



## Odontology Section – 2007

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### **F30 Disaster Victim Identification in a Global Community: Issues and Challenges**

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After attending this presentation, attendees will learn about the qualifications, protocols, and procedures needed for adequate disaster victim identification that can withstand scrutiny of international legal systems.

This presentation will impact the forensic community and/or humanity by demonstrating that the only good way to obtain maximum results in disaster victim identification operations is to work according to standardized protocols and procedures that have to be accepted and applied by all involved, regardless of personal agendas and opinions.

The Asian Tsunami of 26 December 2004, which caused over 200,000 casualties in more than 10 countries in and around the Indian Ocean, was a prime example of how in a global community an international interdisciplinary disaster victim identification operation was set up and coordinated. This was accomplished by the Interpol Secretariat General and DVI Standing Committee in Lyon according to the Interpol philosophy (DVI). DVI teams from more than 20 countries took part in the identification process which, because of the complexity of the situation and different legal systems, had to be conducted in an internationally agreed upon way.

Despite existing protocols and procedures the biggest challenge turned out to be quality control at all levels of the operation. After a thorough review by Interpol a good number of issues were identified and discussed at the annual Standing Committee Meeting in Lyon. The challenges for the future will be to create a unified front and get all pointed in the same direction regardless of personal agendas and interest.

Forensic odontology, being one of the primary identifiers, faces the same issues and challenges overall. A review will be given and some suggestions for future practice will be made.

**Disaster Victim Identification, Interpol DVI Philosophy, Forensic Odontology**