raad Shakir, President of the World Federation of Neurology, applauded the educational activities of the Sudanese Society of Neuroscience (SSNS) which he witnessed during the 9th SSNS Meeting in Khartoum (January 2014).

Sadaqat Charity Organization of Sudan also gracefully offered to help and joined this educational activity through the pivotal efforts of Dr Nazim Haidar and Mr. Nazim Sirag. Also the faculty of the Paediatric Epilepsy Training Course Level 1 (PET 1), organized by the British Paediatric Neurology Association (BPNA), kindly offered to stay longer after finishing their course and contribute to this educational meeting. I would like to thank on behalf of all of us and the Sudanese children and adolescents all those who made this Educational Meeting a reality starting with the renown pediatric neurologists and teachers who gathered from around the globe travelling for long distances. Many thanks are also due to the local Sudanese Organizing Committees who supervised and carried the tedious tasks of the logistics needed to make this educational meeting a splendid success. Lastly, it is also time to remember and applaud those who shaped our career starting with the teachers who guided us through specialization in paediatrics. These include Professor Mahmoud Mohamed Hassan [1] and Prof. Salah Abdelrahman Ali Taha [2] who pioneered this field in Sudan and the Arabian Peninsula. Prof. Hafez Al Shazali [3] and Prof. Mohamed Ibrahim Ali Omer [4,5] pioneered the establishment of the first Department of Paediatrics and Child Health in

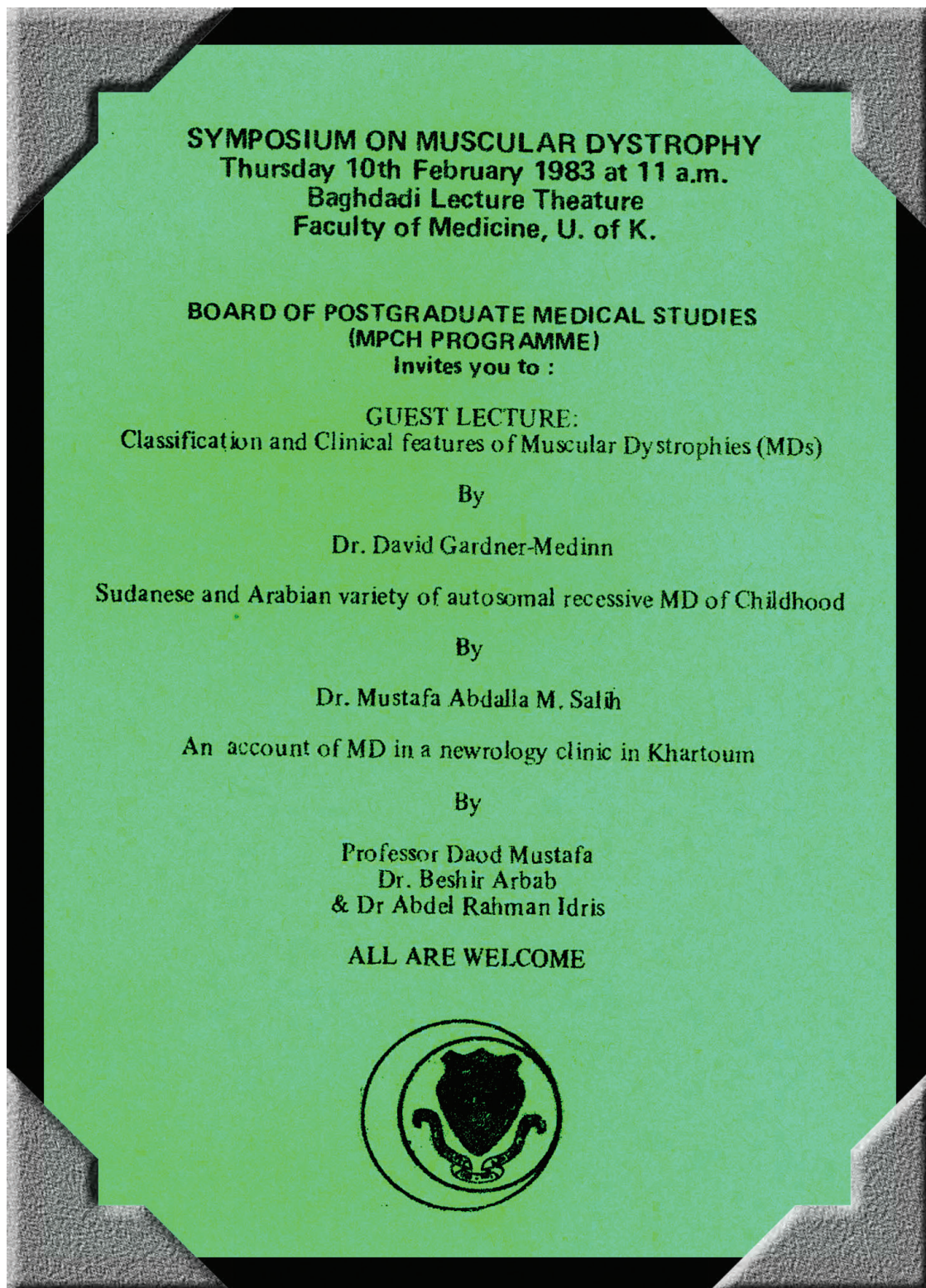
Sudan within the Faculty of Medicine, University of Khartoum ( U of K).

Postgraduate training in paediatrics in Sudan was first initiated at the Department of Paediatrics and Child Health, Faculty of Medicine, U of K, which was boosted by a successful link program with Newcastle University, UK [1]. Driven by visionary thinking, Prof Mohamed Ibrahim A. Omer, Head of Department and first Board of Postgraduate Medical Studies Paediatrics Convenor, Faculty of Medicine, U of K, encouraged us to enroll on subspecialty training in the UK as postdoctoral fellows after obtaining the Mastership in Paediatric and Child Health (renamed, Clinical MD in Paediatrics and Child Health). My choice was to do paediatric neurology and I had the great privilege of having the Late Dr. David Gardner-Medwin, one of the founder fathers of child neurology worldwide [6], as my mentor (Figure 3). Following my return back from Newcastle upon Tyne, Dr. David Gardner-Medwin gracefully accepted an invitation by the Postgraduate Medical Studies Board, U of K to visit Khartoum and conduct an intensive paediatric neurology course (5th-11th February 1983) for postgraduate students in paediatrics and medicine. This included a symposium on muscular dystrophy (Figure 4).



**Figure 3 – A) The Author (second from left) with the Late Dr David Gardner-Medwin (first from left), and (C) Lord Walton of Detchant (right) at the Regional Neurological Centre, Newcastle upon Tyne in 1982. B) The Telegraph depicting David Gardner-Medwin’s obituary. D) Lord Walton of Detchant (second from left) revealing the Walton Report of the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Muscular Dystrophy.**





**Figure 4** – Announcement of a symposium on muscular dystrophy within an intensive paediatric neurology course (5th-11th February 1983) conducted by Dr David Gardner-Medwin during his visit to the Faculty of Medicine, University of Khartoum.



Another major personal fortune was that I had my training at the Regional Neurological Centre in Newcastle upon Tyne, headed by the legendary Lord Walton of Detchant [7, 8]. I still enjoy the honor of greeting and talking to Lord Walton during the World Congress of Neurology meetings (Figure 5). Lord Walton is currently the leading spirit of the muscular dystrophy campaigns in the House of Lords [9]. I have personally been very jubilant when The John Walton Muscular Dystrophy Research Centre was recently launched in Newcastle on 24th November 2014 (Figure 5B).



**Figure 5** – The Author (left) with Lord Walton of Detchant (right) during the 18th World Congress of Neurology, Sydney, Australia (November 2005), and (C) during the 20th World Congress of Neurology, Marrakesh, Morocco (November 2011). During the latter Congress, Lord Walton received The Medal for Service to International Neurology by the World Federation of Neurology. B) The announcement of the opening ceremony of The John Walton Muscular Dystrophy Research Centre in Newcastle upon Tyne on Monday 24th November 2014.

Professor Daoud Mustafa Khalid (1917-2008), the great Sudanese physician and neurologist, who taught generations of Sudanese doctors, will be remembered forever as an outstanding physician, neurologist, teacher and mentor (Figure 6) [10,11]. He engraved the heritage of passing knowledge and skills through

successive generations [12], and this has been vivid in the 14th Congress of the Pan Arab Union of Neurological Societies which took place last week (22-24 January 2015) in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia (Figure 7).



**Figure 6 – A) During an interview done by the Author (left) when he was medical student with a faculty of American cardiologists who visited the Faculty of Medicine, University of Khartoum (October 1972). Professor Daoud Mustafa Khalid (right) hosted the team and organized the teaching activities. B) The interview was published in ‘Al-Sahafa’, the Sudanese newspaper.**



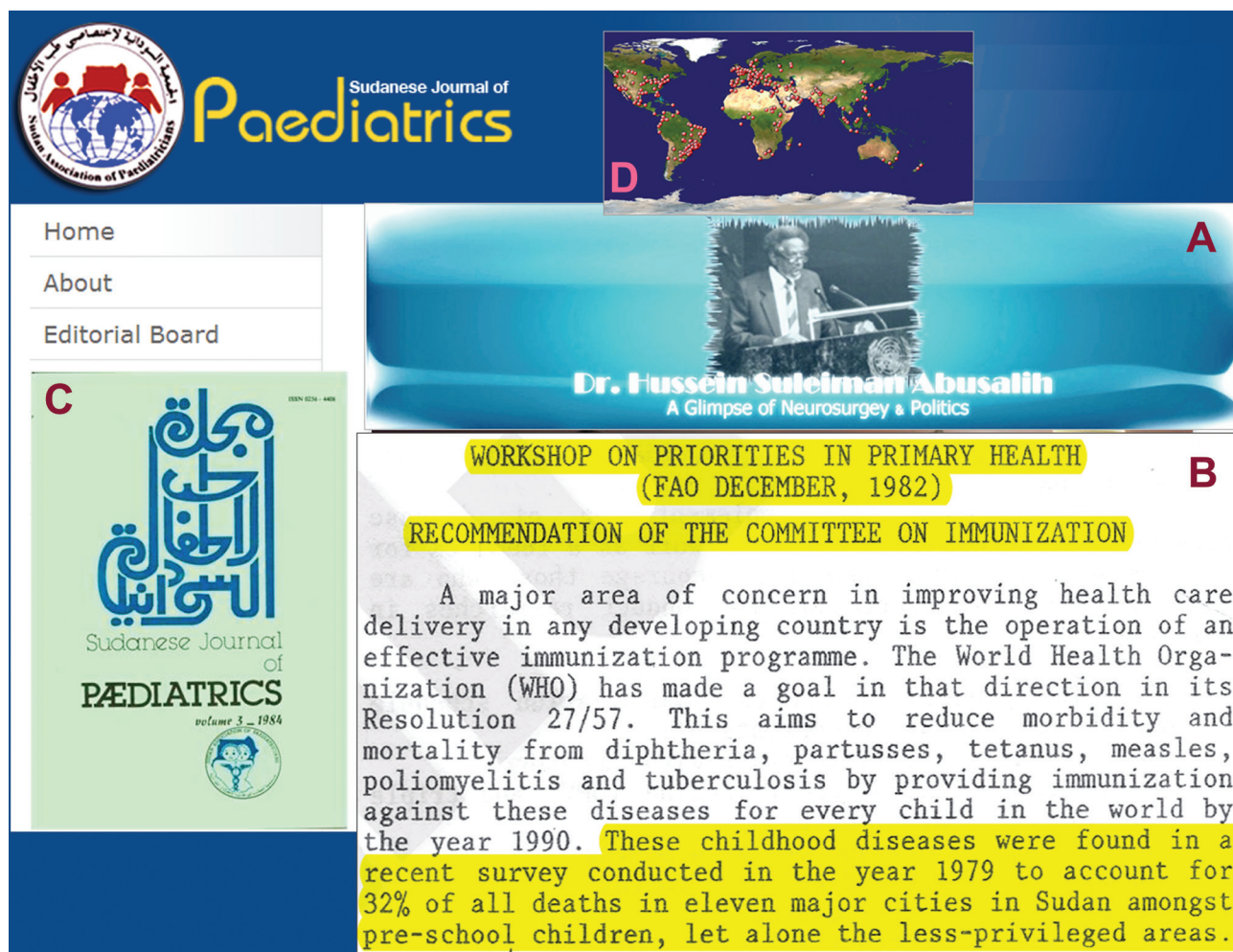


**Figure 7 – Group photo during the 14th Congress of the Pan Arab Union of Neurological Societies which took place in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia ((22-24 January 2015). Three generations of neurology teachers at the Faculty of Medicine, University of Khartoum (U of K) stand together: Dr Mirghani Ahmed Abdelaziz (third from right, first generation) and Prof Mustafa Abdalla M Salih (fourth from right, second generation). The third generation consists of Prof Ammar Eltahir (second from right, Dean Faculty of Medicine, U of K and Vice President, Pan Arab Union of Neurological Societies), Prof Abbashar Hussein (fourth from left) and Prof Osheik Seidi (fifth from left). Also shown in the photo are Dr Adel Jishi (third from left, President of Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] Neurology, Bahrain), Dr Saeed Bohlega (sixth from left, President of Saudi Neurology Society) and the Sudanese borne Dr Salah Omer (first from right, Atkinson Morley Regional Neuroscience Centre, London, UK).**

Dr. Hussein Suleiman Abusalih, who pioneered neurosurgery in Sudan [13], will be remembered for the great support he gave, when he was Minister of Health (1985-1987) to establish sustainable system of vaccination against childhood communicable diseases including tetanus, diphtheria, whooping cough, polio and measles (Figure 8), and for his commitment to support medical research [14].

Professor Tigani El Mahi, “the father of psychiatry in Africa” and one of the pioneers in the Middle East

introduced this discipline in Sudan and trained those with whom our generation learnt psychiatry [15]. An icon of varied talents and interests, he compiled a personal library which was classified as one of the most valuable libraries acquired by an individual in the world which was gifted to the University of Khartoum (U of K) Library in 1972. He was also the President of Sudan during the historic visit of Queen Elizabeth II to Sudan in February 1965 [16].



**Figure 8 – A)** Dr. Hussein Suleiman Abusalih, who pioneered neurosurgery in Sudan, is remembered for the great support he gave, when he was Minister of Health (1985-1987) to establish sustainable system of vaccination against childhood communicable diseases. **B)** The 1982 Conference of the Sudan Association of Paediatricians was in the form of a workshop on priorities in primary health. **C)** The workshop highlighted the vital importance of immunization and the recommendations were published in the Sudanese Journal of Paediatrics (Volume 3, 1984); the online version of which (<http://www.sudanjp.org/>) is currently followed **(D)** in a multitude of locations around the globe.



## REFERENCES

1. Abdullah MA. Pioneers of Paediatrics in Sudan: Professor Mahmoud Mohamed Hassan. Sudan J Paediatr 2011; 11(1): 70-71.
2. Adam KA. Pioneers of paediatrics: Professor Salah Abdelrahman Ali Taha. Sudan J Paediatr 2013;13(1): 56-62.
3. Shazali H, Ahmed AM, Karib A. An experiment in community approach in delivery of health services in rural areas. Sudan J Paediatr 1977(2):10-18.
4. Habour AB. Editorial: The Right Model. Sudan J Paediatr 2010; 10: 3.
5. Salih MAM, Satti SA. Editorial. Commitment to the wellbeing of children worldwide. Sudan J Paediatr 2011;11(2): 4-5.
6. Gardner-Medwin J. Tribute to David Gardner-Medwin, 27th June 2014. Available at: [http://www.david-kilgour.com/2014/DGM\\_tribute.pdf](http://www.david-kilgour.com/2014/DGM_tribute.pdf). Accessed May 27, 2015.
7. Rose FC. Lord Walton of Detchant. Postgrad Med J 1992; 68: 497-499.
8. Lord Walton of Detchant. Available at: <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/1834/history/people/walton.htm>. Accessed May 27, 2015.
9. Access to Specialist Neuromuscular Care: The Walton Report. Available at: [http://www.muscular-dystrophy.org/assets/0000/9943/Walton\\_report.pdf](http://www.muscular-dystrophy.org/assets/0000/9943/Walton_report.pdf) Accessed May 27, 2015.
10. Salih SY. Obituary: Tribute to the late Professor Daoud Mustafa Khalid. Sudan Medical Journal 2008; 44: 1-3.
11. Alsafi A. Daoud Mustafa Khalid: His life and work. Khartoum: Sudan Medical Heritage Foundation Publications, 2009. Available at: [https://sitefinder.tghn.org/site\\_media/media/site\\_finder/sites/documents/Daoud\\_Mustafa\\_his\\_life\\_\\_work.pdf](https://sitefinder.tghn.org/site_media/media/site_finder/sites/documents/Daoud_Mustafa_his_life__work.pdf). Accessed May 28, 2015.
12. Salih MAM, Swar MO. Professionalism in medicine and hyposkillia. Sudan J Paediatr 2014; 14(1):6 - 10.
13. Salim AD. Spine Care in Sudan. World Spinal Column Journal 2012; 3: 60-63.
14. World Health Organization Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean. Report on the Third Inter-country Meeting of National Officers Responsible for Medical Research, Khartoum, Sudan. 25-27 November 1986. Available at: [http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/116696/1/who\\_em\\_rsr\\_35\\_e\\_en.pdf](http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/116696/1/who_em_rsr_35_e_en.pdf). Accessed May 26, 2015.
15. Baasher TA. Republished: First Tigani El Mahi Memorial Lecture. Sudan J Paediatr 2013;13(1): 79-89.
16. Salih MAM. Professor Tigani El Mahi: Short biography and photos. Sudan J Paediatr 2013; 13(1): 75-78.