

## Original Article

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# The Seventh World Congress of Pediatric Cardiology and Cardiac Surgery, Istanbul, Turkey, June 19–24, 2017: “Bridge together”

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**Abstract** The Seventh World Congress of Pediatric Cardiology and Cardiac Surgery will be held in Istanbul, the only city in the world that is located on two continents, June 19–24, 2017. This World Congress promises academic excellence in a culturally stimulating environment. All those interested in the care of patients with pediatric and congenital cardiac disease should attend this meeting, which represents “The Olympics of our Profession”.

**Keywords:** Cardiac Surgery; Cardiology; Anesthesia; Critical Care; Nursing, Science

ISTANBUL, THE ONLY CITY IN THE WORLD THAT IS located on two continents, Europe and Asia, will provide the perfect backdrop for The Seventh World Congress of Pediatric Cardiology and Cardiac Surgery (Figs 1–6). Here you will have an outstanding opportunity to participate and to network with those who are at the very forefront of this field, in a city not only encompassing history and civilisation, but also modern infrastructure and state-of-the-art facilities. Furthermore, the scientific programme will provide you with the most advanced knowledge and will be at the cutting edge in paediatric cardiology, cardiac surgery, anaesthesia, and intensive care. You can find information about The Seventh World Congress of Paediatric Cardiology and Cardiac Surgery at the following Internet address: <http://wcpccs2017.org/en/>

The World Congress of Pediatric Cardiology and Cardiac Surgery dates back to 1980, when Dr Jane Somerville and Professor Fergus Macartney organised The First World Congress of Pediatric Cardiology in London, United Kingdom. Naturally, both organisers played a large role in the development of this Congress, and if it was not for their commitment and motivation, we would not be

where we are today. The development of The World Congress of Pediatric Cardiology and Cardiac Surgery is sheer testament to their vision and expertise. The historic joint First “World Congress of Pediatric Cardiology and Cardiac Surgery” took place in Paris in June, 1993. The “World Congress of Pediatric Cardiology and Cardiac Surgery” has been held successfully in Paris (1993), Hawaii (1997), Toronto (2001), Buenos Aires (2005), Cairns (2009), and most recently in Cape Town (2013).

The great work achieved in Cape Town among the beauty of Table Mountain provides a constant reminder and added motivation for the Seventh World Congress to be even better! We aim to have even greater opportunities and tools for the attendees among the vibrancy and energy that Istanbul offers. There is no doubt that this will be the case – we have assembled a dedicated and passionate team that will assure it is the best World Congress yet.

When Istanbul won the bid to play host to The World Congress of Pediatric Cardiology and Cardiac Surgery, naturally, we were delighted with the opportunity to showcase this fine city, and we were confident that this World Congress will be of great success. Knowing that we have the chance to bring this esteemed Congress to Turkey and to our beautiful and inspiring hometown continues to be a source of great happiness for me. If you would like to see the

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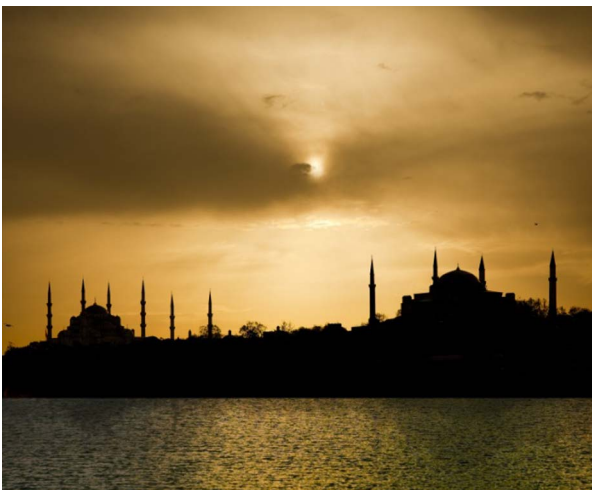
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**Figure 1.**  
*The Bosphorus bridge connecting Europe and Asia.*



**Figure 3.**  
*Istanbul view.*



**Figure 2.**  
*Mosque Skyline.*



**Figure 4.**  
*Ephesus.*

bid presentation video, highlighting the beauty of Istanbul, you can find it on the homepage at the following internet address: <http://wcpccs2017.org/en/>

Throughout its 2.5 thousand years of history, Istanbul has served as the capital to three of the most powerful empires of the world, namely, the Roman, Byzantine, and Ottoman Empires, and as such bears the relics of those civilisations and much more in its fabric. Geographically, Istanbul is a unique city that unites Europe and Asia. However, it is not only the *meeting point* of the continents, but also is the *melting pot* of eastern and western, northern and southern civilisations.

Throughout centuries of the city's existence,

- many a faith came in contact with each other in its pagan temples, synagogues, churches, and mosques;
- countless languages were spoken in its houses, palaces, marketplaces, schools, and courthouses;

- innumerable armies stood outside its mighty walls and tried their luck at looting its riches and commanding the rest of the world from its epicentre.

Unavoidably, inescapably, the unending encounter of races and religions, rituals and practices, traditions and customs, ambitions and dreams dissolved differences between societies, softened the sharp edges, and melded cultures together. Tolerance became the key to survival, and Istanbul emerged as one of the centres of tolerance in the world, next to her prominence as a military and commercial fulcrum. Today, much of this ancient framework survives, witnessed by numerous monuments sometimes separated from each other by mere meters spatially, although by centuries temporally. Many tongues are still being spoken in markets and schools, although being more and more replaced by English. The city has metamorphosed into a truly cosmopolitan centre of arts, music, technology, and commerce, home to close to 15 million, with a new downtown springing from every corner, and a new bridge or submarine tunnel being built spanning the Bosphorus, the giant river separating



Figure 5.  
*Cappadocia.*



Figure 6.  
*Maiden Tower and historical peninsula behind Istanbul.*

Europe from Asia and connecting the Black Sea to the Mediterranean basin.

By 2017, the World Congress will have been in neither Europe nor Asia for over 20 years; holding the 2017 World Congress in Istanbul where the two continents meet will not only be appropriate, but also full of symbolism. Tolerance is the key event for humanity, and Istanbul has been the centre of tolerance between different races, cultures, and religions for centuries. Istanbul is an important symbol for friendship, understanding, and collaboration, which we need nowadays, and in the future, even more than ever. I have no doubt that this meeting will be a valuable opportunity for all of you to experience a scientifically enriched environment in perfect harmony with all the Turkish hospitality and historical beauties of magnificent Istanbul.

The World Congress of Pediatric Cardiology and Cardiac Surgery is an integral part of the learning process and engagement for those involved in the field of cardiac surgery and cardiac medicine. Not only is there a chance to improve and upgrade skills, but also to collaborate and cooperate with your peers within a collegial spirit. During the 5 days of this Congress, we are determined to provide an extensive programme with discussions and state-of-the-art lectures, combined with an interactive programme. Furthermore, this meeting will be significant in promoting team effort, bridging together not only different cultures but also different specialities.

There are five key aims of The Seventh World Congress of Pediatric Cardiology and Cardiac Surgery, which all play an important role in giving direction to the World Congress and understanding its value.

- First, the World Congress aims to be an interactive meeting that involves the experts in the field of paediatric cardiac surgery and paediatric cardiac medicine to ensure development and networking opportunities.
- Second, the World Congress aims to initiate an advancement and development of cardiac care for children.
- Third, the World Congress aims to increase the visibility of the inadequacies in the field, which are still present in many countries, and to provide a pathway for action where most necessary.
- Fourth, the World Congress aims to aid the spread of knowledge regarding cardiac care to regions with limited access.
- Lastly, the World Congress aims to evaluate and reflect on four years of advancement within this field.

We are confident that all aims will be met throughout the 5 days due to the focused structure of the World Congress.

The programme will consist of subspecialty meetings, plenary lectures, symposiums, and live cases. The World Congress will take place at the Istanbul Convention Center, the biggest convention centre in Turkey and a cultural and artistic meeting point that will take great care of you throughout the programme. At your finger tips, you will find state-of-the-art facilities with superior service in well-equipped rooms.

The Seventh World Congress of Paediatric Cardiology and Cardiac Surgery will cover the following topics throughout the 5 days of the World Congress:

- Pediatric and Adult Congenital Cardiology & Interventional Cardiology

- Pediatric and Adult Congenital Cardiac Surgery
- Pediatric and Adult Congenital Cardiac Intensive Care
- Pediatric and Adult Congenital Cardiac Imaging
- Pediatric and Adult Congenital Cardiac Anesthesia
- Paediatric and Adult Congenital Perfusion
- Pediatric and Adult Congenital Cardiac Nursing
- Fetal Cardiology
- Genetics & Basic Sciences
- Training in Pediatric and Adult Congenital Cardiology and Cardiac Surgery
- Pediatric and Adult Congenital Cardiac Care in Countries with limited resources

It is worth noting the significant assets that Istanbul holds in playing host to the World Congress. Istanbul, uniquely surrounded by thousands of years of historical and cultural heritage, is not only the geographical meeting point of the continents, but is the true melting pot of cultures and civilisations, both eastern and western. Located at the crossroads of East and West, Istanbul offers easy air connections to hundreds of cities around the world and is one of the world's most exciting conference destinations. The citizens of 99 countries can enter Turkey without a visa; and furthermore, the citizens of 48 countries can obtain their visa directly at the airport making the journey much easier. Its outstanding infrastructure, including modern, luxurious accommodation with conference and exhibition venues, makes the city one of the best choices. Hotels located within walking distance to the Istanbul Convention Center are comfortable and affordable. In total, there are 7960 hotel rooms to choose from, all within two to ten minutes from the Istanbul Convention Center.

In Istanbul, inspiration lays on every corner, with each district giving a unique feel with new experiences. You will be able to explore districts in Istanbul such the fashionable Nisantasi area, where you can marvel at top-end fashion stores and then enjoy a morning Turkish coffee in luxury surroundings while you slowly gear yourself up for an adventurous day tackling this beautiful city. There is also Ortakoy, a charming and idyllic village situated on the Bosphorus, where you can explore the small market stalls that overlook the shores of the Asian side. In Istanbul's old town Sultanahmet, you will find

- Hagia Sofia – which was first a Byzantine Church, then an Ottoman Mosque, and now a Turkish museum,
- Topkapi Palace – which for nearly 400 years was home to the Ottoman sultans, and
- The Grand Bazaar – world recognised and one of the oldest shopping areas, home to over 3000 shops – where you can smell the exotic spices and

take in all the vibrant shops, which are full of the most colourful objects and necessary souvenirs!

Istanbul also offers some fantastic post-Congress opportunities to make the most of your time in Turkey. You can enjoy the likes of Cappadocia (Fig 5) – an enchanting open-air museum and an unparalleled example of the common cultural heritage of humanity – and Ephesus, which has some of the best-preserved ancient ruins in the Mediterranean, which are both within easy-reaching distance.

The World Congress of Pediatric Cardiology and Cardiac Surgery will also ensure that delegates are offered an enjoyable social programme. This will include a world famous dance show titled “Fire of Anatolia”, a welcome cocktail in the gardens of the Archaeological Museum, and will end with a Turkish-themed night on Thursday 22 June, 2017. A spectacular view will be on offer, showcasing the city at night in all its glory, while you can enjoy the delicious Turkish cuisine with your peers and a chance to reflect upon the highlights of the World Congress.

The Seventh World Congress of Pediatric Cardiology and Cardiac Surgery will provide a unique opportunity to work in harmony within a culturally historic city, as well as modern infrastructures and state-of-the art facilities. By covering all aspects of paediatric cardiac surgery and paediatric cardiac medicine in this vibrant city, we aim to make a substantial difference and tangible progress for those providing care to patients with paediatric and congenital cardiac disease. With a clear emphasis on team work, there will be a large opportunity to foster collegial spirit among delegates and build on your existing network. Moreover, we will bridge together the various cultures and specialities from all over the world, and we intend to make The Seventh World Congress of Pediatric Cardiology and Cardiac Surgery the best it can be, with your vital participation.

In 1947, a famous Turkish poet, Orhan Veli, famously described Istanbul. I will recite a part of the equally beautiful 1982 translation of his poem by another poet, Talat Sait Halman:

*I am listening to Istanbul, intent, my eyes closed;  
At first there blows a gentle breeze  
And the leaves on the trees  
Softly flutter or sway;  
Out there, far away,  
The incessantly ringing bells of water carriers;  
I am listening to Istanbul, intent, my eyes closed.  
  
I am listening to Istanbul, intent, my eyes closed;  
Then suddenly birds fly by,  
Flocks of birds, high up, in a hue and cry  
While nets are drawn in the fishing grounds  
And a woman's feet begin to dabble in the water.  
I am listening to Istanbul, intent, my eyes closed.*

*The Grand Bazaar is serene and cool,  
A hubbub at the hub of the market,  
Mosque yards are brimful of pigeons,  
At the docks while hammers bang and clang  
Spring winds bear the smell of sweat;  
I am listening to Istanbul, intent, my eyes closed.*

*I am listening to Istanbul, intent, my eyes closed;  
Still giddy since bygone bacchanals,  
A seaside mansion with dingy boathouses is fast asleep,  
Amid the din and drone of southern winds, reposed,  
I am listening to Istanbul, intent, my eyes closed.*

*I am listening to Istanbul, intent, my eyes closed.  
Now a dainty girl walks by on the sidewalk:  
Cusswords, tunes and songs, malapert remarks;  
Something falls on the ground out of her hand,  
It's a rose I guess.  
I am listening to Istanbul, intent, my eyes closed;  
I am listening to Istanbul, intent, my eyes closed.  
A bird flutters round your skirt;*

*I know your brow is moist with sweat  
And your lips are wet.*

*A silver moon rises beyond the pine trees:  
I can sense it all in your heart's throbbing.  
I am listening to Istanbul, intent, my eyes closed.*

Now, Istanbul is getting herself ready to host one of the most important medical professional meetings of the world, The Seventh World Congress of Pediatric Cardiology and Cardiac Surgery. On behalf of my colleagues, I would like to invite you all to take this opportunity to feel the breeze and listen to Istanbul!

I believe you will bring with you the ideas, views, opinions, passion, and the commitment of our profession from across the globe. Most importantly, you will bring the concerns of every child born with heart disease and their parents:

The right to have access to the best medical care!!!