

Founding of the World Thyroid Federation

ON SEPTEMBER 14, 2010, during the 14th International Thyroid Congress (ITC) in Paris, its four sister societies, the Asia and Oceania Thyroid Association (AOTA), American Thyroid Association (ATA), European Thyroid Association (ETA), and Latin American Thyroid Society (LATS) founded the World Thyroid Federation (WTF).

The objectives of the WTF include, but are not limited to, coordinating the meetings of the ITC and facilitating the development of international programs, research projects, worldwide guidelines, and task forces. Future specific directions and scope are unlimited and depend only on the motivation and involvement of its members.

The WTF was constituted by the four sister societies (AOTA, ATA, ETA, LATS) with an Executive Committee composed of the four Presidents and the four Secretaries of these societies and a Current Coordinator. For the period 2010–2012 only, there is also a “Founder Coordinator,” working together with the Current Coordinator, to facilitate organization and initiation of the WTF.

In addition, there is an Advisory Committee whose function is to pursue the objectives of the WTF by reviewing available international developments and opportunities and making proposals to the Executive Committee.

The following is a reproduction of the official document that created the WTF and was approved by the four sister societies:

World Thyroid Federation (WTF)

Background

During the 7th International Thyroid Conference (Boston, MA, June, 1975), the four sister associations (ATA, ETA, AOTA, and LATS) cooperated to create an International Coordinating Committee (ICC) whose major function was to help organize the venues of future International Thyroid Congresses (ITCs). The previous designation as “Conference” was changed to “Congress,” starting in Sydney, Australia, in February 1980. The policy of venue rotations has been established. The ITC should be held every 5 years in a location belonging to one of the thyroid associations in specific order as follows: LATS, ETA, ATA, and AOTA. This policy was initiated in Sao Paulo, Brazil, in 1985. A representative of the sister society, which was the previous host of the ITC, shall act as the Recording Secretary of the ICC for a period of 5 years. The ICC shall be composed of the President and Secretary of each association and the previously mentioned recording secretary. This board is constituted by nine members as follows: four presidents, four secretaries, and one recording secretary, who functions as the coordinator of the ICC. The administrative and bureaucratic structure of the ICC is fundamental as members join together only once a year during

the meetings of the ATA or ETA, or at the time of the ITC, wherever it is held. More recently, due in part to the fact that the ICC has an inexpensive and uncomplicated structure, its members believed that its function should be expanded to take advantage of the international cooperation.

Objectives

The scope and function of the organization should be expanded in various directions. Among these new directions and conceptions include (but are not limited to): the development of international programs, research projects, worldwide guidelines, and task forces. Future specific directions and scope are unlimited and depend only on the motivation/involvement of its members. The consensus mechanism of function is the creation of the World Thyroid Federation (WTF) whose structure should be based on the actual ICC as its Executive Committee. However, there is the addition of an advisory scientific committee whose function is to pursue the goals previously mentioned, by reviewing available international possible venues. This bureaucratic structure should not result in significant additional administrative expenses for the four sister associations. It is believed that creation of the WTF represents the natural progression of international cooperation that was originally conceived in 1975.

By-Laws

Executive committee

Members. The executive committee will be composed of nine members: the four Presidents and four Secretaries of the ATA, ETA, AOTA, and LATS, and the Coordinator of the WTF.

Role. Regarding the ITC’s organization, it shall follow comparable activity of the former ICC. This Board shall review each proposal from the Advisory Committee and will decide on approval, rejection, or modification. Proposals for consideration will emanate from the Advisory Committee or, alternatively, the Executive Committee will be able to propose projects for the Advisory Committee to consider. The Executive Committee can establish *ad hoc* committee(s) to study, develop, or promote specific proposals originally initiated by the Executive Committee. Such *ad hoc* committees will automatically be terminated at the time the topic or project has been completed.

Modus operandi. The Executive Committee will meet once a year. Each sister society (ATA, ETA, AOTA, and LATS) will also have the option of being able to send up to two designated individuals who would represent the President

and Secretary at the yearly meeting of the Executive Committee of the WTF. This policy would also apply to any other designated activity of the WTF. It is the responsibility of each sister society to determine the choice and duration of its designated members. Each sister association would maintain the option of deciding whether to participate in any specific activity of the WTF. That is, each sister society has the unambiguous prerogative to determine which activities it will participate in and this action is not subject to consideration by the remaining sister societies.

Coordinators

The Coordinator will be proposed by the sister society that hosted the previous ITC. The 5-year term of the WTF Coordinator must coincide with the 5-year cycle of the ITCs. However, in order to facilitate an understanding of the functioning of the organization from the former Coordinator, the new Coordinator-Elect will start his/her service 1 year prior to actually becoming the Coordinator. As a result, the coordinator cycle will be in actuality a total of 6 years. The role of the Coordinator will be similar to that of the former ICC Recording Secretary, but with the addition of a new role as the liaison between the Executive and the Advisory Committees. Also, he/she will also function as the coordinator of *ad hoc* committees and/or task forces working under the control of the WTF. During the overlapping of tenures of the Coordinator and the Coordinator-Elect, the latter shall help the Coordinator to the extent possible while learning the duties and responsibilities.

Advisory committee

Members. The advisory board will be composed of 12 members, three from each sister association. They will be designated for a term of 3 years, although every year each association should nominate a single individual, allowing an appropriate equilibrium between newer and older members. One individual will be chosen as a Chairperson for a 1-year period and, based on the rule of rotations, every year the Chairperson should belong to a different association. Each sister society will choose one basic and two clinical members. It is desirable that the clinicians possess expertise in different areas of thyroidology. For example, the two clinicians designated from each association should specialize in different broad areas of thyroidology. Each chairperson will be designated by the Executive Committee of the WTF.

Role. The Advisory Committee should be alert for and initiate efforts to find and develop appropriate international activities, such as epidemiological programs, research projects, worldwide guidelines, and relevant task forces. They shall discuss potential ideas and concepts and consider potential individuals to help formulate them. They shall also consider possible sites to develop the actions, and the economical resources to be obtained for these purposes. Once this board has a definite proposal, it should be sent to the Coordinator, who shall assist with final arrangement of such a task. When ready, the proposal must be considered by the Executive Committee for approval, rejection or modification. There will be no official meetings of the Advisory Committee. They shall function mainly by communicating through the

Internet. Nevertheless, they can arrange a meeting, when feasible, at the time of the annual or biannual meetings of the sister thyroid associations.

Addendum

For the initiation of the WTF, some considerations must be taken into account:

- 1) For the initial activities, the present Recording Secretary of the ICC will act as a Founder Coordinator for the period 2010–2012, working together with the next current Coordinator (an ETA member for the period 2010–2015). The Recording Secretary's experience and advice concerning any WTF project will be invaluable in the successful initiation of the WTF, mainly because the next coordinator will start in 2010 without previously having been a Coordinator-Elect from 2009 to 2010.
- 2) For the initial term of duration of advisory members each sister society should nominate a member for a 1-year period, a second member for a 2-year period, and a third member for the full 3-year term.

The task of developing the full conception that became the WTF took more than 4 years and the efforts of numerous colleagues and members of the four sister societies who worked diligently to reach this goal. Besides those now involved in the Executive and Advisory Committees, the other participants in the project were Rebecca Bahn, Kenneth Burman, David Cooper, Terry Davies, Ulla Feldt-Rasmussen, Josef Köhrle, Junji Konishi, and Wilmar Wiersinga. Bobbi Smith of the ATA and Sandra Crutchey of the ETA provided logistic support for organizational meetings.

This year (2011) the Executive Committee of the WTF is composed of the following individuals:

Yoshiharu Murata (AOTA President)
 Gregory Brent (ATA President)
 Peter Laurberg (ETA President)
 Hans Graf (LATS President)
 Teófilo San Luis (AOTA Secretary)
 Richard Kloos (ATA Secretary)
 Luigi Bartalena (ETA Secretary)
 Ana María Masini-Repiso (LATS Secretary)
 Martin Schlumberger (Current Coordinator)
 Hugo Niepomniszczce (Founder Coordinator)

The Advisory Committee of the WTF is composed of the following individuals:

Chairperson for the year 2011: Leonidas Duntas (ETA)
 Nobuyuki Amino (AOTA)
 Bo Youn Cho (AOTA)
 Ian Hay (ATA)
 Guillermo Juvenal (LATS)
 Michael McDermott (ATA)
 Sandra McLachlan (ATA)
 Robin Peeters (ETA)
 Mario Vaisman (LATS)
 Laura Ward (LATS)
 Graham Williams (ETA)
 Paul Yen (AOTA)

Acknowledgments

This notice was developed by the Editorial Staff of *Thyroid* using material supplied by Hugo Niepomniscze Founder Coordinator of the WTF and Martin Schlumberger, Current Coordinator of the WTF. Most of the wording in this notice

was the same as the wording supplied by Dr. Niepomniscze. In communicating this material Drs. Schlumberger and Niepomniscze stated that they look forward to a stimulating and productive WTF and invite all AOTA, ATA, ETA, and LATS colleagues to contribute their ideas and new projects of worldwide interest to the WTF.

