



Association for European Paediatric Cardiology

Newsletter – October, 2008

Dear Colleagues, Friends, Members,

The Annual Meeting recently held in Venice was the largest in the Association's history, with 900 participants attending the meeting. This was also an historical occasion for the Association, as for the first time our meeting was held jointly with the European Heart Surgeons Association. The large number of attendees was good evidence of the value of such joint meetings. The presence of so many surgeons gave an additional view in the scientific sessions. Council again thanks Ornella Milanese and Giovanni Stellin for the hard work that was required to produce such a well-organized and top-quality meeting.

The teaching day held on May 21 was also a success. The high-quality course was skillfully organized by the working group for paediatric cardiac intensive care. The Council appreciates the efforts of the working group, and especially Eduardo da Cruz. More people sought to attend this course than could be accommodated. Over time, such courses have become more and more sophisticated. For the first time, therefore, the name of the event this year was changed to the "update-on" course. Such "update-on" courses are designed as postgraduate courses for everybody, seniors as well as juniors. The high attendance is evidence that those attending the meeting approve the new design. At future Annual Meetings, this kind of course will be organized by our various different working groups.

News from the Council

Due to World Congress to be held in Cairns Australia, in 2009, the Association has cancelled its own Annual Meeting for next year. We anticipate that the World Congress will attract more than 3000 participants from all over the world. We hope that those members who will attend the meeting will enjoy the scientific content of presentations and symposiums, and possibly also have time to

visit other parts of the Australian continent. Even if the Association will not have an Annual Meeting next year, there will be Business Meeting of the Association during Annual Meeting of the European Society of Cardiology, to be held in Barcelona. The European Society of Cardiology has already agreed to provide us with a room for the Business Meeting. There will be several scientific and abstract sessions devoted to congenital cardiology during the meeting. We hope, therefore, that our members will attend the Annual Meeting of the European Society of Cardiology in high numbers.

The Council has been busy representing the Association in different National meetings, and at the Annual Meeting of the European Society of Cardiology in Munich. At the meeting of the European Society of Cardiology, the Society provided a booth, which was manned by the Secretary-General together with friendly and very much appreciated help from colleagues and collaborators from Hamburg and Innsbruck.

Replacement of Councillors and Officers

Since the President of the Society will step down in 2010, it is time for nomination of a President-elect! The proposals for nominations must be signed by ten ordinary members of the Association from 3 or more countries. The proposed candidates should be working in a European country. Council itself normally has only one, and never more than two, members from the same country at any one time. The nominations must be received in writing by the Secretary-General 3 months prior to the Business Meeting. The Council will announce its own nomination at least 4 months before the Business Meeting of the year preceding the Annual Meeting at which the President-elect is due to take office. It will also be necessary to elect one Councillor during the Business Meeting in Barcelona. Should more than one candidate emerge, a ballot will be organized. The ballot papers will be mailed to

all Ordinary members 2 months before the Annual Meeting. The deadline for receipt of the ballot papers by the Secretary-General is 2 weeks before the Business Meeting of the Association. You all are all invited to make proposals for the President-elect and for the Councillor according to the rules indicated in the constitution. The Council is expecting to receive several proposals. Your activity in making nominations will exhibit the strengths and democracy of our Association.

Educational Committee

The Council has decided to create an educational committee, which will serve as a tool of the Council in organizing education. This will include the organization of basic training courses for the junior fellows, along with the "update-on" courses for all members, both provided together with the working groups. The educational committee will also work with Council to develop a European examination in Paediatric Cardiology, along with web-based tools for learning and teaching. The specific task and bylaws of the committee will be finalized during the Council meeting to be held over the Fall. The proposal for the Educational Committee was discussed also with the members in the meeting of the National Delegates, and during the Business Meeting. The Council now asks members to submit proposals for those colleagues who might wish to become part of the educational committee, or aid in its activities. Please send your proposals to the Secretary-General.

Web site

The Council has decided to develop further the existing web services. A discussion forum will be provided at the web page of the Association <www.aepc.org> by the end of this year. It will be possible to enter the forum by using username and password. We hope that there will be active discussions within the forum. There will also be individual web pages for all the working groups within the overall web page of the Association. We advise all members to visit regularly the pages for important information concerning meetings and announcements of jobs, as well as the training courses. If erroneous information is discovered, or if you have suggestions for further development, please do not hesitate to inform the Secretary-General.

Euro Echo

The Annual Meeting will be held this year over the period December 10 through 13 in Lyon. Interesting sessions, and a special course for imaging of the congenital malformed heart, have been prepared. The Euro-examination in echocardiography of congenital

cardiac malformations again takes place during the meeting, under the auspices of the European Association for Echocardiography. We advise all members who wish to pass this examination to keep a log-book of their echocardiographic activities, including copies of reports with some copies of images of pathologic cases.

We conclude this Newsletter with a message from the President.

Words from the President: "Association for European Paediatric Cardiology in the World"

It is a happy President who is able to work with such efficient council members as Eero Jokinen, our productive and efficient Secretary-General, Klaus Schmidt who keeps a tight hold on the financial issues as carefully as his own budget, Jo Di Giovanni, the Scientific secretary who was very active in implementing the programme of our Annual Meeting, and all our other council members who work hard in a friendly atmosphere. The Annual Meeting was a huge success, and I thank again Ornella Milanese and Giovanni Stellin for their care in organizing this first joint meeting with surgeons, and also the officers of our working groups, these groups being the backbone of our association.

Since the duties of the President include representation of the Association abroad, I have spent most of my free time travelling for the Association, and dealing with several major issues, which I summarise here.

World Organization for Pediatric and Congenital Heart Disease

As was discussed during our last general assembly in Venice last May, the Association participated actively in the constitutional meeting of the World Organization for Pediatric and Congenital Heart Diseases, held in Montreal in June, 2008.

The new organization is an initiative from the surgeons, led by Christo Tchervenkov from Montreal, who created last year the World Society for Pediatric and Congenital Heart Surgery, which currently has 500 members representing 70 countries from all over the world. The vision of the World Society for Pediatric and Congenital Heart Surgery is that every child born anywhere in the world with a congenital cardiac defect should have access to appropriate medical and surgical care.

Our Association surely supports such a vision, even if we do not forget the 10 millions of children dying of starvation and lack of safe water and food, as Shakeel Qureshi showed us during his unforgettable Mannheim lecture given in Warsaw in May 2007. The World Society for Pediatric and Congenital Heart Surgery organized a World Summit that took place in Montreal over the period June 19 through 21.

It was a well organized and well attended meeting, with representatives from all over the world. We heard very interesting reports from all continents about the current state of care for those with paediatric and congenital cardiac diseases. The lectures gave us an idea of the immensity of the need and efforts required to build a global coalition to improve the cardiac care of children and adults with congenitally malformed hearts.

Several members of Council, including myself, Secretary-General Eero Jokinen, Treasurer Klaus Schmidt, and past President András Szatmári represented the point of view of the Association for establishing a multi-societal World Organization for Pediatric and Congenital Heart Disease. We stated that the new World Organization should be a democratic organization with financial transparency. It should also be efficient in the field of teaching, and should create guidelines adapted for local situations. The Association will have discussions about the constitution of the new World Organization with other participating societies and associations during the year to come. The draft of the constitution will be officially presented during the World Congress in Cairns in 2009.

Asia

The President was invited on behalf of Association to give a lecture in The 44th Annual Meeting of the Japanese Society of Pediatric Cardiology and Cardiac Surgery. This is one of the biggest and oldest societies for paediatric cardiology in the world, with its first annual congress held in 1965, 2 years after our own first meeting held in Lyon in 1963. The Japanese Society has 2000 members, including surgeons. During this meeting held over 4 days in Koriyama, Japan, I was able to appreciate the vitality and efficacy of the Society, ably led by its President, Makoto Nakazawa. Scientific papers were presented in five simultaneous sessions. My lecture was followed by a Japan-China-Korea Pediatric Heart Forum, with high level scientific presentations in English. During "Meet the Expert" sessions, I had the opportunity to have free discussions with young Japanese paediatric cardiologists, who are very open to bilateral exchanges with our own Association. Proposals for a partnership between the Association for European Paediatric Cardiology and the Japanese Society of Pediatric Cardiology and Cardiac Surgery were warmly welcomed during the Council meeting of the Japanese Society, to which I had been invited as the President of our Association.

By the time this newsletter is published, I will have represented the Association at the Asian Meeting in Hanoi, organized by the Vietnamese National Heart Association, and chaired by its President, Pham Gia Khai. The pre-congress meeting will focus on paediatric cardiology, and will be chaired by Trong-Phi Lê. The main topics will be "Paediatric Cardiology in developing countries", "Management of congenital heart diseases with right heart obstructions" and "The status quo of interventional paediatric cardiology in developing countries".

Africa

Over the period April 11 and 12, I was invited to give a lecture at the First Course in Paediatric Cardiology and Cardiac Surgery held in Tunis. Later in the month, I also gave a lecture, and participated in a hands-on Echo teaching session, at the Meeting of the Cardiology Society of Morocco in Marrakech. These two short stays in North Africa permitted me to meet enthusiastic young cardiologists trying to improve the care of children with congenitally malformed hearts in a less favourable social and economical surrounding. In November, 2008, I will participate in a conference organized by the Egyptian Working Group of Pediatric Cardiologists directed by Maiy H El Sayed, from the League of the Egyptian Society of Cardiology. The Association will also be a partner of this young association.

In this era of global economy, Europe should look around in a world becoming smaller due to fast communications. Internet can bring us the world in our office. Tele-medicine is becoming a reality. Teaching courses, along with guidelines for diagnosis and treatment, are urgently needed world-wide. During the years to come, therefore, I hope that the Association will develop its contacts with other continents to continue fruitful co-operation, and will have a major impact on the care of patients with congenitally malformed hearts, and also on education, and democracy.

In closing, we hope you all will enjoy velvet-dark nights and the whistle of wind in the corners. Autumn can also be a beautiful time of the year.

André Bozio
President

Eero Jokinen
Secretary-General