



## **IN THIS ISSUE:**

**WASLI 2011 IN SOUTH AFRICA**

**WASLI PRESIDENT VISITS JAPAN**

**INDIAN ASLI UPDATE**

**INTERPRETER WORKSHOP IN SAUDI ARABIA**

**SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETER TRAINING IN MALI**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

## **WE NEED YOUR NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS!**

Please share interpreting news from your part of the world with us! To make a contribution, please contact [newsletter@wasli.org](mailto:newsletter@wasli.org).

The next deadline for newsletter contributions is **FRIDAY 20<sup>th</sup> AUGUST, 2010**.

# WASLI 2011 IN SOUTH AFRICA

## REGISTRATIONS NOW OPEN

**Momentum is building** for an outstanding conference in Durban, South Africa, 14-16 July 2011. For all the information you need and regular updates, visit the conference websites:

English: <http://www.wasli.org/wasli-conference-2011-p37.aspx>

Spanish: <http://www.wasli.org/conferencia-de-wasli-de-2011-p102.aspx>

**Registrations are now open** so why not take advantage of the discounted early bird prices and reserve your place. (A special price has been negotiated for interpreters from eligible developing countries.) The conference hotel is on the Golden Mile beachfront at Durban where the warm waters of the Indian Ocean lap the shore. While in KwaZulu-Natal province (of which Durban is the capital), take some extra time to enjoy the spectacular scenery and wildlife.

**The Call for Papers and Posters** has been issued and proposals are required by 15 September 2010 in order to complete the selection process by 30 November 2010. The complete programme will be announced soon after that. The conference theme, "Think Globally, Act Locally" gives plenty of opportunity for a wide variety of topics, formats, and presenters from around the world. The conference encourages the sharing of ideas for collaboration across countries, cultures, and languages from consumers, practitioners, educators, and researchers. The aim is to put together a range of presentations that reflect the diversity of the world in which we live. Deaf and hearing interpreters, educators and researchers – now is the time to be preparing your proposals. WASLI will publish papers presented at the conference in 2012.

**The Sponsorship Programme**, which has been so successful in enabling a number of interpreters from developing countries to attend WASLI's previous two conferences, is being launched again. Linking sponsors with as many qualifying interpreters as possible, the opportunities of attending this conference can have worldwide impact. We encourage national associations, corporate organisations and individuals from the developed world to come forward as sponsors, and we anticipate applications for sponsorship from interpreters in Africa, Latin America, Asia and other places that meet the eligibility criteria. (See the website for further details. You can also donate online at anytime.)

**Design a Logo for the Conference.** We are giving the opportunity to those of you with artistic skills to design a logo for the conference. In your design, please keep in mind who the conference is for, the conference theme, and its location. Entries close on 15 October 2010; please email [confadmin@wasli.org](mailto:confadmin@wasli.org).

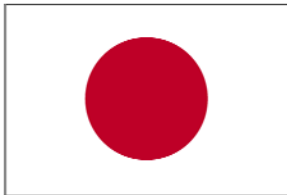
**Can you play a part** in the development of the World Association? Some of the leaders that have helped the organisation to grow over the past five or six years will be stepping down from positions on the WASLI Board at the end of the 2011 conference. Now is the time to be looking for able people to replace those leaving office. Nominations for vacant posts will be called later in the year as part of the preparation for the General Membership Meeting (which precedes the conference).

**Keep up to date with information** on the website, on WASLI's Facebook page (have you joined yet?) in emails, and future newsletters. Put the date in your diary and plan to be there for a truly memorable experience.



*The 2011 WASLI Conference will be on the beachfront in Durban*

## **JAPAN**



Area: 377,915 sq km  
Population: 126,804,433 (July 2010 est.)  
Capital: Tokyo  
Language/s: Japanese  
Exports: Transport equipment, motor vehicles, semiconductors, electrical machinery, chemicals  
GDP: \$32,600 (2009 est.)

(Source: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ja.html>)

## WASLI PRESIDENT VISITS JAPAN

In May, Liz Scott Gibson, WASLI President, visited Tokyo, Japan as part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations of JASLI (the Japanese Association of Sign Language Interpreters), and gave a presentation at their Symposium on 'WASLI – past, present and future'. The sign language interpreters of Japan in past years have been very supportive of the work of WASLI, and Asia Regional Representative, Emiko Ichikawa, has been a leader in inspiring them.



*President of JASLI*

JASLI works to improve the knowledge and skills of certified JSL interpreters, and provides training and publishes booklets and text books to support interpreter development. Japan was one of the very first countries in the world to recognise the health problems of interpreters. JASLI has published an extensively revised book on its Code of Ethics with many illustrative examples, and has also just completed a major survey into the situation of interpreters in the country (we hope to publish a summary of its findings in a future edition of the Newsletter). There is some concern that younger people are not entering the profession and the average age of interpreters in Japan is increasing. JASLI sees the need to enhance the status of sign language interpreters in Japan as one way to change this.

A particularly moving moment was when 'Certificates of Gratitude' were awarded to 4 respected interpreters who had supported the profession over many years. One recipient, Shunsuke Ito, had died a little time ago – but his widow attended to collect the award posthumously and was warmly welcomed.

Liz then went to Kyoto to give a presentation to the National Research Association for Sign Language Interpretation (Zentsuken) entitled 'Co-operation between Deaf People and Sign Language Interpreters'. A co-presenter was Fuzisaburo Ishino, Director of the Japanese Federation of the Deaf, who outlined the very positive ways in which the JFD co-operate with sign language interpreters. There are formal joint meetings twice a year to discuss a range of issues, and agreements to work collaboratively on research. It seems that Japan is a very good model



of working together which many other countries could learn from.

Whilst there, Liz stayed in a hotel which is jointly owned and managed by the JFD, JASLI and Zentsuken, which employs some Deaf staff and is very 'Deaf Friendly' with visual fire alerts and a vibrating alarm clock in each room! Zentsuken have their offices within the building, and books and information on sign language and the Deaf community are sold in the hotel lobby. A wonderful experience!

Sincere thanks are due to JASLI and Zentsuken for all they have done for WASLI and in particular for the interpreters of the Asia Pacific Region.



## INDIA



Area: 3,287,263 sq km  
Population: 1,173,108,018 (July 2010 est.)  
Capital: New Delhi  
Language/s: Hindi 41%, Bengali 8.1%, Telugu 7.2%, Marathi 7%, Tamil 5.9%, Urdu 5%, Gujarati 4.5%, Kannada 3.7%, Malayalam 3.2%, Oriya 3.2%, Punjabi 2.8%, Assamese 1.3%, Maithili 1.2%, other 5.9% (English is a subsidiary official language)

Exports: petroleum products, precious stones, machinery, iron and steel, chemicals, vehicles, apparel

GDP: \$3,100 (2009 est.)

(Source: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/in.html>)

## INDIAN ASLI (ASSOCIATION OF SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS) UPDATE

### Mr. Arun C. Rao, ASLI President

Here at ASLI we believe we are currently moving from our newest stages of development to that of an eager to learn toddler. There have been a few developments already this year. We have been working with Voluntary Services Overseas (VSO) and currently have a volunteer in place.

Our first task this year was to organise our national conference. ASLI had its first conference in 2008. With advocacy developments in the Deaf community and still a desperate shortage of trained interpreters in India, it was time to hold another.



We chose to hold the event at the esteemed Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi on 13<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup> February 2010. The guests of honour and presenters were Dr Madan Vasishta, a Professor Emeritus at Gallaudet University; Dr Vaishna Narang, a Professor of Linguistics at JNU; Desmond Masterson, a consumer of sign language interpreting and researcher for Deafblind people from the UK and Jennifer Smith, a Sign Language Interpreter and VSO volunteer from the UK. We had a presentation on DVD from Dr Deskmukh who spoke of his experiences in learning about Deaf education, history and rights whilst running a school for the Deaf in Ichalkaranji, Maharashtra.



The interpreters present gained some invaluable information about interpreting for Deaf people. The opportunity was invaluable to share problems between us and discuss how these problems could be resolved. Interpreters in India are in need of support and recognition for their efforts. The ASLI 2<sup>nd</sup> National Conference brought interpreters

from around India from as far as Chandigarh to Hyderabad to Kolkata to Coimbatore together. A sense of community and belonging to an emerging profession is important at this time in India and the conference was a roaring success in offering this support and information.

ASLI is planning community interpreter training in the upcoming months reaching bilinguals who already interpret for their family and friends across the country. We are conducting a survey. Results so far confirm that many of these untrained interpreters are working in areas ranging from meetings, medical appointments and courts. We aim to double the number of interpreters who have had access to any form of training. The training will include ethics, interpreting theory, sign language linguistics and contain a practicum module. Deaf people need a dramatic increase in the number of interpreters available to them in all areas of society to give them the equality promised in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which was ratified by the Indian government in 2007.



We imparted this vision at the conference and encouraged the interpreters present to return to their communities and encourage more bilinguals to join ASLI and receive training. We had a separate session with Deaf people to discuss problems linked to the lack of interpreters and some of the issues they had with untrained interpreters, such as using family members to interpret. We recorded this feedback to be used as part of the future training. We have since had another meeting to work alongside the Deaf community on the training package. It was a success that we are sure will continue over the next few months.

More information is available on the website (<http://www.signasli.org/>) and you can see updates on the facebook page (search for 'Indian Association of Sign Language Interpreters').



## SAUDI ARABIA



Location: Middle East, bordering the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea, north of Yemen  
Population: 29,207,277  
Capital: Riyadh  
Language/s: Arabic  
Exports: Petroleum and petroleum products 90%  
GDP: \$20,400 (2009 est.)

(Source: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/sa.html>)

## INTERPRETER WORKSHOP IN SAUDI ARABIA

In June, WASLI President Liz Scott Gibson was invited by the Prince Salman Centre for Disability Research, through its Manager of the Deaf and Sign Language Programme, Hend Al Showaier (who many will know as having attended both WASLI conferences) to conduct an introductory training workshop for sign language interpreters in Riyadh. Hend has been a tireless campaigner to bring training to the interpreters of Saudi Arabia for there is no training for interpreters there at the moment. Most interpreters are from Deaf families, or may be teachers of deaf children. However, there are hopes that more formal training programmes may be established soon.

Liz met with representatives of the Saudi Committee of Sign Language Experts and Interpreters, which is hosted by the Saudi Association of Deaf Sports, to discuss the standardisation of Arabic Signed Languages, and the creation of dictionaries



of an 'Arabic Sign Language'. There was a healthy debate looking at these issues!

Liz visited the Deaf Women's Cultural Center which was celebrating the 35th Deaf Arab Week. This is an annual event which the Arab countries celebrate every year in April. The Arab Federation of Organizations Working with the Deaf (AFOOD) chooses the theme every year. Liz gave a presentation and was also interviewed for a new television programme for Deaf and hearing people, 'Al-Labeb Bel Ishara', to explain a little about WASLI and answer questions on a variety of sign language related topics.

Liz says she was impressed with the enthusiasm and motivation of the interpreters who attended the workshop, and was particularly grateful for the support and contribution of the members of the Deaf community who were also there. We hope we see an Association of Sign Language Interpreters from Saudi Arabia soon as a member of WASLI.



## MALI



Location: Western Africa, southwest of Algeria

Population: 13,796,354 (July 2010 est.)

Capital: Bamako

Language/s: French (official), Bambara 80%, numerous African languages

GDP: \$1,200 (2009 est.)

(Source: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ml.html>)

# **SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETER TRAINING IN MALI, WEST-AFRICA**

Deaf people from Mali, a school principal from Burkino Faso and a Dutch foundation are working together towards the realisation of training for Sign Language interpreters in Mali.

There are approximately 15,000 Deaf people in Mali (census, 1998). Nevertheless, there are only two Deaf schools and a few small classes with Deaf pupils within mainstream schools. The first school for the Deaf in Mali was opened fifteen years ago. Facilities for Deaf people are basic and few. Also, there is not a lot of expertise concerning Deafhood and Sign Language. Many Deaf people can hardly read or write, and often they are unemployed. On top of that, there are virtually no Sign Language interpreters in Mali.

SiRAprojects, which has been involved in Burkina Faso since 2004, has had contact with the Deaf community in Mali since 2006. This resulted in a six day empowerment workshop in Bamako (Mali) in 2008. The forty Deaf people who took part in it came from different sections of the population of the Deaf communities in Mali and Burkino Faso. One of the issues that came up during that workshop was the distressing lack of Sign Language interpreters. Deaf people emphasise that it is impossible for them to fully participate in society without the service of interpreters.

Amasourds (Association Malienne pour les Sourds) is the national association that represents the Deaf in Mali. On the 10<sup>th</sup> of January 2009, for the first time in its history, a Deaf signer was chosen as chairman. As a result of this Deaf people themselves will be able to work on the improvement of their position in Mali. In practice though, it appears to be extremely difficult for chairman Magassouba to work together with other organisations. NGOs are willing to cooperate, but indicate that this is not possible without the service of Sign Language interpreters. The lack of interpreters blocks effective consultation and cooperation, and consequently successful development. The same problem goes for Burkina Faso. Training Sign Language interpreters is therefore very important.

Amasourds, IJSF (Institut des Jeunes Sourds du Faso – from Burkina Faso) and SiRAprojects have joined hands. Together they have made plans for an initial Sign Language interpreter training course of four weeks. At the moment their first aim is acquiring financial resources to realise this training.

The plan is as follows. A group of ten hearing signers will attend an introductory course for Sign Language interpreters. An experienced interpreter/teacher from Senegal, who formerly worked in other countries such as Mauretania, will conduct the training. The training will focus on aspects of interpreting skills (theoretical as well as practical) and interpreting attitude. After having passed the exam participants will be able to start working as novice Sign Language interpreters. Two of the best candidates will be offered a job for two years at an appropriate salary. Part of the training is informing the participants about future possibilities to improve their interpreting skills. Participating in the WASLI congress in South Africa in 2011 may be one of these options.

For more information on and/or financial support of this project, please contact

Mariska van Zanten, secretary SiRAprojects and project leader Sign Language Interpreter Training  
0031 (0)6 41930070, [mariskamail@yahoo.com](mailto:mariskamail@yahoo.com)

SiRAprojects: [www.siraprojects.weebly.com](http://www.siraprojects.weebly.com) (Dutch)

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### **XVI WORLD CONGRESS OF THE WFD: GLOBAL DEAF RENAISSANCE**

South Africa, 2011

The next World Congress of the World Federation of the Deaf is held in Durban, South Africa from 18 – 24 July 2011. It is the first WFD World Congress to be held in Africa. The congress participants will have a wonderful opportunity to enjoy the spirit of 'Ubuntu', a Zulu expression for 'humanity/compassion towards others'. This attitude is often described as the spirit of South Africa.

For more information about the congress, registration, and call for abstracts, please go to <http://www.wfd2011.com/>

**A FOURTH DEAF PERSON - DR GERGELY TAPOLCZAI – HAS BEEN ELECTED TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT.** See [http://www.eud.eu/news.php?action=view&news\\_id=91](http://www.eud.eu/news.php?action=view&news_id=91) for more information.

**THE CONFERENCE OF INTERPRETER TRAINERS** A preliminary conference programme and registration is now available at <http://cit-asl.org/conf/>.

**ASLIA NATIONAL (AUSTRALIA) HAS SET UP A NEW ASSOCIATION FOR INTERPRETER EDUCATORS AND TRAINERS** - the Interpreter Trainers' Network (ITN). Visit the website of the ITN at [www.itn.aslia.com.au](http://www.itn.aslia.com.au) to see the resources and information available to teachers of interpreters. For more information contact Karen Bontempo at [itn@aslia.com.au](mailto:itn@aslia.com.au)

#### **IMPORTANT**

The views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect those of the World Association of Sign Language Interpreters. The Editor, together with the WASLI Executive Board and external contributors, produce the WASLI newsletter. WASLI will work to ensure the authenticity of any

information provided. WASLI accepts no liability for the accuracy of the contents or any opinions expressed. Readers are invited to reproduce information provided the source is quoted. Readers should contact [secretary@wasli.org](mailto:secretary@wasli.org) for permission to use WASLI official photographs, or to advise of a change of email address.

#### **WASLI EXECUTIVE BOARD**

*Officers: Liz Scott Gibson (President); Juan Carlos Druetta (Vice President); Zane Hema (Secretary); Daniel Burch (Treasurer)*

*Regional Representatives: Emiko Ichikawa (Asia); George Major (Australasia & Oceania); Philemon Akach (Africa – official representative); Jack Owiti (Africa – temporary representative); Selman Hoti (Balkans); Marco Nardi (Europe); José Luis Brieva Padilla (Latino America); Deb Russell (North America); Anna Komarova (Transcaucasia & Central Asia)*

#### **WASLI VOLUNTEERS**

*WASLI Webmaster: David Wolfenden*

*WASLI Membership: Robin Demko*

*WASLI Translations Coordinator: Rafael Treviño (plus volunteers)*

*Newsletter proofreaders: Patrick Galasso and Alan Wendt*

*Education and Training Task Group volunteers*

*Certification and Assessment Task Group volunteers*