



ILA FORUM

2nd Series

FOREWORD

As most of you may recall, this publication, supposed to be quarterly, was initiated in September 1994, to be distributed with each issue of *IJL* as a means of better communication among ILA members, on nontechnical subjects of common interests, primarily on ILA itself but also on leprosy activities in general.

There were some outstanding contributions but, as a whole, it was not a success because there were not enough spontaneous contributions to fill the pages of each issue. The majority of them were result of my personal solicitation, and I am most grateful for their positive responses, but that was not the way I intended originally. Some of the contributions were, in my view at least, thought provoking enough which should have elicited some spontaneous return contributions, which unfortunately did not happen.

Over the next 4 to 5 years, while I am the ILA President, I intend to publish the second series of the *ILA FORUM*, not regularly this time, but when there are some important enough subjects to present and discuss. This issue is the first of the new series. As the title of the following article shows, it is my personal view on what ILA should be. In the next issue, hopefully in June, it is intended to publish at least six views in response to my article, both pros and cons. I will request two ILA Officers, two Council members and two of ILA's general members to do that job. After that, I am planning to circulate questionnaires on ILA, to be prepared by Dr. Piet Feenstra, ILA Secretary, early in the autumn, perhaps by the middle of September, to be returned by the end of October 1999.

The summary and analysis of those returns in addition to being published in a future *ILA FORUM*, perhaps in December, will be discussed among those members of the ILA Council present at the proposed Third International Conference on the Elimination of Leprosy, scheduled in mid-November 1999 somewhere in Africa.

If that group judges that there are enough members wishing to make some changes, then a committee of a few Council members will be asked to plan a suitable form for a postal referendum, which will be mailed to all existing ILA members, perhaps by April 2000, to be returned by the end of June 2000.

According to the results of the referendum, of the majority of those who respond by the designated time, a small committee of the ILA Council, perhaps four Vice-Presidents plus one or two Officers, will be asked to formulate proposals which will be presented and acted upon by the full Council meeting at the time of the ILA Asian Congress, expected to be held in September/October 2000 in India.

Any changes of the ILA Constitution deemed necessary, even only wordings and not real substance, still require voting at the General Meeting of Members, and that has to wait until the next Congress in Brazil.

Although that is my plan, it is entirely up to the current members to decide whether such changes are necessary or even warranted. My real wish in this exercise is that every existing member at least take the issue seriously and act as required, by responding to the questionnaire first and, depending on that, then to the referendum and, finally, to come and vote at the General Meeting of Members at the 16th Congress. We could consider a postal voting for those who are unable to come to Brazil, even though the current ILA Constitution does not require it.

What I am not prepared to accept is indifference among our members on the issue of ILA itself. I am now paying due respect to the feelings of the current silent majority. But in Brazil, a silent majority then will be no entity at all.

Dr. Yo Yuasa
ILA President