



**WILLIAM WADEBHO ALIMANI (Honorary) (*in absentia*)**

The village of Ekanga, Ituri Province,  
Democratic Republic of the Congo

William was born in 1955 in the village of Ekanga in the northeast of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, close to the Uganda border. His primary school education began at age 9, completing four years in French-speaking Congo before moving to Uganda with an uncle where he finished his primary schooling in English. William was never able to complete secondary school as Idi Amin's murderous reign caused massive social dislocation. So much so that in 1979, at age 18, William had to flee back across the border to the relative security of Congo, now re-named 'Zaire' by its own dictator president, Mobutu Sese Seku. William returned to his village and for the next six years, grew cassava, coffee and other vegetables in his family's field to enable them to survive.

In 1985 William was selected to undertake a nursing course in Boga with the Anglican Church's Medical Service. He completed the two year course becoming the first qualified nurse in Ekanga and worked with two midwives for another two years. In 1989 William was again selected to move 600 kilometres south to the large provincial town of Butembo where he began learning basic dental techniques under the tutelage of Australian dentist, Fellow Graham Toulmin. William joined the Anglican dental team in Butembo, working with Timon Grodya, another Boga-trained nurse who had arrived a year before. After Dr Toulmin and his family were evacuated back to Australia in 1991, the trainees were left in charge of the Butembo Dental Clinic. William became the Dentist in Charge until the second Congo War when he and his family were evacuated back to their home territory for safety.

With assistance from Australia via the Toulmins, a dental clinic was opened in Aru (near William's village) in 2004 and a third dental clinic opened in Mahagi, 200 kms away, in 2010. William has overseen both clinics and continued his work with competence yet without any dental qualifications. In 2015, the Toulmins returned for five years to work with William and to establish a dental training school in Aru.



In 2018, Dr Toulmin approached Sydney University's Dental School to acknowledge the service that William had faithfully carried out over a thirty year career, treating dental problems including multiple fractured mandibles. William had become the most competent oral surgeon for 600 kilometres. He was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Dental Science from the University of Sydney for his years of service.

William is deeply grateful for being inducted in absentia in Sydney as an Honorary Fellow of the ICD and is sorry that he cannot be here in person. He sends his greetings to all present and his overwhelming thanks to the College for this great honour. Fellows Graham and Wendy Toulmin returned to the Democratic Republic of the Congo to present William with his ICD Fellowship certificate and pin at a special presentation ceremony in the Butembo Anglican Church (where the Australian-assisted dental work all began) on September 17th with many dignitaries from the town and the surrounding region in attendance. Graham and Wendy are at the Sydney induction ceremony tonight to symbolically accept the honour of ICD Fellowship on behalf of William.

*(Information and photos provided by Graham Toulmin AM, FICD)*



## **RINGO PALUKU WANZIRENDI (Honorary)**

*(in absentia)*

Anglican Diocese North Kivu, Butembo City,  
Democratic Republic of Congo

Ringo was born in 1971 in the large provincial town of Butembo in Eastern Zaïre - now the Democratic Republic of Congo. At age 16, Ringo told his parents he wanted to be a mechanic and they were not happy, wanting him to become a teacher like his father. His parents relented and Ringo completed a three year motor mechanics apprenticeship. During these years he sang in one of the choirs at the Anglican Church during the time that the Anglican Church's Medical Service missionary team had arrived from Australia. Ringo captured the attention of the dentist in the team, Fellow Graham Toulmin.

After establishing a small dental clinic and training two nurses in basic dental techniques, Grodya and William, Dr Toulmin organised dental safaris to outlying villages. The roads were atrocious, especially in the wet season so Dr Toulmin hired Ringo to dig the vehicle out when it got bogged and to maintain the vehicles. Out in the villages, Ringo observed Dr Toulmin extracting teeth and became interested in providing dental treatment. Dr Toulmin decided to invite Ringo onto the dental team to teach him how to make dentures. Unfortunately, these plans were thrown into disarray by the oncoming Congo wars and the Toulmins were forced to return to Australia leaving Grodya and William running the dental clinic in Butembo. They suggested to Ringo that he go to Boga for nursing training then on his return they would train him as a dentist. Subsequently, Ringo was trained in the same 'apprenticeship' way by Grodya and William, as they had been trained by Dr Toulmin. After the Congo Wars, Ringo was appointed 'Dentist in Charge' of the Butembo Dental Clinic. To satisfy new government requirements for qualifications to deliver medical and dental care, Ringo enrolled in the dental course that had been started by Graham and Wendy Toulmin in Aru, 600 kilometres north of Butembo, in 2013. Ringo graduated with distinction. Since his graduation, Ringo has continued as a practising dentist and oral surgeon in Butembo and returns regularly to the Aru Dental School as one of their 'professeurs'. With his leadership he has transformed the original Butembo clinic facilities and has established three other smaller dental clinics in the surrounding regions.



Ringo was overjoyed with the news that he had been accepted as an Honorary Fellow of the International College of Dentists and sends heartfelt thanks to the College. Fellows Graham and Wendy Toulmin returned to the Democratic Republic of the Congo to present Ringo with his ICD Fellowship certificate and pin at a special presentation ceremony in the Butembo Anglican Church (where the Australian-assisted dental work all began) on September 17th with many dignitaries from the town and the surrounding region in attendance. Graham and Wendy are at the Sydney induction ceremony tonight to symbolically accept the honour of ICD Fellowship on behalf of Ringo.

*(Information provided by Graham Toulmin AM)*