

**2<sup>nd</sup> WFNS Global Neurosurgery Conference and 1<sup>st</sup> ISGNS Conference****Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, 11<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> April 2026**

I had the privilege of attending this conference from 15<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> April, which unfortunately coincided with the SBNS Harrogate meeting.

The 1<sup>st</sup> WFNS Global Neurosurgery Conference was in Peshawar, Pakistan, in February 2024. The current meeting was organised jointly between the WFNS Global Neurosurgery committee, chaired by Tariq Khan, and the Tanzanian Neurosurgical Society, with Hamisi Shabani as chair of the local organising committee.

The theme of the joint conference was ‘Global neurosurgery impact and challenges in LMIC: uniting minds and transforming care.’ The main meeting was preceded by a number of educational, training, and public engagement events, beginning on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> April. The conference ended with the formal launch of the International Society for Global Neurosurgery (ISGNS), and the election of the various office bearers.

**Pre-conference events**30<sup>th</sup> March – 11<sup>th</sup> April

Surgical camps

12<sup>th</sup> April**TBI Charity walk Dar es Salaam**

This really caught the imagination – motorcyclists wearing high visibility vests and wearing (or waving) helmets with the Swahili slogan ‘Vaa helmet, ubongo hauna spea!’ (Wear a helmet, your brain has no spare!). This will now become an annual public engagement event in Tanzania, every April.

14<sup>th</sup> April

Research skills workshop

14<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> April

Nursing and critical care workshop

15<sup>th</sup> April

Neurorehabilitation course

15<sup>th</sup> April

Epilepsy surgery course

15<sup>th</sup> April**Boston Declaration meeting**

Chaired by Gail Rousseau, multiple speakers with rapid fire updates on their Boston declaration pledges, covering the full spectrum of global neurosurgery.

**Main conference**Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> April**Opening ceremony**

This was attended by the President of Tanzania, Samia Suluhu Hassan. Packed auditorium, excellent public engagement and a high profile event. While all this was admirable, important to be aware that there was significant unrest at the time of the last presidential elections in October 2025. The African Union observers stated that the election did not comply with democratic standards.

**Programme**

The first day included keynote speeches from Kee Park, Tariq Khan, Tony Figaji, and Gail Rousseau. The theme of the day was advocacy.

Friday 17<sup>th</sup> April**Programme**

The theme was leadership and partnerships, moving on to research and training as the day progressed. Again, very high quality speakers: Moody Qureshi, Alex Golby, and Graham Fieggen (plus many more). There were some useful panel discussions in the afternoon (chaired by Beverley Cheserem) with audience engagement.

Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> April**Programme**

A short lecture session to start the day.

**Election of ISGNS board**

This was the main focus of the final day. The election process was overseen by Dr Richard Moser, ably assisted by Jay Rav and others. The electorate was ordinary members of the ISGNS who were present in person, and who had paid their dues. The fee was a nominal \$10 (plus \$2.51 to Eventbrite).

Individuals could nominate themselves or another, with the nominations closing at 0900 on the morning of the election.

For each post the electorate queued and voted one by one for each of the positions from among the available nominees.

The results were as follows:

<b>President:</b>	Kee Park	(US)
<b>President-elect:</b>	Gail Rousseau	(US)
<b>Vice President:</b>	Beverly Cheserem	(Kenya)
<b>Secretary:</b>	Happiness Rabiell	(Tanzania)
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Eylem Ocal	(US)
<b>Director at large:</b>	Kemel Ghotme	(Colombia)
<b>Director at large:</b>	Hamisi Shabani	(Tanzania)

The final 8<sup>th</sup> board position, normally allocated to the past president, was filled by Tariq Khan, having been proposed and then confirmed by a show of hands.

**Summary/Observations**

Attending this meeting allowed an overview of the origins of Global Neurosurgery, how it has developed, and where it is likely to go in the future. A large number of partnerships exist, often direct between institutions (HIC-LMIC), many of which are still active. It's interesting that some of the North American groups began by providing direct clinical care in LMICs, generally realising that this was an ineffective strategy, before moving on to education, training, research and advocacy.

The practice of Global Neurosurgery might therefore be usefully summarised by the acronym TREAT:

- Treatment (delivered by local neurosurgeons, rather than short term visits)
- Research
- Education
- Advocacy
- Training

We are already involved in all these areas through the SBNS GNI. There are also many neurosurgeons in the UK who engage with global neurosurgery, mostly through education and training. We may have an advantage in that we have a strong single voice through the SBNS, whereas there appears to be less co-ordination between the various institutions and organisations in other high income countries, despite the excellent projects and partnerships which have often resulted.

**WFNS/ISGNS relationship**

This meeting was a joint conference between the WFNS and ISGNS. The ISGNS is a completely independent society, with its legal entity in Delaware. There is no current conflict between these bodies, but the exact long term relationship remains unclear e.g. will the conferences always coincide? This issue was raised by Moody Qureshi in one of the discussion forums.

**Possible joint SBNS/ISGNS meeting**

The plan is to have an ISGNS conference biannually, with the 2028 conference to be held in Bogota, Colombia in 2028. The likelihood is that the conferences will generally be hosted in the Global South. However, there appears to be opportunity in the alternate years, including 2027. The SBNS will be in Glasgow in April 2027, and a joint SBNS/ISGNS meeting may work extremely well for both parties. This would allow the SBNS to fully engage with this new and important global society.

**Chris Barrett**

**20<sup>th</sup> April 2026**