

Islamic Republic of Iran and International Committee of Military Medicine: A New Horizon Toward Our Global Role

Farshad Najafipour^{1,*}

¹Epidemiology Research Centre, AJA University of Medical Sciences, Tehran, IR Iran

*Corresponding author: Farshad Najafipour, Epidemiology Research Centre, AJA University of Medical Sciences, Tehran, IR Iran. Tel: +98-2122971143, E-mail: drnajafipour2002@yahoo.com

Received: December 26, 2014; **Accepted:** December 29, 2014

Keywords: Military Medicine; Emergency Medicine; Iran

Dear Editor,

During the 40th World Military Medicine Congress at Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, we realized the huge scientific and applied potential of Islamic Republic of Iran (IR Iran) in military medicine era. Our meetings with Secretary General of International Committee on Military Medicine (ICMM), in particular, and some member countries delegations showed that they expect a more active participation of Iranian delegates in the committee, congresses, and other events.

This had been already arranged by the Iranian Military System a few years ago. According to the IR Iran Constitutional Rules, any membership of Iranian official organizations in international organizations must be approved by the National Parliament. Therefore, the efforts that were started a few years ago, reached the final stage and the parliament approved the membership of Iranian Military System in the ICMM. Admission is validated when the application is approved by the next General Assembly, in Bali, Indonesia. This opens a new horizon for internationalization of our missions in military medicine.

The ICMM membership can provide good chances for more development in the vast field of military medicine by sharing and being shared by armed health services of other countries. This could be a very good opportunity to express and share our capacities and our capabilities to international community and show our peaceful beliefs and culture to the world. Furthermore, this would be a good chance to expand our contribution in international peace promotions and operations as well as humanitarian global action.

The ICMM is made up of 110 Member States and five observer States, all of which are members of the United Nations (UN), have the status of official observers with in the UN, or are recognized as members of World health Organization (WHO). The ICMM is a neutral, non-political,

international, intergovernmental organization. Each Member State is represented by an official delegate who is appointed by the government of his or her country. The ICMM was established in 1921, after the World War I had revealed the lack of care provided to victims and the need to strengthen cooperation between the health services of the armed forces worldwide (Figure 1) (1).

According to the official documents, the main objective of the ICMM is to ensure that our medical services personnel have the means to work together through similar practices in operations involving international cooperation. This is a long-term goal, and the ICMM can work towards achieving this goal in a number of ways: by encouraging activities at which scientific and technical experience is shared, by developing contacts with the scientific community, and by promoting regional events. This will enable us to pool our resources and work experience of military medicine, both in the theatre of operations and in a support role in the case of crisis situations (2). These objectives are of interest to all sectors of military medicine in the wider sense, including the followings:

- Screening personnel
- Medicine within military units
- Surgery in the theatre of operations
- Emergency medicine
- Disaster response
- Public health
- Dentistry
- Pharmacy
- Veterinary sciences
- Administration and medical logistics training.

To expand our contribution with ICMM, we need to have more information about this organization. Let us review some parts of ICMM website as below:

“These activities are of interests of ICMM:

- Exchanges and Information Forum.
- The ICMM major role is to contribute to exchanges in all the medico-military fields both technological and scientific.
- This is achieved mainly during World and Regional Congresses regrouping delegations of Member States and representatives of observer countries, but also during multilateral exchanges.
- The 40th World Congress on Military Medicine was held in Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in December 2013.
- Pan-American, Pan-African, Pan-European, Maghreb and Pan-Arab Regional Working Groups organize Regional Congresses and Courses.
- Each quarter, the ICMM publishes its official organ, the International Review of the Armed Forces Medical Services.
- Scientific ICMM showcase, the International Review of the Armed Forces Medical Services is the material link between Medical Services and Member States. Several copies are sent for free to the delegates of each Member State and to other structures of the Medical Services. This link is strengthened with the ICMM official website, where all information about ICMM's activities, structures and official working documents are updated.
- The active participation of Member States allows them to get all advantages they could expect during the different congresses and multilateral exchanges.
- The official languages for the exchanges are French and English.
- In Study of Training and Coaching field the ICMM objectives are:
 1. Making exchanges easier on training methods used in the world,

2. Trying to make out guidelines (Not restrictive),
 3. Establishing a database on existing training,
 4. Organizing international courses.
- Assessment of disaster situations: The ICMM promotes discussions on the Medical Services activity during natural or technological main disasters.
 - Cooperation with international organizations: The ICMM has signed agreements with WHO, OIE and UNAIDS. These agreements provide for cooperation with medical services of our Member States in order to detect and respond to major epidemics posing a global threat to public health. WHO, OIE and UNAIDS contact each government individually. We are also discussing draft agreements with other international organizations.
 - Study of International Humanitarian Law evolution:
 1. It is clear today that current conflicts and military interventions impose an evolution of this law. Based on actual experience within the ICMM context, we can collaborate, in this aim, with specialized organizations.
 2. Fruitful exchanges are taking place during different meetings at the ICMM.
 3. A course of Law of Armed Conflicts is organized each year with the support of Switzerland. This course is actually decentralized in different regions of the world.” (1). Shortly, the 41st World Congress on Military Medicine will be hosted by Indonesia in Bali, in May 2015. Iranian military forces are going to have active participation in this congress by presenting papers, workshops, and roundtables. Nevertheless, it is not enough. We must reorganize our activities in order to be an active and effective member of ICMM and play our role in the regional committees. In addition, we expect to have at least one candidate for the next ICMM Prize (Jules Voncken Prize). Therefore, I sincerely invite my colleagues for further action to reach these goals.

				
General Jules VONCKEN, MD Secretary-General from 1921 till 1976	Colonel Jules MATHIEU MD Secretary-General from 1976 till 1982	Colonel Marcel COOLS, MD Secretary-General from 1982 till 1998	Colonel Jacques SANABRIA, MD Secretary-General from 1998 till 2011	Major General Roger VAN HOOFF, MD Secretary-General from 2011 till today

Figure 1. The Secretaries-General of International Committee on Military Medicine, Adopted From the International Committee on Military Medicine Website

References

1. Secretary I, ICMM secretary.. Status of the international committee of military medicine (ICMM). . Belgium; 2013.
2. ICMM . *International Committee of Military Medicine*. Belgium 2014. Available from: http://www.cimm-icmm.org/index_en.php.