

ANNUAL REPORT 89/90 of IMIA (Affiliate Member of IFIP)

TRANSFORMATION OF IMIA

IMIA's transformation from an IFIP-SIG to an independent organization was approved at the Annual General Meeting in Singapore on December 9th, 1989 prior to MEDINFO 89. IMIA thereby becomes an Affiliate Member of IFIP. Achieving independence, however, does not mean that IMIA wishes to see scientific ties between the two organizations severed. On the contrary, IMIA decided to have its seat in Geneva at the IFIP secretariat's office. The amendments of the Bylaws, necessary for this transformation have been approved.

MEDINFO 89

Due to the events on Tienanmen Square in June 89, the World Congress on Medical Informatics had to be split into 2 parts. The first part took place in October 89 in Beijing, as originally planned. The second in December 89 in Singapore.

This proved to be one of the most difficult decisions for IMIA. No one else could have solved the problems better than the Past-President Prof. Dr. S. Kaihara, with his deep understanding of the cultures of the East and of the West, his personal touch and diplomacy. Both Mr. Ouyang, Chairman of the Organizing Committee for the Beijing part, and Dr. K.C. Lun, Chairman of the Organizing Cee for the Singapore part, did achieve an extraordinary job, under real difficult circumstances. Common Proceedings were published for both meetings as initially planned by North Holland Publ.

The Beijing part was attended by 675 people, mostly from the Peoples Republic of China. The participation of Western Scientists (92 in total from 32 countries) was about 10 % of those who would have attended if not for the events on Tienanmen Square. It was a clear but dramatic signal of the academic community to the political events which happened in the Chinese capital.

The meeting in Singapore was a real success, not only from the standpoint of scientific quality, but also from the organizational point of view. The sixth triennial World Conference on Medical Informatics attracted more than 750 people from 44 countries from around the World. The greatest contingents came from Japan (145), the USA (62) and the United Kingdom (59). Two-hundred papers were presented in 42 sessions. In the poster sessions 100 additional papers were presented. There were 15 scientific demo's and 9 scientific workshops. Decision support received the most interest (20 % of the papers and 29 % of the sessions). Clinical systems and imaging ranked second and third, each with on the average 10 % of the papers.

There were very little cancellations in the presentations of the papers in Singapore. Most papers were of excellent quality. Two gold medals were awarded, one to an American and the other to a group of scientists from Gambia.

Contrary to the expectations, but thanks to the hard currency fund rising of Prof. Kaihara and the excellent organizational talents of Dr. K.C. Lun, the overall financial return for both Medinfo parts still proved to be positive. Of course also many other fine people contributed to their success, not to the least Dr. Ph. Manning, Chairman of the Programme Cee and Dr. B. Barber, Chairman of the Editorial Board of Medinfo 89.

MEMBERSHIP

The American Informatics Association (AMIA) formally took over the representation of AFIPS in IMIA. Dr. Marion Ball was appointed US representative. A request for change in representation was also received from Brazil. The Societies of Medical Informatics of South Korea, Singapore and Yugoslavia were accepted as members. A submission for membership was also received from Kuwait.

WORKING GROUPS AND WORKING CONFERENCES

- The creation of Working Group 11 on Dental Informatics was approved by the AGM in Singapore.
- Working Group 1 organized a very successful Conference on Medical Informatics and Medical Education in Vancouver.
- Other Conferences were held on the State of the Art in Primary Care Computing and Diagnosis Related Groups (DRG's).
- Regional Conferences were organized by EFMI and IMIA-LAC, respectively the European Federation for Medical Informatics Societies and the Latin American Groups.

NOMINATIONS

Prof. Dr. J.L. Willems took over the IMIA Presidency, as successor of Prof. Dr. S. Kaihara. Prof. Dr. A. Bakker became the new Treasurer. Dr. M. Ball and J. Flint were appointed Trustees. Dr. H. Peterson was appointed chairman of the Nominations Committee.

FUTURE ACTIVITIES

The next MEDINFO will be held in 1992 in Geneva. The Chairman of the Organizing Cee will be Prof. Dr. J.R. Scherrer. Salah Mandil, Director of the Division of Computer Support of WHO, will chair the Scientific Programme Committee. Dr. K.C. Lun will be Chairman of the Editorial Board.

For the Fall of 1990 IMIA Conferences are scheduled on Medical Education (Prague), Software Engineering in Medical Informatics (Amsterdam), Telemedicine (Rotterdam) and Methodological Approaches of Medical Technology Assessment (Montpellier).