

## 2.11 ELEVENTH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF NEUROLOGICAL SURGERY

AMSTERDAM 1997

### Interim Planning Meeting Berlin 1995

The Interim Meeting of the Executive Committee of the World Federation of Neurosurgical Societies after the Acapulco Congress was held in the Berlin Congress Centre on Tuesday, 9th May 1995. The meeting was called to order by the President, Dr. A. Basso, who asked for a moment of silence in remembrance of the members who had passed away since the meeting in Acapulco. The host, Dr. M. Brock, President of the European Association of Neurosurgical Societies gave some words of welcome and wished success to the members of the Executive Committee. Dr. G. Ablin was appointed as Parliamentarian by the President.

The President presented his report and mentioned the creation of a variety of new committees to deal with emerging subspecialties in the field of neurosurgery. He discussed the efforts to improve communication with the membership of the Federation and described the initiatives with the World Health Organization that had been undertaken in Geneva, centred on the importance of neurosurgery in issues of public health.

A new programme entitled Neurosurgery and the Community had been established. Guidelines for neurosurgical education and development of training programmes in neurosurgical societies had been produced and would be publicized throughout the world and Dr. Basso reaffirmed his commitment to reducing the gap between developed and developing nations with regard to neurosurgery. The Treasurer, Dr. J. Brotchi, announced that the financial situation of the Federation was a concern, although most member societies were up-to-date in paying their dues and the treasury had a balance of approximately US \$ 420,000. There were concerns about the continuance of financial stability because of the decrease in the exchange rate of the US dollar and the fact that most expenses of the Federation had to be paid in Swiss Francs. Furthermore, it appeared that the financial performance by Bank Lombard in Switzerland, where, with approval of the Administrative Council, the WFNS account had been placed under the presidency of Dr. Symon and treasurership of Dr. de Tribolet, had been rather poor, resulting in a net loss of 8.8 %. This was the reason for Dr. Brotchi's interim decision to transfer the account to the care of Banque Rothschild in Brussels. Because of the fact that WFNS dues had not been raised for more than eight years, a motion to increase the annual dues from US \$ 4 to US \$ 5 per member per annum was unanimously approved by the Executive Committee.



Armando Basso  
President WFNS 1993-1997  
Honorary President

Two neurosurgical societies were proposed as new affiliate members of the Federation, namely those of Afghanistan and Tunisia. In a remarkable discussion a delegate from Pakistan stated that probably only one neurosurgeon was working in Afghanistan at that time, which might be a problem with respect to affiliate membership. One of the officers pointed out that, according to the Bylaws, even one neurosurgeon was sufficient for a society to become an affiliate member. Although this statement was not correct - the Bylaws state that affiliate organizations are small neurosurgical societies having less than twenty and more than five neurological surgeons as members - no objections were made, and both proposed societies were accepted as affiliate members. Seven other societies had fulfilled the requirements of the Bylaws for application for full membership and were accepted. These included the societies of Algeria, Hong Kong, Lebanon, Portugal, Spain, Romania and Honduras. With the separate membership status of Spain and Portugal, the membership of the former Sociedad Luso-Espanola de Neurocirugía expired. Despite the fact that there had been some major changes in the actual status of countries that made up the Republic of Yugoslavia, the membership of the then current neurosurgical society was continued. After having paid all of their dues in arrears, Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) was installed into full membership status with the right to vote.

There were six candidates bidding for the location of the 2001 World Congress. The respective bids were presented by Dr. P. Black for Boston, Massachusetts, by Dr. Z. Rappaport for Jerusalem, Israel, by Dr. N. Altimors for Istanbul, Turkey, by Dr. A. El Khamlichi for Morocco, by Dr. A. Rhoton for Orlando, Florida, and by Drs. N. Dan, W. Sears and M. Vonau for Sydney, Australia. All candidates promised a net profit for the World Federation ranging from US \$ 120,000 to US \$ 450,000. Voting by secret ballot proceeded, and on the third ballot a majority vote was held for Sydney, Australia, although the anticipated registration fee was the highest of all. Extensive reports on the progress of the organization for the Amsterdam Congress 1997 were presented by Dr. A. van Alphen, President of the Congress and Dr. C. Avezaat, Chairman of the Scientific Programme Committee. The organizers were happy to announce that, despite uncertainty about the sponsoring of the congress at that time, the pre-registration fee for participants, if submitted prior to 15th November 1996, would be as low as Dfl. 650 or US \$ 390. The fee prior to 1st June 1997 would be Dfl 750 and on arrival at the congress, Dfl 850.

The Chairman of the Education Committee, Dr. J. Ausman, presented new Guidelines for Neurosurgical Resident Education and Graduate Training Programmes, and Guidelines for the Development of Departments of Neurosurgery. After ample discussion it was decided by motion to publish these guidelines as an Appendix to the Bylaws. This would be implemented by amendment during the Executive Committee Meeting in Amsterdam 1997.

## The Congress

The Eleventh International Congress of Neurological Surgery was held in the RAI International Exhibition and Congress Centre in Amsterdam, The Netherlands, 6th-11th July 1997 under the High Patronage of Her Majesty the Queen of The Netherlands. The motto was Centennial Perspective. The Congress Centre was ideally located for easy access by both public and private transport and had a direct rail connection to Schiphol International Airport and to Central Railway Station, Amsterdam. Most congress hotels were located in the direct vicinity of the Con-

gress Centre. The headquarters hotel was the Meridien Apollo. All participants were provided with a ticket for free public transport during the congress. The total number of attendants was well over three thousand, three hundred: about two thousand, three hundred active participants, five hundred accompanying persons and some five hundred technical support and exhibit registrants. The organizing committee had decided to make fifty complimentary registrations available to senior neurosurgical residents and young neurosurgeons in the East European countries. Their national societies were asked to propose two or three colleagues whose scientific interest was evident on the basis of scientific publications or otherwise. Only ten applications were received, and all were accepted. The daily organization was perfectly conducted by the professional staff of the Eurocongress office. The whole congress organization was placed in a foundation for reasons of legal and financial security.

Three announcements had been mailed, the first in 1994, the second in early 1996 and the final one in early 1997. The circulation of the printed material was a major problem, due to poor accuracy and lack of completeness of address lists of neurosurgeons throughout the world, especially in the countries of the former USSR and in South America, and to incompetence of a major sponsor who had promised to take care of the circulation through their organization of local representatives worldwide.

The WFNS Committees and Administrative Council Meetings on 5th and 11th July and three Executive Committee Meetings were all held in the Congress Centre. On the Saturday night a lively reception given in the Meridien Apollo Hotel to welcome the WFNS officials and delegates was attended by well over two hundred



H. August van Alphen  
President of the Congress  
1997  
Honorary President



Model of logo of the Eleventh International Congress in Amsterdam

people. On the afternoon of Sunday, 6th July, the commercial exhibition was officially opened, an address being delivered on both occasions by the President of the Congress, Dr. A. van Alphen.

### *Opening Ceremony*

The Opening Ceremony took place in the Grand Auditorium of the Amsterdam RAI on Sunday, 6th July, 4-6 p.m. The musical opening by the Concertgebouw Chamber Orchestra, conducted by Vincent de Kort was a brilliant and very sensitive performance of Wolfgang A. Mozart's Divertimento in D. Then, welcome addresses were delivered by the President of the Eleven International Congress, Dr. A. van Alphen, the President of the World Federation of Neurosurgical Societies, Dr. A. Basso, and the President of The Netherlands Society of Neurosurgeons, Dr. A. Bosch. Dr. van Alphen then introduced Her Excellency the Minister of Health, Welfare and Sport, Dr. Else Borst-Eilers, MD, PHD, who delivered a very intelligent and meaningful speech on the place and significance of Neurosurgery in public health. Participating in an act performed in mime, she officially inaugurated the congress. The Concertgebouw Chamber Orchestra performed as musical intermezzo Variations and Fuga on a Theme by Johann Kuhnau by the Dutch composer, Hendrik Andriessen (1892-1981). The second part of the ceremony was dedicated to bestowing various awards. Dr. L. Symon, Chairman of the Medals of Honour Committee presented the Medals to Drs. P. Niemeyer (Brazil), the late K. Sugita (Japan), M.G. Yaşargil (Switzerland, USA), J. Hardy (Canada), and A.C. de Vet (The Netherlands). The laudations were delivered respectively by Drs. A. Basso, K. Takakura, Y. Yonekawa, G. Mohr and A. Walder. Dr. Niemeyer, who could not be present because of his deteriorating health, and the late Dr. Sugita were each represented by their sons. After this event Dr. D. Thomas gave a laudation in praise of Dr. P. Kelly (USA) and presented him with the William B. Scoville Award with Mrs. Hélène Scoville and her daughter in attendance. The Opening Ceremony was concluded by the Concertgebouw Chamber Orchestra with a beautiful interpretation of Benjamin Britten's Simple Symphony. The music was of excellent quality throughout and was highly appreciated by the audience. The ceremony, attended by one thousand, six hundred and ninety people, was followed by a welcome reception in the lounges and outdoor terraces of the Congress Centre where a great variety of delicious dishes and beverages were served. The weather was beautiful.

### *Scientific Programme*

The heart of the scientific programme consisted of Main Topic Sessions in the mornings from 08.15 to 10.30. Ten topics reappeared from Monday through Thursday, a different aspect of the particular topic being dealt with each day. The topics were: paediatric neurosurgery, stereotactic and functional neurosurgery, spinal surgery, skull base surgery, nerve surgery, cerebrovascular surgery, cerebral glioma, surgical instrumentation, neurotrauma, and CNS infections. These subjects had been chosen, either because they were very common and of relevance to the daily practice of most neurosurgeons, or because they were at the interface between neurosurgery and other specialties, or because the subject was expected to open new perspectives. Each session consisted of a symposium in which experts in the field, sometimes with different and controversial viewpoints, addressed the topic, followed by a panel discussion during which two critical discussants challenged the speakers and the audience. During the second part of each morning, a Plenary Session was held in which highly distinguished speakers addressed four important issues, which constitute the backbone of our professional activities, namely Quality in Neurosurgery (Dr. H.R. Wulff

[Denmark], Dr. R.F. Spetzler [USA]), Education in Neurosurgery (Dr. A. Basso [Argentina], Dr. J. Ausman [USA]), Science in Neurosurgery (Dr. A. Benabid [France], Dr. R.H. Wilkins [USA]), and Ethics in Neurosurgery (Dr. B. Ramamurthi [India], Dr. M. Fearnside [Australia]). The programme continued with twelve Luncheon Seminars dealing with a wide selection of State-of-the-art and How-I-do-it topics.

The afternoons of Monday, Tuesday and Thursday were devoted to Free Paper presentations, both orally and in the form of videos and posters. The abstract handling committee had attached equal importance to oral and poster presentations. Out of over one thousand, one hundred abstracts submitted, seven hundred were selected for poster and four hundred for oral presentation. During one of the Free Paper sessions on the Thursday afternoon, Dr. G. Dohrmann (USA), Chairman of the Committee on Neurotraumatology bestowed the 1997 Volvo Award for CNS Injury Research on Dr. S. Suzuki (Japan) and Dr. H.J. Hoffman (Canada), Chairman of the Committee on Paediatric Neurosurgery, presented the Paediatric Neurosurgery Award to Dr. M. Fujii (Japan). Both authors delivered their winning paper. In addition, special poster sessions had been organized at which the moderators focussed attention on new developments and controversial issues. Each day one poster was selected as the best of the groups dealt with and its authors recognized with a certificate. The afternoons were closed with a 3D video demonstration presented by some 'giants' in our specialty. Wednesday afternoon was free for leisure.

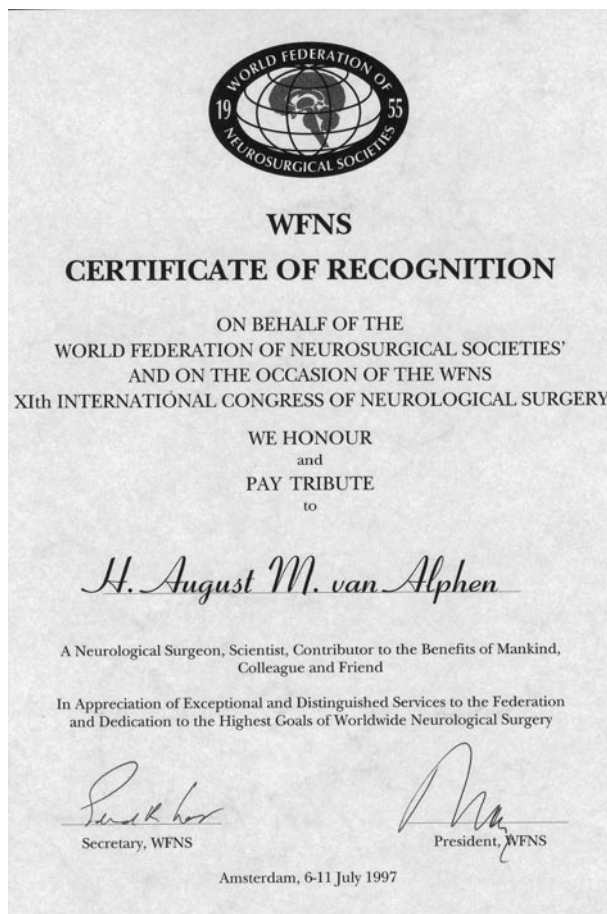
Concurrently with the formal programme, several special symposia were held, sponsored by commercial companies.

Finally, on the Friday morning, the winners of the WFNS Award to Young Neurosurgeons presented their papers. These were: Drs. M.T. Lawton (USA), Xiao-Nan Li (P.R. China), L.H.S. Sekhon (Australia), M. Tatagiba (Germany) and K. Thapar (Canada). The awards were presented by Dr. A. Rhoton (USA), Chairman of the Committee. The Lars Leksell Award was also presented, an award established by the Elekta Company in Stockholm, Sweden in 1993 in memory of the late Professor Leksell to be presented every second year in recognition of pioneering work in the field of Neuroscience. The scientific programme was concluded with a symposium: Neurosurgery towards the Third Millennium, with four very remarkable presentations. Dr. M. Apuzzo (USA) spoke on 'Advanced Neurosurgery: Key elements in emerging conceptual and technical metamorphosis', Dr. M. Samii (Germany) on 'Neurosurgeon and the next century', Dr. J. Martin-Rodriguez (Spain) on 'The demographic shift and Neurosurgery: Socio-economic implications', and Prof. W. Derkse (The Netherlands) on 'What may we hope for? Philosophical reflections on the role of values in the future of Neurosurgery'. The total number of presentations within the scientific programme had been almost one thousand, seven hundred.

During a short closing ceremony at noon, the leaving presidents of the Federation and the Congress and their successors gave a short farewell address.

During the congress an extensive institutional and technical exhibition was held in one of the large exhibitions halls of the Amsterdam RAI Exhibition Centre, in which seventy-four companies and organizations participated. The scientific posters were arranged among the exhibition booths for the purpose of mutual promotion.

Before and after the International Congress several symposia, workshops and hands-on courses were organized in other towns in The Netherlands or elsewhere in Europe. Some of these had to be cancelled because of lack of sufficient participation.



WFNS Certificate of Recognition, granted to a few dozen recipients by President Armando Basso during the banquet on 10th July 1997

### *Social Programme*

The Local Arrangements Committee under chairmanship of the Vice-President of the Congress, Dr. A. Bosch, had organized a full scale and high quality social programme for all participants and their spouses. On the Monday evening a reception was offered by the Mayor and Aldermen of Amsterdam and the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences at the seventeenth-century Nieuwe Kerk (New Church) on the Dam Square in the centre of Amsterdam. All participants were transported from the Congress Centre to the city centre in open, vintage streetcars. The weather was marvellous. During the reception, there was a recital on the splendid, old church organ.

On the Tuesday evening, a congress party was organized in the world-famous Concertgebouw Amsterdam, a magnificent, neoclassical building which is seldom available for such huge parties. Many classical and modern, instrumental and vocal performances were presented in the concert halls and scattered throughout the

building by well-known artists including the famous 'Breuker Collectief' with its excellent jazz musicians. The International Neurosurgeon' Jazz band 'Skull Base All Stars' also played on the stage of the Main Hall, which can be regarded as a historic event in international neurosurgery. At several locations large buffets offered a choice of delicacies and beverages. Some two thousand people attended the party.



The Concertgebouw, Amsterdam (exterior and interior)

On the afternoon of Wednesday, 9th July, it was time for leisure. Several sporting events were organized, optional for all participants and accompanying persons: a bicycle tour through the Dutch landscape, a sailing tour on the IJsselmeer and a golf tournament. One could also choose one of three excursions to typical old Dutch towns.

On the Wednesday evening, the magnificent ambiance of the old Lutheran church was the candlelight setting for the Presidents' Dinner. This church was built between 1668 and 1671, and is nowadays used as the Convention and Cultural Centre adjacent to the Amsterdam Renaissance Hotel. One hundred and fifty-four invited officers, honorary presidents, medallists and awardees and distinguished guests and their spouses were transported to the church by boat, a tour which included the harbour and views of the old city centre from the water. At the same time an audience of four hundred and fifty enjoyed a concert by the Combattimento Consort Amsterdam conducted by Jan Willem de Vriend, playing music by Johan Sebastian Bach and Antoni Vivaldi in the Concertgebouw, which had now been restored to its pre-party splendour.

On the evening of Thursday, 10th July, the official Banquet was held in the Europa Restaurant of the Congress Centre with seven hundred and six participants. During the dinner, there were several speeches, and the newly elected honorary presidents and officers of the Federation and the 2001 Congress were introduced. The President, Dr. A. Basso, granted certificates of the WFNS to many individuals whose efforts in the past four years were considered to be particularly deserving of this recognition.

The Partners' Programme during the Congress included excursions and tours to the popular cities of Delft and The Hague (two hundred and eighty visitors on two separate days), Castles and Country (two hundred and fifty-three) and the Kröller-Muller Museum in the National Park with its famous Vincent van Gogh collection (one hundred people). The Alkmaar Cheese Market tour attracted one hundred and twenty-nine visitors and the Early Bird Tour eighty-five.

## Executive Committee Meetings

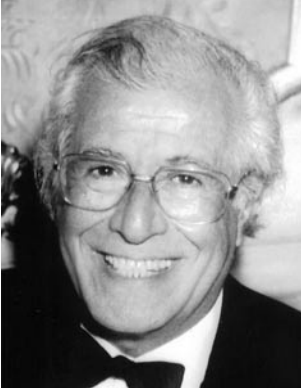
The meetings of the Executive Committee took place in the RAI Congress Centre on Sunday 6th, Tuesday 8th, and Thursday 10th July 1997 attended by ninety-five, one hundred and one, and ninety-eight officers, honorary presidents and delegates, respectively. At the beginning of the Eleventh Congress, the membership of the Federation included sixty-four continental organizations and national societies, representing over eighteen thousand, six hundred neurosurgeons. There were six affiliate societies. Dr. G. Ablin was appointed as Parliamentarian by the President, Dr. A. Basso.

A moment of silence was observed in commemoration of members of the World Federation who had passed away since the last Executive Committee Meeting, including the Honorary President, Dr. W. Luyendijk.

President Basso stated that information and education had been the major initiatives of his four years of presidency of the Federation. Many WFNS Education Courses had been offered under the leadership of Dr. J. Ausman, chairman of the Education Committee, in different parts of the world, especially in Latin-America and Asia. These had proved highly effective. It was mentioned that all teachers had travelled at their own expense to these courses and produced enormous good for the Federation and for neurosurgical education in general. In spring 1995, the first issue of a new bulletin: 'Federation News' had been introduced. Some time later, 'Critical Reviews in Neurosurgery' had successfully been adopted as the official journal of the World Federation of Neurosurgical Societies. This was edited by Dr. A.J. Raimondi and published by Springer-Verlag at no expense to the World Federation. The subscriptions were apparently increasing.

Requests for full membership of the Federation were made by Pan-Arab Neurosurgical Association and the national neurosurgical societies of Cono Sur, Croatia, El Salvador, Latvia, Moldova, Macedonia, Russia, Syria, Tunisia (previously an affiliate member), the Ukraine and Vietnam. All were entirely in order according to the Bylaws with submission of the officers and members names, the Constitution, and the review and approval of the Continental Societies. Applications were voted upon and all unanimously approved by the Executive Committee.

Some minor changes in the Bylaws had been passed, including the establishment of the non-profit status of the World Federation. There was some discussion about the position of continental organizations and their influence on the admission of new member societies and about the question under which continental organization all countries of the former Soviet Union, in particular the Asian republics, should be placed. There was also confusion about the position of the Mexican Society and the Caribbean Association. One of the proposed changes for the Bylaws was to place Mexico under the AANS as representing continental organization. This was now considered during the Amsterdam Congress 1997. One should note, however, that, in the early days of the Federation, the Sociedad Mexicana de Cirugía Neurológica, together with the societies of Canada and USA, had also been placed under North America (WFNS Bulletin number 2, January 1964). At the meeting of the Executive Committee in Tokyo, 9th October 1973, the delegate from Mexico, Dr. D. Gonzales expressed his surprise that his society was included in the sectional organization of Latin America. It appeared that this had been decided some years previously. It was, however, stated that the option of including the Mexican Society within the organization of North America had been left open. This question would have to be decided by the Mexican society itself. In 1997, the rationale for the proposed change in the Bylaws was to accommodate the current geographical



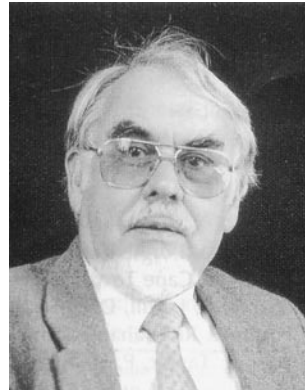
Sayed El Gindi  
Honorary President



Russel H. Patterson  
Honorary President



Kintomo Takakura  
First Vice-President WFNS  
1993-1997  
Honorary President



Jacques C. De Villiers  
Honorary President

and political changes. Dr. F. Rueda-Franco, on behalf of the Mexican Society, objected to Mexico being 'expelled' from the FLANC and cast doubt on the existence of any documentation of such a request from Mexico. The Secretary of the Federation, Dr. E. Laws replied that there was no specific documentation to this effect but that clearly the AANS had accepted the Mexican neurosurgeons for full membership. Dr. Rueda-Franco restated his feeling that Mexico belonged to the FLANC. Another proposed change was to allocate the Caribbean Association from AANS to FLANC. The Caribbean delegation commented that the Association had not been asked whether it wanted to join FLANC but that it would be delighted to join if this were permitted by the Constitution of the FLANC. Both proposals would be reconsidered later at the Interim Meeting of the Executive Committee in San Francisco 2000. The amendments concerned were then tabled. At the Executive Committee

Meeting in Sydney 2001, finally, both national societies had realigned themselves, Mexico with FLANC and the Caribbean with AANS.

The name of the WFNS congress was also a subject for extensive discussion. Since the foundation of the Federation, all congresses had held the title International Congress of Neurological Surgery, as settled in Article II, Section 2 of the Constitution and of the Bylaws. The Netherlands Society in hosting the Eleventh Congress had also used this nomenclature. It was now felt that this name did not sufficiently portray the congress as an essential part of the World Federation, and that it should be changed to WFNS Congress or Congress of the World Federation of Neurosurgical Societies. On the other hand, the Australian Congress Committee had already met with a marketing expert who felt that a shorthand title with high impact would be best from the marketing point of view. Finally, it was decided that the name 'World Congress of Neurosurgery' should be adopted, adding a Roman numeral to indicate the number of the Congress. In addition, the name of World Federation of Neurosurgical Societies had to be prominently placed on all related printed material. This, however, might interfere with other interests or requirements, as it had done in the past. Most abstract books of earlier congresses had been published as a volume of the Excerpta Medica International Congress Series. The abstracts of the Munich Congress 1981 had been published as a supplement to the German journal, *Neurochirurgia*, by George Thieme Verlag and the abstracts of the Amsterdam Congress 1997 as a supplement to *Clinical Neurology and Neurosurgery*, International Edition of Elsevier-Excerpta Medica, with the advantage of all abstracts being cited in Medline, Current Content/Clinical Practice, EMBASE etc. The cover and title page lay-out of these publications had, however, to meet the requirements of the respective journals, which might be a concession for the Federation.

The amended Bylaws would be published along with the Constitution. This would include a table of contents, a dedication to Dr. G. Ablin for his tireless work with the Committee on Constitution and Bylaws, and an appendix of useful information, both historical and practical.

Lahore, Pakistan was approved by vote as the location for the Interim Meeting of the Executive Committee during the Asian Australasian Congress to be held 7th-12th November 1999. This would be the first time in the history of the Federation that this meeting would be held outside Europe. The Nominating Committee presented the slate of officers for the period 1997-2001 which was approved by the Executive Committee. Dr. M. Samii was elected as the new President. As Honorary Presidents were elected: Drs. H.A. van Alphen (The Netherlands), A. Basso (Argentina), S. El Gindi (Egypt), R. Patterson (USA), K. Takakura (Japan) and J.C. de Villiers (South Africa). Dr. N. Dan was appointed incoming Congress President.

The financial status of the Federation up to 30th June 1997 was stable with a balance of US \$ 415,000, the same as at the end of 1996. The Federation would enjoy a final profit from the Amsterdam Congress of US \$ 370,652, which was greatly appreciated by the Administrative Council.

## References

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Amsterdam, The Netherlands 1997

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 HONORARY PRESIDENTS AND OFFICERS ELECTED IN AMSTERDAM 1997

**Honorary Presidents**

H.A. van Alphen (The Netherlands)	
A. Basso (Argentina)	K. Takakura (Japan)
S. El Gindi (Egypt)	J.C. de Villiers (South Africa)
R. Patterson (USA)	

**Federation Officers 1997-2001**
**President:**

M. Samii (Germany)

**1st Vice-President:**

E.R. Laws Jr. (USA)

**2nd Vice-Presidents:**

J. Ausman (USA)

A. Olumide (Nigeria)

D. Thomas (UK)

I. Nyary (Hungary)

J. Mendez (Chile)

M. Sambasivan (India)

A. El Khamlichi (Morocco)

**Secretary:**

M. Choux (France)

**Assistant Secretary:**

R. Perrin (Canada)

**Treasurer:**

S. Kobayashi (Japan)

**Assistant Treasurer:**

A. Raja (Pakistan)

**Editor of Federation News:**

E. Karol (Argentina)

**Historian:**

H.A. Walder (The Netherlands)

**Past President:**

A. Basso (Argentina)

**Congress Officers**

(all from Australia)

**President:**

N. Dan

**Honorary Vice-President:**

G. Fabinyi

**Vice-President:**

L. Atkinson

**Secretary:**

M. Vonau

**Assistant Secretary:**

T. Bookallil

**Treasurer:**

R. Newcombe

**Assistant Treasurer:**

G. McCulloch

**Chairman Programme Committee:**

A. Kaye

## 2.12 TWELFTH WORLD CONGRESS OF NEUROSURGERY

SYDNEY 2001

### Interim Planning Meeting San Francisco 2000

The Interim Meeting of the Executive Committee after the International Congress in Amsterdam was originally planned in conjunction with the Tenth Asian-Australasian Congress of Neurological Surgery in Lahore, Pakistan, 7th-12th November 1999. At the end of October, the host and President of the Congress, Dr. I.A. Raja, had already completed the arrangements and announced that the venue of the meeting would be the Hotel Pearl Continental in Lahore, when the Interim Meeting had to be cancelled due to political unrest in Pakistan. In spite of the volatile situation, the Asian-Australasian Congress did go ahead and was a great success, attended by some five hundred registrants. The postponed Interim Meeting was eventually held during the annual meeting of the American Association of Neurological Surgeons in the Marriot Hotel San Francisco, 9th April 2000.

The meeting was chaired by Dr. M. Samii, who welcomed all those present. A minute of silence was observed for all colleagues deceased since 1997, including the Honorary Presidents Drs. G. Ablin, J. Brihaye, K.-A. Bushe, C.G. Drake, H. Schwartz and H. Verbiest. The President appointed Dr. R. Patterson to the position of Parliamentarian. At the time of the meeting in San Francisco, the World Federation consisted of five continental organizations, seventy-two member societies and six affiliate member societies, representing some twenty thousand neurosurgeons around the world. The Federation had nine standing committees, three scientific and nineteen ad hoc committees.

Dr. Samii announced the establishment of the WFNS Certificate of Membership, which could be purchased by individual neurosurgeons of the member societies. At the time of the Twelfth World Congress in Sydney 2001, two hundred and fifty-one certificates had already been sold.

For the special purpose of supporting the pursuance of neurosurgery in developing countries, a WFNS Universal Instrument Set had been manufactured by Aesculap AG & Co, Tuttlingen, Germany. This company was founded in 1867 and, with more than one hundred and thirty years of experience, is one of the world's leading manufacturers of surgical products. The neurosurgical set consists of the basic instruments required for straightforward cranial, spinal and peripheral nerve surgi-



Madjid Samii  
President WFNS 1997-2001  
Honorary President

cal procedures. The instruments are of prime quality, and each is numbered and stamped with the WFNS insignia. The Administrative Council had approved the production of fifty sets, available for approximately US \$ 3,000 each. The Second Vice-Presidents, representing the five continental organizations, had been charged with generating 'assessments of needs' for their respective constituency and promoting the WFNS Universal Instrument Set. Requests to purchase a set can be directed to the Executive Secretary of the Federation at the Central Office in Nyon, Switzerland.

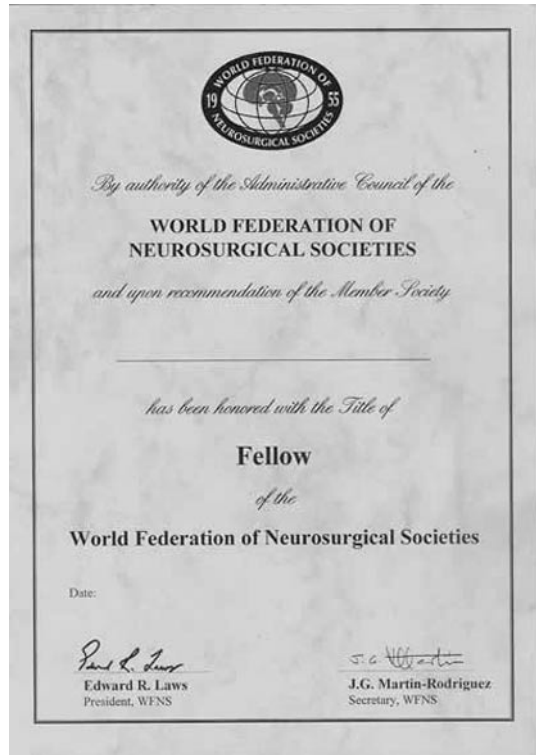
Dr. Samii also envisioned the creation of WFNS courses, encompassing the broad spectrum of neurosurgical topics, to be accessible to all neurosurgeons worldwide. The World Health Organization had accepted the research on and prevention of Neurotrauma as a WHO-supported initiative, thanks to the efforts of the WFNS liaison officer to WHO, Dr. A. Basso, who promoted this programme.

In an effort to make the World Federation more pertinent to young neurosurgeons, implementation of the Young Neurosurgeon's Forum was launched by Dr. E. Laws, First Vice-President. The inaugural meeting was scheduled to take place during the Sydney Congress 2001. Then, it would also be recommended to the Executive Committee that the Award to Young Neurosurgeons be incorporated in the Forum. In Lisbon 2003, it would be specified in the Bylaws that the Award to Young Neurosurgeons is open to all neurosurgeons who apply within ten years of having obtained their neurosurgical qualifications. Critical to the development of the Young Neurosurgeons' Forum is the activity of the WFNS website under the direction of Dr. E. Karol of Argentina with its extraordinary menu of educational opportunities and the possibility for neurosurgeons to communicate and mentor with each other in special interest groups.

Again some minor amendments to the Bylaws were passed unanimously.

The Medal of Honour Committee, chaired by Dr. Basso, proposed bestowing the Medal at the Twelfth World Congress in Sydney 2001 on the following recipients: Drs. P. Albert Lasierra (Spain), E.D. Rocca (Peru), A.L. Rhoton (USA), and Ch.-Ch. Wang (P.R. China). This proposal was unanimously approved by the Executive Committee.

Five national societies had applied to host the Thirteenth World Congress of Neurosurgery 2005, namely: People's Republic of China, Egypt, Morocco, South



Certificate of Fellow of the WFNS

Africa and Turkey. After two secret votes, Morocco gained the majority. The 2005 World Congress would be held at the Congress Palace in Marrakech, 19th-24th June 2005, with Dr. A. El Khamlichi as President.

The Treasurer of the World Federation, Dr. S. Kobayashi, reported that the Federation was financially sound, due largely to the proceeds from the Amsterdam Congress 1997.

## The Congress

The Twelfth World Congress of Neurosurgery, hosted by the Neurosurgical Society of Australia, was held at the Sydney Convention & Exhibition Centre in Sydney, Australia, 16th-20th September 2001. The horrific terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centre in New York and the Pentagon in Washington, DC, USA on September 11th, five days before the opening of the congress, also proved a real disaster for the congress organizers. Most of the American colleagues who had not left their country before this catastrophic day were no longer able to get a flight out of the country. This meant numerous cancellations in attendance and large gaps in the scientific programme. The organizing committee believed that at least five hundred delegates did not make it to the congress. The final attendance figure was one thousand, nine hundred and forty-seven active participants, three hundred and eighty-five accompanying persons, eighty-one exhibitors, two main sponsors and one newspaper sponsor. Approximately four percent of the free papers and three percent of those presenting posters were cancelled. Thanks to the enormous efforts of the organizing and scientific programme committees the major problems were addressed and could be solved on a day-to-day basis. Several colleagues hastened to help by presenting impromptu papers to fill some of the gaps.

On Saturday, 15th September, the WFNS Administrative Council and Committee Meetings were held in the Convention Centre. That evening, an International Delegates' Reception was given at the same location.

### *Opening Ceremony*

The Opening Ceremony of the Congress took place in the Auditorium of the Convention Centre on the Sunday afternoon. Hon. Dr. Michael Wooldridge, Minister for Health and Age Care, who officiated at the Ceremony as a representative of the government and who was to officially inaugurate the Congress, was late, arriving at the end of the ceremony. An opening performance was presented by the well-known Australian singer, Kay Gordon. She performed the New Zealand & Australian National Anthem. Glen Doyle, a member of the Wolari tribe in the North West of New South Wales, played the didgeridoo. The professional Descendance Aboriginal Dance Group, from Mount Isa and around the Torres Strait Island, showcased the spirit of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island through their powerful style of dance and music. Then, the official opening had to be improvised.



Noel Dan  
President of the Congress  
2001  
Honorary President



Performance by Australian aborigines at the Opening Ceremony of the Twelfth World Congress on 16th September 2001

The famous Australian pianist, Simon Tedeschi gave an expressive performance of George Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue, followed by a beautiful Alligator Crawl. After speeches by Dr. Marianne Vonau, President of the Neurosurgical Society of Australia and Secretary of the Congress, and Dr. M. Samii, President of the World Federation of Neurosurgical Societies, Dr. A. Basso bestowed the Medals of Honour on the distinguished colleagues selected by the Committee in San Francisco in the previous year. Drs. P. Albert Lasierra and E.S. Rocca were unable to be present, due to their considerable age or deteriorating health. The laudation for Dr. A.L. Rhoton was presented by Dr. W.A. Friedman, the Albert L. Rhoton, Jr, Chairman of Neurological Surgery, University of Florida at Gainesville. Dr. Yu-Qi Zhang, from the Beijing Neurosurgical Institute lauded Dr. Ch.-Ch. Wang. The William B. Scoville Award was bestowed on Dr. M.L.F. Apuzzo, Professor of Neurological Surgery and Radiation Oncology, Biology and Physics at the University of Southern California, Los Angeles for his innovative work related to stereotaxy, operative techniques, brain neoplasia, and the future of neurosurgery. He was also Editor of Neurosurgery at the time. The Award to Young Neurosurgeon was presented by Dr. A.L. Rhoton to Drs. S. Dubey (India), S. Holmin (Sweden), H. Duffan (France),



World Federation of Neurosurgical Societies



12th World Congress of Neurosurgery  
Sydney 2001

Sydney Opera House & Logo of the Twelfth World Congress of Neurosurgery

D. Soni (USA) and A. Fukunaga (Japan). These five awardees were selected by the Committee from forty-eight submissions. The winning papers would be presented in one of the Main Topic Sessions on the morning of Tuesday, 18th September. The ceremony was closed with a performance of the typical Australian style musician, Noel Watson and The Brent Street Kids consisting of children aged between seven and fifteen years in 'I Still Call Australia Home'. The whole ceremony was a very authentic Australian event. It was followed by a welcome reception in the Exhibition Halls.

### *Scientific Programme*

The Scientific Programme Committee had compiled a very comprehensive programme. Abstracts for nearly two thousand scientific contributions had been received. The programme would critically evaluate the current state of clinical neurosurgery as well as basic science and biological research necessary for future advancement. The scientific programme had been structured so that all congress participants would be able to obtain an overview of the clinical and basic science aspects of clinical neurosurgery and attend seminars and workshops related to areas of special interest. Particular emphasis had been given to interactive forums to allow close and meaningful interactions between participants and the audience. The programme was planned around thirteen major special interest sections. Each section included breakfast sessions and daily seminars relating to topics of particular interest as well as poster workshops and sessions. In addition, there were five major plenary sessions including the Nobel Laureate, Professor Bert Sakmann, Director of the Department of Cell Physiology at the Max Planck-Institute for Medical Research in Heidelberg, Germany, and sessions on neurosurgical education, the new biology, the new technology and achievements and frustration of the twenty-first century.

In total there were eighty-three breakfast sessions, forty-eight main topic sessions and four plenary sessions on four mornings and one plenary session on the Thursday afternoon. On Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons there were ninety free paper sessions during which seven hundred and forty-four papers would be presented. Eight hundred and eight posters would be displayed from Monday to Wednesday, divided over three areas. Poster sessions with Podium Poster presentations had been allocated each day in different areas on different subjects. These numbers do not include contributions by those who failed to arrive due to the events in the USA. The Young Neurosurgeons Award papers were presented in a main topic session on Tuesday, 18th September. The Paediatric Neurosurgery Award and the Volvo Award for research on CNS trauma were not bestowed in Sydney. The Keynote Lecture by Professor Sakmann on Monday, 17th September was on Grey Matter – Probing Cortical Structure and Functions with Electrodes and Lights.

An extensive institutional and trade exhibition consisting of seventy-four stands divided over two halls of the exhibition centre was open from Sunday to Thursday.

### *Social Programme*

The Local Arrangements Committee had put together a compact but very varied social programme. After the Opening Ceremony and Welcome Reception on the Sunday afternoon, Monday evening was free for most participants so that they could enjoy the vibrant, friendly and beautiful city of Sydney, which had just recovered from the Olympic Games the year before. Several suggestions for entertaining

and dining were made by the organizers and their spouses. There was a Presidents' reception and dinner for invited guests at the Art Gallery of New South Wales. The evening of Tuesday, 18th September was the Night of the Opera. In the fantastic ambiance of the world-famous Sydney Opera House, whose stylized image had been included in the logo of the Congress, Gioacchino Rossini's opera 'Il Barbiere di Siviglia' was performed. All participants could enjoy the comedy of a love-starved Count and the crafty barber Figaro who helps him fool his love Rosina's guardian, Bartolo. It was a beautiful performance.

On the Wednesday evening, a sparkling Congress Party, Outback to Ocean, was organized at Wharf 8 within the new Darling Harbour Overseas Passenger Terminal. This informal event took the participants on a fascinating and exciting exploration of the Asia-Pacific region through several themed environments: Sydney Royal Easter Show, representing the fact that once a year in Sydney the bush comes to the city and farmers and city slickers rub shoulders as they enjoy a show that encompasses carnival side-shows and candyfloss, sheep-shearing, wood-chopping, sheep trials and farm animals; The Outback where the aromas of spit-roasted meats tantalized the senses and the visitors could quench their thirst at the Windwill bar, watch a whip-cracker, see the native animals and try their hand at dot-painting; Chinatown, where the sounds enticed the participants around the corner where cooks were busy producing stir-fried noodles and tantalizing titbits in bamboo steamers; and Bondi Beach Party where people could enjoy sun, surf and sand, join in beach games and have fish and chips. In all sections different shows were presented and people could feast on local savoury and sweet dishes and local beverages. A typical and very entertaining Australian country party.

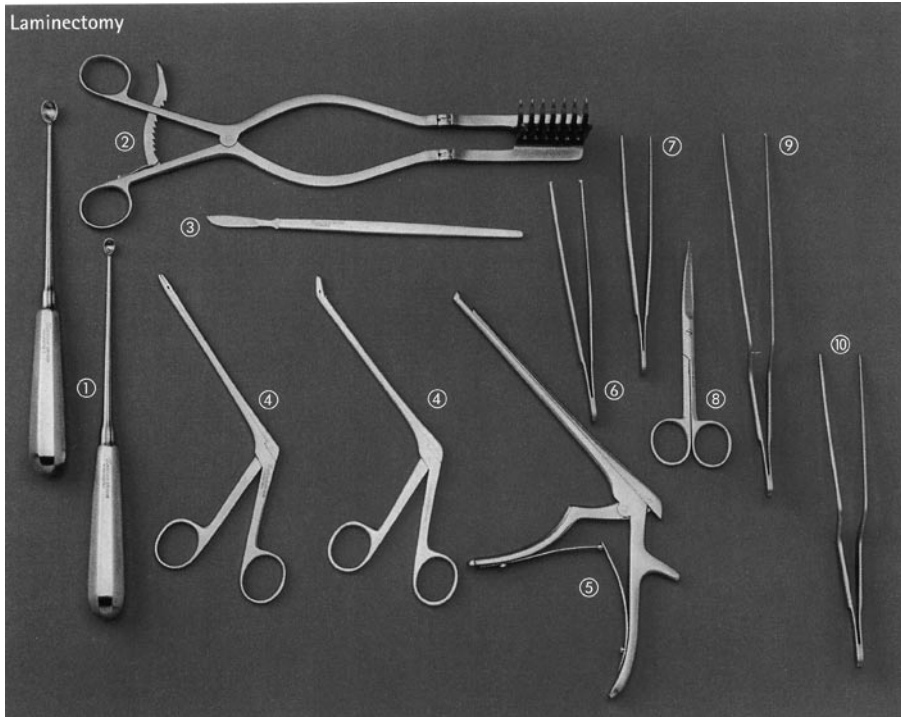
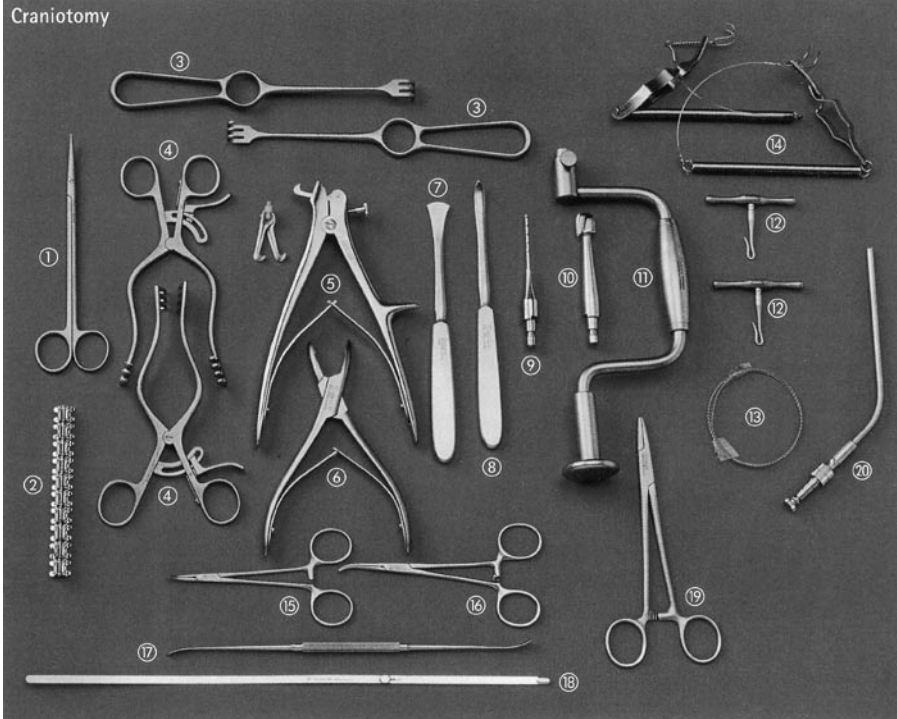
On the Thursday afternoon, the Congress was concluded during a stylish Closing Ceremony, where the newly elected officers were introduced, followed by refreshments.

For those staying on, sporting activities were organized around Sydney on the Friday. There was a choice of golf at St. Michaels Golf Club, sailing in the beauty of Sydney harbour, or tennis at Sydney's White City with the opportunity of taking home the winning trophy.

### Executive Committee Meetings

During the Twelfth World Congress, three meetings of the Executive Committee were held in Sydney Convention Centre, namely on Sunday morning 16th September, Tuesday afternoon and Wednesday afternoon. The President was Dr. M. Samii. One hundred and eighteen, ninety-seven and one hundred and six officers, honorary presidents, delegates and observers attended, respectively. In 2001 the membership of the World Federation included five continental associations, eighty-nine national, regional and multinational general neurosurgical societies, or neurosurgical sections of national neurological or neuroscience societies, and four affiliate organizations. At the beginning of the first meeting, Dr. Samii thanked the President, Dr. N. Dan, and the organizing committee for their efforts in mounting the congress in the beautiful city of Sydney and he condemned the terrorist attacks which had taken place in the United States on 11th September. A moment of silence was observed for all colleagues departed since April 2000, including Dr. A. de Vet

[Opposite page] Basic sets of neurosurgical instruments specially designed for the World Federation of Neurosurgical Societies for craniotomy (above) and laminectomy (below)



(The Netherlands) who was the last surviving founder of the World Federation of Neurosurgical Societies, its first Treasurer, Editor of the Third Congress in Copenhagen 1995, and Medal of Honour recipient in Amsterdam 1997, and Dr. A. Raimondi, Editor of the WFNS Journal 'Critical Reviews in Neurosurgery'.

The President stated that his main goals during the past four years had been to improve the education of neurosurgeons around the world and to create and support neurosurgical facilities in underdeveloped areas. He complimented Dr. J. Brotchi for coordinating and conducting numerous educational courses worldwide. He appealed for support for the Universal Instrument Set, which was introduced in San Francisco 2000 and on display at the Aesculap booth during the Twelfth World Congress. The Carl Zeiss Company in Germany had agreed to provide a surgical microscope for US \$ 10,000, including a camera and video capabilities. The Secretary, Dr. M. Choux, had negotiated with Medtronic Neurosurgery (PS Medical) in California to produce a CSF shunt for US \$ 100. A special WFNS Foundation, chaired by Dr. Samii, had been established to conduct all these activities with a treasury containing US \$ 33,000.

One of the proposed amendments to the Bylaws was that the president of the Federation, at the end of his term of office, should automatically become an honorary president, unless otherwise decided by the Executive Committee, to acknowledge his work and dedication on behalf of the Federation. This proposal was approved.

The slate of officers proposed by the Nomination Committee was approved unanimously by the Executive Committee. Dr. E.R. Laws was elected President. Drs. A. Adeloye (Nigeria), N. Dan (Australia), J. Mendez (Chile), M. Sambasivan (India) and M. Samii (Germany) were appointed Honorary President.

The Administrative Council had decided to schedule the next Interim Meeting of the Executive Committee in Lisbon, Portugal on 7th September 2003 in conjunction with the Twelfth European Congress of Neurosurgery.

The annual dues per individual member for the Federation was increased from US \$ 5 to US \$ 6. The final financial profit from the Twelfth Congress to the World Federation would prove to be US \$ 320,000.

### The Frequency of World Congresses

During the meetings of the Executive Committee in Sydney, a considerable amount of time was devoted to discussing a proposal to increase the frequency of the WFNS world congresses from four-yearly to bi-annually. The idea had already been raised in Amsterdam four years previously. With reference to the worrisome financial status of the World Federation at that time, several suggestions had been made for ways to increase the funds available to the Federation. For instance, it was felt that there should be a major effort to acquire more funds from the profits of the International Congress and that this might be enhanced by increasing the frequency of these congresses. This issue was elaborated upon by Dr. J. Martin-Rodriquez, the then Chairman of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee, and had been debated extensively at successive Administrative Council Meetings. In Sydney 2001, one of the proposed amendments to the Bylaws was a change of Article II, Section 2; this made provision for an International Congress of Neurological Surgery to be held usually at intervals of two years, to take account of rapid developments in the field of neurosurgery and related sciences. Several arguments in favour were mentioned, such as doubling the opportunity for member societies to host a world congress, the

probability that these world congresses would attract the majority of participants from the host geographical area with a greater possibility of young neurosurgeons participating at lower costs. There were also many objections. These were related to the large number of neurosurgical congresses, conflicts with national and regional meetings, political and economic consequences including dilution of the pool of support from industry. After the question had been discussed at length, a vote was called. The votes were registered using the electronic system of the auditorium with the following result: in favour of bi-annual world congresses: forty-nine percent; in favour of four-yearly congresses: fifty-one percent. During the aftermath of the electronic voting, doubt was cast upon the functioning of the voting system and a number of objections were raised concerning the process. It was also suggested that probably not all delegates had properly understood the question under vote. The sentiment was, therefore, expressed that the voting should be repeated, using a duly authorized secret ballot. This was deferred until the next day. Then, a new debate on the issue ensued, but this was interrupted by reminding those present that there was a motion on the floor and a vote was called. The question to be balloted was clarified: 'Do you agree to holding a World Congress of Neurosurgery every two years? Please write yes or no below'. The role was called with each delegate or alternate, in turn, depositing an executed ballot. The tabulated results were: Yes: forty-four votes, No: sixty-two votes.

The Administrative Council, however, did not want to give up on the issue and again placed it on the agenda of the Administrative Council Meeting in Madrid in February 2003. The following August, the Administrative Council wrote a comprehensive letter to the members of the Executive Committee, describing the main objectives of the World Federation of Neurosurgical Societies and specifying the changes which had taken place in the neurosurgical world. The text continued:

'However, since these changes have taken place and especially since undergoing the crisis that followed September 11th, 2001 at a global level, our Organization and our mentality has not evolved enough to confront the reality of present neurosurgical manpower conditions. Article II, Section 2 of the WFNS Constitution originally adopted in Brussels in 1957, reads: 'A primary means of achieving these purposes shall be the holding of an International Congress of Neurological Surgery (hereinafter designated as 'Congress'), *at times determined by the Executive Com-*



Adelola Adeloye  
Honorary President



Jorge Mendez  
Honorary President



Mahadeva Sambasivan  
Honorary President

*mittee*'. After extensive discussion, the WFNS Administrative Council, which met in Madrid in February 2003, voted unanimously to submit to the WFNS Executive Committee in Lisbon, a proposal for a change in the WFNS Bylaws that would permit the sponsoring of WFNS International Congresses at intervals of every two years.'

The phrase underlined above appeared this way in the letter from the Administrative Council. However, in A. Earl Walker's 'The History of the World Federation of Neurosurgical Societies' (1985, page 16) it was recorded: 'At the meeting of the Executive Committee of the World Federation of Neurological Surgery convened on Saturday July 20th, 1957, Sir Geoffrey Jefferson welcomed the 39 officers and delegates. He noted that two years previously, representatives of 13 neurosurgical societies had met and planned a world organization to advance the scientific knowledge and practice of neurosurgery by holding congresses every 4 years'. In those days the neurosurgical congress was still incorporated in the four-yearly International Neurological Congress. And so, the formulation of Article 11, Section 2 of the Constitution in the early days read: 'The primary means of achieving these purposes shall be the holding of International Neurosurgical Congresses at intervals of four years, except that the time of the congress may be determined at the discretion of the Administrative Council'. In the Constitution published after amendment in New Delhi 1989, the formulation was as quoted in the letter of August 2003. But in the Bylaws it was specified as: 'A primary means of achieving these purposes shall be the holding of an International Congress of Neurological Surgery (hereafter designated as the 'Congress'), usually at intervals of four years, except that the time of the Congress may be determined at the discretion of the Executive Committee'. These formulations in the Constitution and in the Bylaws still apply.

The arguments in favour and against the proposal of the Administrative Council were extensively summarized in its letter of August 2003. It ended with the request: 'While analyzing the pros and cons presented here or any others you may consider pertinent, please do not think from your own personal point of view or interest or from the particular interest of your Society but consider the interest and needs of the Global Community of Neurosurgery'. At the meeting of the Executive Committee in Lisbon on 7th September 2003, the proposed change to the Bylaws was again fully discussed and put to the vote. The Executive Committee took responsibility and voted the proposal down once again.

## References

- Book of Abstracts of the 12<sup>th</sup> World Congress of Neurosurgery, Sydney, Australia  
2001, 484 pp  
Programme Book of the 12<sup>th</sup> World Congress of Neurosurgery, Sydney, Australia  
2001

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 HONORARY PRESIDENTS AND OFFICERS ELECTED IN SYDNEY 2001

**Honorary Presidents**

A. Adeloeye (Malawi)	M. Sambasivan (India)
N. Dan (Australia)	M. Samii (Germany)
J. Mendez (Chile)	

**Federation Officers 2001-2005**
**President:**

E.R. Laws Jr. (USA)

**1st Vice-President:**

D. Thomas (UK)

**2nd Vice-Presidents:**

K. Al-Moutaery (Saudi Arabia)	M. Brock (Germany)
S. Kobayashi (Japan)	R. Perrin (Canada)
F. Rueda Franco (Mexico)	Th. Trojanowski (Poland)
A.H. Zidan (Egypt)	

**Secretary:**

J. Martin-Rodriguez (Spain)

**Assistant Secretary:**

Y. Kato (Japan)

**Treasurer:**

L. Atkinson (Australia)

**Assistant Treasurer:**

N.P. Ferreira (Brazil), substituted by M. Arraez (Spain)

**Editor of Federation News:**

A. Kaye (Australia)

**Editor of Federation Web:**

E. Karol (Argentina)

**Historian:**

H.A. van Alphen (The Netherlands)

**Past President:**

M. Samii (Germany)

**Congress Officers**

(all from Morocco)

**President:**

A. El Khamlichi

**Honorary Vice-President:**

A. El Ouarzazi

**Vice-President:**

M. El Azouzi

**Secretary:**

A. El Ouahabi

**Assistant Secretary:**

N. Abbadi

**Treasurer:**

Y. Bouzoubaa

**Assistant Treasurer:**

A. Aghzadi

**Chairman Programme Committee:**

A. El Azhari

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## 2.13 THIRTEENTH WORLD CONGRESS OF NEUROLOGICAL SURGERY

MARRAKECH 2005

### Interim Planning Meeting Lisbon 2003

The Interim Meeting of the Executive Committee between the congresses in Sydney and Marrakech was held in conjunction with the Tenth European Congress of Neurosurgery in Lisbon on 7th September 2003, under the presidency of Dr. E.R. Laws. Twenty-eight officers and one hundred and twenty-eight delegates were present. At the time of this meeting the Federation spanned five continental associations, eighty-eight national, regional and multinational general neurosurgical societies, or neurosurgical sections of national neurosciences or neurological societies, and five affiliate organizations. The Federation had nine standing committees, four scientific committees, seventeen ad hoc committees and the Parliamentarian. There was a coordinator of activities of all committees of the Federation except for the Nominating Committee, an ex-officio member of the Administrative Council.

During the Executive Committee Meetings in Sydney 2001, a proposed amendment to the Bylaws was approved: i.e. that a new office of president-elect should be created. This officer would take the place of the immediate past-president within the Administrative Council at the Interim Meeting two years before the next congress, when he would become president of the Federation. This office would be filled in Lisbon in 2003. Because accommodating the new office required adjustments of several articles of the then current Bylaws, and because the aim was simultaneously to elect the new officer, an exceptional procedure had to be followed. First of all, there was a discussion and vote on the new amendments to the Bylaws proposed by the Constitution & Bylaws Committee. After approval of the amendments, a motion was moved and passed to suspend the Bylaws just for this occasion and for this office. Then, the Nominating Committee reported and proposed Dr. J. Brotchi (Belgium) for position of President-Elect with immediate effect. There being no other candidate than the committee's nominee, Dr. Brotchi was elected unanimously. Finally, another motion was carried to re-instate the Bylaws.

Applications to host the World Congress to be held in 2009 were submitted by the American Association of Neurological Surgeons, which proposed a meeting in Boston, Massachusetts, USA, and by the Spanish Society of Neurosurgery, proposing a meeting in Madrid, Spain. After excellent presentations from both societies a



Edward R. Laws  
President WFNS 2001-2005  
Honorary President

very close vote awarded the 2009 meeting to Boston (fifty-seven/fifty-three).

The WFNS Foundation, chaired by Dr. M. Samii, had been very active and reported significant progress. Thanks to their activities, more than thirty-five WFNS Universal Instrument Sets had already been distributed to neurosurgeons and neurosurgical centres in areas of the world where there was real need, including Moldova, Ukraine, Paraguay, Uruguay, Honduras, Ecuador, Bolivia, Vietnam, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Papua-New Guinea, Nepal, Pakistan, Nigeria, South Africa, Cameroon, Benin, Senegal, Ethiopia, Jordan, Gaza, Syria, Yemen, Iraq and Peru. The distribution of these sets was made possible through the generosity of various donors, many of whom wish to remain anonymous. Other donors include organizations such as the Japan Neurosurgical Society, the Japanese Congress of Neurosurgery, the Royal Australian College of Surgeons, the Pakistan Neurosurgical Society, the International Society of Pituitary Surgeons, the American Associations of Neurological Surgeons, the Society of Neurological Surgeons, Inc. (USA) and the American Academy of Neurological Surgery. Neurosurgical groups that have donated instrument sets include surgeons at the Medical College of Wisconsin, the CHUV in Geneva, SUNY Syracuse, the University of Toronto, Barrow Neurological Institute, the Medical University of South Carolina, the University of Nebraska, Midwest Neurosurgical Associates, the Mount Sinai School of Medicine, the Bowman Gray School of Medicine and the Carolina Neurosurgical and Spinal Associates. Individual donors include Rev. W. Lyons, Dr. E. Wilson, Dr. M. Molina, Dr. B. Park, Dr. I.A. Raja, Dr. J. Clark, Dr. C. Coda, Dr. J. Guido, Dr. E. Mahmood and Drs. L. Leibrock, Patil and Prabhu from Nebraska. An additional donor is the Pan-Arab Journal of Neurosurgery with contributions from many of those involved in this educational effort. The Spanish Society of Neurosurgery have donated 0.7% of the income from their annual meeting in Santander, 19th-22nd May 2005, an initiative most welcome as it sees the start of a new kind of collaboration between member societies and the Foundation.

One operating microscope had been furnished under similar circumstances and donated to a hospital in Vietnam by Dr. B. Park. Plans were underway to consider providing, in appropriate circumstances, computer-guided neurosurgical instrumentation following an initiative of BrainLAB. In addition, the possibility of developing a practical set of endoscopic instruments with the aid of the Storz Company was examined, and, under the leadership of the Paediatric Neurosurgery Committee and the International Society of Paediatric Neurosurgery, the development of a very inexpensive CSF shunt was proceeding.

Supported by the Foundation, two young residents from Africa, one from Congo and one from Nigeria, followed a full training course at the Neurosurgical Training Centre in Rabat, Morocco, under the direction of Dr. A. El Khamlichi. After graduation, one of them continued to study, obtaining a postgraduate fellowship to Charlottesville, Virginia, USA thanks to the generosity of Dr. L. Steiner and the Elekta Company in Sweden. Both young neurosurgeons have since returned to their native countries.

The other major activity of the World Federation of Neurosurgical Societies is the development of educational courses. Under the auspices of the Neurosurgical Education Committee, chaired by Dr. M. Choux, a number of very well attended and highly effective courses were organized focussing on developing areas in the world. Unfortunately, due to global turmoil, some of the courses that had been planned had to be deferred but these will be rescheduled. Recent courses included the one held by the Brazilian Neurosurgical Society in Recife, Brazil in the autumn of 2003, a course in Jakarta, Indonesia in January 2004 with five hundred people

attending from thirty-four different countries, a course in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia in late February 2004 with two hundred and fifty participants from the region, and courses in Shanghai, China and Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in late May and early June 2004. In addition, educational courses were held in association with other international meetings.

The Committee on Neurotraumatology had its ICRAN Meeting in Aswan, Egypt in March 2004. A neurotrauma conference was also held in Peshawar, Pakistan in March 2004. In addition, the World Society of Stereotactic and Functional Neurosurgery held a course in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia where seventy-five neurosurgeons attended and the Neuro-oncology Committee organized a course in Jaipur, India in October 2004.

All these activities of the World Federation of Neurosurgical Societies fulfil a great need and are very inspiring.

The Administrative Council had decided that two WFNS Medals of Honour would be awarded at the Opening Ceremony of the European Congress in Lisbon. The two recipients were Drs. L. Steiner (USA) and J. Talairach (France), the laudations being delivered by Drs. E. Laws and A. Basso, respectively. Due to illness, Dr. Talairach was unable to attend the ceremony and so the Medal was collected on his behalf by Dr. M. Choux. The Committee, chaired by Dr. M. Samii, made the following nominations for the Medal of Honour in Marrakech: Drs. G. Teasdale (UK), P. Sampaio (Brazil), L.F. Levy (Zimbabwe), J. Haftek (Poland) and J.A. Jane (USA). These proposals were approved unanimously.

The Administrative Council also decided to present, as a new interim activity, a Young Neurosurgeons' Award for the best paper submitted for special presentation at the Twelfth EANS Congress in Lisbon. The awardee was Dr. P. Vajkoczy (Germany).

Shortly after the Interim Meeting in Lisbon, news was received of the death of two honourable members of the Federation. Dr. B. Ramamurthi, from Madras, India, who was Honorary President, died in December 2003; Dr. P. Niemeyer from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, who received the WFNS Medal of Honour in 1997, died in March 2004.

## The Congress

In this year of the fiftieth anniversary of the World Federation of Neurosurgical Societies, its World Congress was held in the Congress Palace in Marrakech, Morocco, 19th-24th June 2005, under the High Patronage of His Majesty King Mohammed VI. It was the first time in the history of the Federation that a World Congress had been held on the African continent. The theme of the congress was: 'Bridging the Gap in Neurosurgery in Marrakech: crossroads of the world cultures', chosen because of Morocco's geographical location, the bridge between Europe and Africa, east and west, the richness of its culture and its people, its openness to others and its concern about the future. The registration fee for member participants came to us \$ 560 for early registration and us \$ 700 for late registration.



Abdeslam El Khamlichi  
President of the  
Congress 2005

### *Opening Ceremony*

The official opening of the congress took place in the Auditorium of the Congress Palace on Sunday evening, 19th June with inaugural speeches by the President of the Federation, Dr. E. Laws and the President of the Congress, Dr. A. El Khamlichi, bestowing of the Medals of Honour and interludes of folk music and entertainment. After the ceremony there was a Welcome Reception for all participants and guests with a variety of buffets representing the regions of the Kingdom, which are world-famous for their exquisite cuisine.



Logo of the Thirteenth World Congress of Neurological Surgery

### *Scientific Programme*

The Scientific Programme Committee had compiled a very comprehensive programme encompassing all fields of neurosurgery.

From Monday to Friday, there were breakfast seminar sessions with a daily choice from twenty subjects, each introduced by three or four invited speakers. These were followed by ten simultaneous main topic sessions with four invited speakers discussing the topic.

From Monday to Thursday the programme continued with a plenary session consisting of two important lectures by prominent guest speakers at the forefront of neurosurgery and neuroscience research. The afternoons were reserved for free papers, video and poster sessions.

On Tuesday 21st and Thursday 23rd the Young Neurosurgeons' Forum met in the afternoon. During the first meeting, Drs. D. Thomas and J. Palmer discussed 'Professional perspectives of the young neurosurgeons'; in the second meeting, the subject discussed by Drs. E. Laws and O. Rubaidi was 'Improving neurosurgery in developing countries'. Both topics can be considered to have the highest priority of the World Federation at that point in time and in the near future.

The congress concluded on the Friday morning after the main topic session.

In a direct spatial relationship with the scientific meeting, a large commercial exhibition was held in the Congress Palace with input from more than one hundred and thirty exhibitors.

### *Social Programme*

The Local Arrangements Committee had put together a very varied social programme with authentic Moroccan features.

On the Monday evening, there was a Presidents' reception extending a warm welcome to invited guests and making them feel at home in a Moroccan atmosphere created by the architecture, the refined decor, the music and the original cuisine.

The Moroccan Philharmonic Orchestra, consisting of sixty mostly Moroccan musicians, performed a variety of international classical music on the Tuesday night. To participate one had to register for US \$ 60 per person. The returns from this evening were allocated to the WFNS Foundation for the Training of Young Neurosurgeons from developing countries.

For the Wednesday, a typical Moroccan evening had been organized with 'Chez

Ali' leading the audience into a world of shapes, colours, lights, perfumes, dreams and music. Over a delicious dinner in an authentic setting, there was entertainment by professional artists performing Moroccan horsemanship, belly dancing, folk music, fireworks, and more.

On the Thursday evening, a sumptuous traditional Moroccan dinner was served in an ancient palace, surrounded by fountains set in luxurious, exotic gardens with artistic dancers accompanied by a traditional Moroccan orchestra enticing the guests back to a different era.

On Friday 24th June at about noon, this enlightening experience drew to a close, with the final ceremony, thus concluding the celebration of fifty years of the World Federation of Neurosurgical Societies.



Kempinski Hotel Mansour Eddahbi and Palais des Congrès,  
Marrakech, Morocco, site of the Thirteenth World  
Congress of Neurological Surgery, 2005