

**The 19th National Congress of the Indonesian Society of Internal Medicine (KOPAPDI XIX) and the 3rd Congress of ASEAN Federation of Internal Medicine**

**June 27-29, 2025**

**Nusa Dua, Bali, Indonesia**

**ACP Global Ambassador reflections by: Isaac O. Opole, MBChB, PhD, MACP**

My travel to Bali, Indonesia, began on Tuesday, June 24, 2025, and I arrived on Thursday, June 26, 2025. I was met at the airport by Dr. Ghiza, who transported me to the hotel and helped me get checked in and settled. I took the afternoon to rest and acclimatize to the 13-hour time difference. Bali at this time of the year is warm and relatively dry, although there was a bit of rain on my day of arrival. Otherwise, the rest of the stay was characterized by sunny weather and high humidity but with a refreshing breeze.



The conference opened on Friday, June 27 at 8:30 a.m., and at 9:30 a.m., I gave the opening presidential lecture on the “Collaborative Role of General Internist and Subspecialist in Optimizing Hospital Patient Care,” focusing on the history and growth of the hospitalist movement in the United States, with a few comparisons with health systems in Southeast Asia. The lecture appears to have been well received, as many of the ASEAN countries represented either did not have hospitalist programs or had very rudimentary programs. I received several requests to share slides and information and at least two requests for individual follow-up with ASEAN leaders and one possible speaking invitation. The opening ceremony also featured the handover of the PAPDI leadership from Dr. Sally Nasution, who has been president for 6 years (two terms), to the new president, Dr. Eka Ginanjar, who takes over for a new 3-year term.



After the opening ceremony, the ASEAN leaders proceeded to their joint meeting, while conference sessions focused on cardiometabolic risk among ASEAN member country populations, with lectures given by representatives from Indonesia, Myanmar, and Malaysia. Afternoon sessions focused on tropical and infectious diseases in the ASEAN region, with a rundown of major infectious diseases encountered in the Philippines and Laos, and best practice in tropical toxicology in Thailand.

The evening events started with a convocation dinner hosted by our Indonesian colleagues and culminated in the presentation of certificates of fellowship for Fellows of the Indonesian Society of Internal Medicine (FINASIM). The main convocation event started with a welcome address by the chairman of the PAPDI board, after which as keynote speaker I delivered the Utoyo Sukaton Memorial Lecture on the topic “General Internal Medicine in the Future: From Science to Collegiality” and presented the ACP gift to the PAPDI President.



The convocation event and fellowship awards were a poignant and colorful event, which I was reliably informed was patterned after the ACP convocation. It started with a convocation procession into the auditorium, where all the fellows were already assembled and seated. After the Utoyo Sukaton lecture and a few speeches, the fellows rose to be acknowledged and a representative from each region received certificates and medals on their behalf. The convocation concluded with prayers and a recessional parade of dignitaries followed by a photo opportunity.



After a very busy day Friday, Saturday, June 28 was a bit lighter, and although the sessions started earlier in the morning, I took the opportunity to explore the seaside in the early morning as the weather was also quite appealing. At 10:00 a.m., my hosts met me in the hotel lobby and escorted me to the venue, where I participated in judging abstract presentations by residents and fellows. The presentations were quite impressive, ranging from basic science and molecule discovery; to clinical testing of novel therapies in diabetes and cardiovascular disease models; to epidemiologic research and early detection of diseases, such as malaria. Participants gave a 7-minute presentation followed by a 3-minute Q&A session, and it was impressive to see their engagement and enthusiasm about their work.



After a busy morning Saturday, I took some time off for sightseeing, and the new President of the Indonesian Society of Internal Medicine, Dr. Eka Ginanjar, took me out sightseeing and to a very delicious Indonesian seafood lunch at the beach, followed by shopping at a local cultural center.



Afterward, we had a dinner and cultural evening hosted at the Westin Convention Center, which was attended by all attendees. I attended and joined our hosts, Drs. Sally Nasution and Eka Ginanjar. This was a colorful event, where everyone wore traditional Indonesian attire. (I went shopping earlier especially to find something to wear for this event.) Everyone was resplendent in their traditional attire, and it was interesting to see how different regions interpreted the traditional batik shirt; sarong; the “teluk beskap,” a formal Javanese jacket for men; and the “kebaya Bali” and “kain songket” adorned with lots of golden and silver trim for the women. I did my best to “represent” and wore the batik shirt and headdress but “saved” my sarong for later and instead wore pants!



Sunday was traveling day, but because I was leaving in the afternoon to catch my flight, I started with a morning walk along the beach. To my surprise (I guess I should not have been too surprised), several people from the conference were also out walking or running and wanted to take a picture “running with the president!”



We later had a breakfast meeting with the leadership of the Indonesian Society of Internal Medicine and the Indonesian College of Internal Medicine (functionally, their version of the ABIM). Our discussions were wide-ranging but themed on medical education and the transition from UME to GME, licensure of foreign physicians in the United States, general medicine–subspecialist relations, development of hospital medicine programs, and government relations and advocacy. They were very eager to learn about our structures and how the different organizations relate, but most importantly, they were very interested in our advocacy and government relations process, as they were facing their own set of political challenges. They do not currently have a functional advocacy process, and I believe this may be one of the areas where ACP can assist them in thinking through and developing a process that suits their members but also works within their political framework.



Finally, it was time to depart Bali for my long series of flights home. All in all, I feel that we made significant progress as organizations but also developed personal connections that will likely enable us to continue our collaborations.