

General Meeting of ILA Members

Minutes

12 September 1998

Beijing, China

The meeting was held on Saturday, 12 September 1998, at the International Convention Center, Beijing, China, and was chaired by Dr. Yo Yuasa, President of ILA.

1. The meeting was opened by the President.

2. A list of names of ILA members who had passed away during the 5 years since the previous Congress was read by the Secretary, followed by a brief period of silence by the participants as a tribute to the deceased members.

L. M. Balina	K. Jesudasan
J. A. Cap	W. H. Jopling
J. E. Cardama	D. L. Leiker
D. S. Chaudury	C. P. Motta
M. Corcos	O. K. Skinsnes
W. Edgar	G. Tarabini-Castellani
G. L. Fite	R. Khin Thein
H. A. Floch	Mother Theresa
J. Gatti	J. van Droegenbroek
J. Harris	R. V. Wardekar
O. W. Hasselblad	

3. The minutes of the General Meeting of Members at the 14th Congress of 4 September 1993 at Orlando were approved.

4. Reports

4.1. Secretary's report

The main activities of the Association are the publication of the INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF LEPROSY AND OTHER MYCOBACTERIAL DISEASES (IJL) and the organization of the International Leprosy Congress (ILC) once in 5 years. The Organizing Committee for the 15th ILC met three times: Greenville, SC, U.S.A. (April 1996); Liege, Belgium (May 1997); Atlanta, GA, U.S.A. (April 1998) and a few visits were made to China by the President who was accompanied by some members of the Organizing Committee on two occasions.

Since the ILA does not have funds for activities which are not related to the two

main activities, other activities were rather low key and infrequent and consisted almost exclusively of attending meetings to which the ILA was invited. It was virtually always the President who attended those meetings including: the World Health Assembly (two times), the WHO LEAG meetings, the meeting of the WHO Expert Committee on Leprosy, and WHO Regional Committee meetings on four occasions. The President also attended several meetings of ILEP.

Two WHO-ILA Consultation Meetings were held during the past 5 years.

4.2. Editor's Report

This year marks the 66th year of publication. Besides publishing original articles, editorials, correspondence, etc., the IJL also serves as the official organ of the ILA. It takes 4 to 6 months for an article to be accepted. The total submission of articles varies between 80 to 120 a year. The acceptance rate is 50% to 70%. The target number of pages is 600 each year. Each year the IJL runs 250 to 300 pages as original articles.

The major questions to be answered at this point in time are: Is there still a need for a professional society dedicated to leprosy? If No, then disband ILA and stop IJL publication. If Yes, then continue ILA and continue IJL.

Is the IJL in its present form useful enough in our work to justify its cost? If No, then change its present form. If Yes, then continue its present form.

Should the ILA and the IJL, like other professional societies, move toward electronic publication? If No, then continue in its present form. If Yes, then begin the transition to electronic publication.

The quarterly publication of the ILA Forum will be discontinued since this appeared to fail as a forum for discussion among the ILA members: most contribu-

tions were solicited and there were virtually no reactions on the articles. However, ILA will continue its publication in a modified format as an occasional publication.

4.3. Treasurer's Report

During 1998 the circulation of the IJL was four times 1019 copies to 100 countries. The number of subscriptions declined by 21% since 1994. The membership decreased to 364. The revenues in 1997 amounted to US\$136,562 and the total expenses US\$126,706. Income from individual subscribers is about 11%, and 22% from institutional subscribers. The rest, almost 70%, consists of support from ILEP Members. About 60% of the expenses is for the production and mailing of the IJL, 35% for the Editorial Office and 5% for the Business Office. The low cost of the latter is possible only because of the 100% voluntary work of the Editor and support of the American Leprosy Mission in making the Treasurer, secretarial staff and office services available. This saves more than US\$60,000. The cash reserve at the end of 1997 was US\$21,605.

The President thanked the Officers for their contributions and the reports were accepted. The discussion was kept short in view of the limited time and since most questions were already discussed at length during an open forum on 6 September, but a number of additional suggestions were brought forward. Many of the members were in favor of disengaging the ILA membership and the subscription to the IJL, and it was strongly recommended that the Council should not wait with action until the next General Meeting of ILA Members. Several members advised that future meetings of ILA Members should be of longer duration than just 1 hour since there was no time for any in-depth discussion. It was decided to bring all suggestions to the new Council, including the proposal to probe the opinion of the ILA Members on the above issues through a questionnaire and to bring the most important proposals forward to the Members for a postal vote.

5. Venue of the 16th International Leprosy Congress

The President explained that he had received a letter from the Minister of Health of Brazil, expressing his interest to host the next Congress. The proposal to accept

Brazil as the host country for the 16th International Leprosy Congress was unanimously accepted.

6. Election of Officers and Councillors for 1998–2003

The President presented a list of Officers and Councillors as nominated by the Council:

President:	Y. Yuasa
Vice Presidents:	H. J. S. Kawuma (Africa) M. Virmond (Americas) S. K. Noordeen (Asia) W. C. S. Smith (Europe)
Secretary:	P. Feenstra
Treasurer:	W. F. Ross
Editor:	R. C. Hastings
Past President:	W. M. Meyers
Councillors	A. Guedenon
Africa:	T. O. Sofola A. Tiendrebeogo
Councillors	F. A. Vazquez Bozzo
Americas:	R. R. Jacobson J. Justice M. Leide de Oliveira
Councillors Asia:	R. Day Syarifuddin P. K. Gopal Tin Shwe C. S. Walter Li Huan Ying
Councillors	Ji Bao Hong
Europe:	J. W. Konig J. Terencio de las Aquas

The Meeting unanimously approved the list.

7. History of Leprosy Project

The President briefly introduced this project which aims at putting together an historical record for the fight against leprosy for the benefit of future generations and to learn from that history. The project benefits from a grant of a half-million dollars from the Nippon Foundation and will be basically executed under the responsibility of ILA in close collaboration with WHO and other partners. After a brief discussion the project was endorsed by the members.

8. After thanking the participants, the President closed the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ P. Feenstra

P. Feenstra
Secretary