

INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL INFORMATICS ASSOCIATION

Special Interest Group of the International Federation for Information Processing

September 12, 1990

reply to Shigekoto Kaihara, M.D.
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Mr. Ouyang Zhineng
Dr. K.C. Lun
Mr. Alfred Tang
Prof. Jos Willems
Dr. Patrick Nugawela

Dear Friends

I am writing this letter regarding Asia Pacific Regional Group of IMIA. If I understand correctly, a meeting to found this group was held at the time of MEDINFO 89 in Singapore, but no further follow up action has been taken. This problem was raised at the time of IMIA GA meeting in Glasgow by Mr. Ouyang and I was asked to investigate the situation.

I had a chance to go to Hong Kong at the end of August and talked with Dr. Alfred Tang, the representative to IMIA from Hong Kong, and Dr. Wong, who is now the president of Hong Kong Society of Medical Informatics. Summarizing the information I got from various sources, the following is my observations and comments.

1. Generally speaking, the existence of a regional group can be justified, when the activities of the group are assured. Even if there is a regional group with a nice committee and a nice charter, if the group is sleeping, the group cannot be justified. Therefore, we have to explore the possibility of any medical informatics activities in the region. The formation of the committee and the charter can come later.
2. Dr. Tang, who is the secretary of the Asia Pacific Group says that he wrote three letters to Dr. P.K. Wong of Singapore, who is the president of the Group but he said he had not obtained any reply. I recommended Hong Kong people to send a copy to Dr. K.C. Lun always. In any case the copies of the letters should be sent to Dr. Lun as soon as possible to ask his help.
3. There will be the first conference of Hong Kong Society of Medical Informatics in Hong Kong in November this year. Although this conference is planned as a domestic conference, it arose a lot of interest in Asian regions and it seems many scientists will participate from various Asian countries. Hong Kong people think that this is a very good time to have another meeting of Asia Pacific Group. I agree with the idea of Hong Kong people that this is the only chance to have the follow up meeting, if they still want to set up the Asia Pacific Group.



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4. I would like to encourage Hong Kong society to make their conference a substantial Asian Pacific regional group conference. To do that, they will not need any formal authority. They can just distribute the brochures as wide as possible. Hong Kong has a unique geographic merit, to which most of the Asian countries have equal access. Chinese people can also come very easily. Hong Kong is very good at organizing meetings with very good hotel facilities. I think that if Hong Kong society keeps organizing their conference annually, it will grow to a substantial Asian Pacific Conference. Then, the formal Asian Pacific Group (Association) will also grow automatically in parallel with the conference.

I hope that the above comments have some help to follow up the committee formed in Singapore.

Sincerely yours,



Shigekoto KAIHARA, M.D.
IMIA Honorary Member



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IMIA

Prof. S. Kaihara
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20th September 1990

Dear Professor Kaihara,

Thank you for your fax dated 12th September 1990. Your remarks are cogent and echo your sentiments as IMIA President at the inaugural meeting of the Asia-Pacific Association of Medical Informatics meeting in Singapore in October 1988 (held in association with the Pan-Pacific conference). At that meeting, the delegates from the various countries confirmed precisely that the viability of such a regional group was a prerequisite for any further activity. This was the foundation of what is now the Asia-Pacific Regional Group of IMIA. Papers relating to this were forwarded to you previously and also tabled with the 1990 IMIA AGM (Glasgow) documents.

A committee was elected (at that meeting in October 1988) to look further into the matter of ongoing programmes for regional MI activity. It would appear that the office bearers elected still stand. We have written to Singapore and have received no reply. From your letter, I gather that Hong Kong has experienced a similar result.

I write to reiterate Australia's support for the regional association and a possible affiliation of this group with IMIA. As a Pacific nation in this Asia-Pacific association, we will be only too pleased to do our part - even if this means convening a regional meeting from time to time (and give Hong Kong a respite). We have enjoyed a good working relationship with Dr Alfred Tang and his colleagues and have no hesitation in endorsing any proposal that would see Hong Kong continuing to play a major role in the association.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Patrick Nugawela
National Coordinator
Australian Medical Informatics Association
IMIA Representative (Australia)