8. International Organizations
Sir/Madam,

I have the honour to inform you that the Forty-fourth World Health Assembly will be convened at 12 noon on Monday, 6 May 1991, in the Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland, and take pleasure in inviting you to appoint a representative or representatives to attend on behalf of your organization.

The provisional agenda for this Health Assembly, as prepared by the Executive Board at its eighty-seventh session, is enclosed. The subject of the Technical Discussions is "Strategies for health for all in the face of rapid urbanization". The Board decided that the Forty-fourth World Health Assembly should close no later than Friday, 17 May 1991.

Documents related to the agenda will be placed at the disposal of your representative(s) on the opening day of the Health Assembly in pigeon-holes marked with the name of your organization.

I shall be pleased to be informed of the name and address of the person(s) appointed to attend at your earliest convenience and, if possible, not later than 26 April 1991.

Please accept, Sir/Madam, the assurance of my highest consideration.

Hiroshi Nakajima, M.D., Ph.D.
Director-General
Dear Doctor Nakajima,

Through the IFIP Secretariat I have received your invitation to attend the 40th World Health Assembly in Geneva, May 6th to 11th, 1991.

I regret that I cannot personally attend. However, I am pleased to announce that Prof. Dr. J.R. Scherrer, Head of the Dep. Medical Informatics of the University of Geneva has accepted to replace me and will attend.

All material should be send to him at the Hopital Cantonal, CH 1211 Geneva 4 (Tel. 41-22-22-6250, Fax : 41-22-47-6486).

Sincerely Yours,

Prof. Dr. Jos L. WILLEMS
President of IMIA

cc. : Prof. Dr. J.R. Scherrer
Mrs. G. Roberts
Dear affiliate member representative,

I have the pleasure of enclosing a copy of the report of the IFIP Technical Assembly (TA) held in Barcelona March 5th 1991.

Some of our affiliate members have rather remote connection to IFIP. We would like to take an initiative to strengthen our bands to our affiliates. I therefore take this opportunity to invite you to share with me your viewpoint on what the role of the affiliates should be.

In particular, I would be interested in viewpoints and ideas as to what IFIP should be able to offer to its affiliates, and how you can contribute to IFIP. What type of cooperation is realistic to develop, and how shall we organize this.

As soon as we receive viewpoints from all affiliates, we will schedule a discussion on this at the TA. As a member of TA you will of course receive invitation and agenda for this meeting.

Sincerely yours,

Asbjørn Rolstadás
Vice president

Enclosure

cc: IFIP Secretariat

B. Sendov
Ref. : EC/JW/jt/91-137

Leuven, April 8th, 1991

Dear Prof. Rolstadas,

I have well received your letter dated March 11th, 1991 with the report on the IFIP Technical Assembly held in Barcelona, March 5th, 1991.

Hereby enclosed I am sending you a copy of the latest Information Bulletin of IMIA, dated March 1991. In this Bulletin you can find an updated list of the planned activities, as well as an overview of the various Working Groups, the Organizational Structure and Bylaws of IMIA.

IMIA and IFIP could cooperate in my opinion through the organization of some joint Working Conferences on topics of common interest such as:

- Ethics, Security and Confidentiality,
- Education,
- Home Telematics,
- Quality assurance testing of software,
- Software Engineering
- Expert Systems

To this end IMIA and IFIP should exchange information on the composition and objectives of their Working Groups. Concrete steps for cooperation need to be taken by individual people.

However, some issues need to be discussed first (such as the financial responsibility, publication and royalty rights, etc.) if the idea of such joint Conferences should succeed.

Sincerely yours,

Prof. Dr. Jos.L. Willems
President of IMIA

Prof. Dr. R. Salamon
Prof. dr. ir. A. Bakker
Prof. Dr. S. Kaihara
Dr. H. Peterson

Prof. Asbjorn Rolstadas
Div. of Production Engineering,
Univ. of Trondheim
Richard Birkelandsv. 2B
N-7034 TRONDHEIM - NORWAY

IMIA Secretariat: c/o IFIP Secretariat, 16 Place Longemalle CH-1204 Geneva, Switzerland
Dear Valerio,

I enjoyed meeting you in Glasgow August 18-19th, 1990 during the meetings of the Board and AGM of IMIA and thank you for your report on the activities of IMIA-LAC as well as your proposal to hold MEDINFO 95 in Buenos Aires.

As you know I will be unable to attend the IFIP General Assembly which will convene in Buenos Aires, the first week of September.

I would appreciate it very much if you could present my report on the activities of IMIA which I have sent to Mr. A. Melbye, IFIP’s Liaison Officer to IMIA, as well as to Dr. Sendov, President of IFIP.

I look forward seeing you in Porto Allegre, Gramado at the Third Brazilian Congress on Health Informatics October 8-11, 1990.

Sincerely yours,

Prof. Dr. Jos L. WILLEMS
President of IMIA

cc. : Mrs. G. Roberts, Secretariat IFIP
     Mr. A. Melbye, IFIP/IMIA Liaison Officer
     Dr. Sendov, President 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 Tienamen 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 Tienamen 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).
Dear Professor Sendov,


I apologize for the slight delay, which was due to my trip to Japan in recent weeks.

I will be unable to attend your meeting in Harare, Zimbabwe.

I wish you a successful Technical Assembly Meeting, and remain

Sincerely Yours,

Prof. Dr. Jos L. Willems
President, IMIA

cc.: Mrs. G. Roberts, Secretariat IFIP
     Mr. A. Melbye, IFIP/IMIA Liaison Officer
     Prof. Dr. J.R. Scherrer, IMIA/IFIP Liaison Officer
ANNUAL REPORT 90/91 OF
IMIA (Affiliate Member of IFIP)

ANNUAL GENERAL AND BOARD MEETINGS OF IMIA

- The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of IMIA was last year organized in Glasgow, in August 1990. In 1991, it will be held in Washington DC in November, just preceding the SCAMC Meeting i.e. the Annual Conference on Medical Informatics of the American Medical Informatics Association (AMIA).

- The Board also met in Glasgow in Aug. 1990, and in Bordeaux in March 1991. The Board will meet again in Nov. 1991, just preceding the AGM.

MEMBERSHIP OF IMIA

Requests for Membership were received from the USSR and Romania. In view of the rapid changing situation in these countries the Membership Committee decided to obtain further information and present its recommendation to the Board in the Fall of 1991. In the mean time the Observer Status will remain in place for these countries. Contacts will be reopened with representatives of Kuwait who applied for Membership before the Gulf War.

Further contacts have taken place between various Asian Pacific Members to set up an Asian-Pacific Regional Group of IMIA.

The European (EFMI) and Latin-American Groups (IMIA-LAC) have continued their regional activities.

The American Medical Informatics Association (AMIA) which was set up last year, also continues to function almost as a regional group for North America. However, no formal ties have yet been made between AMIA and the Canadian and Mexican Medical Societies.

AMIA is setting up a Fellowship programme to stimulate the development of Medical Informatics in Central and Eastern Europe, whereby 2 fellowship would be granted to individual interested in obtaining training in Medical Informatics in the United States.

WORKING GROUPS OF IMIA

An application has been received to set a working group on Computer Applications for Pharmacists and Pharmacologists. Contacts have also been made to reshape former Working Group 3, which dealt with computerized ECG Analysis, into a broader Biosignal Processing Working Group. Both applications will be discussed in the Board and General Assembly Meetings in November 1991.

IMIA WORKING CONFERENCES

- April 5-6, 1990 in Brighton (United Kingdom) on International Primary Care Computing.
- Sept. 3-7, 1990 in Prague (Czechoslovakia) on Medical Informatics and Medical Education.
- Oct. 8-10, 1990 in Amsterdam (The Netherlands) on Software Engineering in Medical Informatics (SEMI).
- Oct. 22-24, 1990 in Montpellier (France) on Technology Assessment with special emphasis on informatics applied to medicine and health.
- Nov. 19-22, 1990 in Rotterdam (The Netherlands) on Telematics in Medicine (TELEMED).
- Oct. 8-11, 1990 in Gramado, Porte Allegre (Brazil) : Regional Conference of the Latin-American Group (IMIA-LAC) with large international representation by Officers of IMIA.
- April 14-17, 1991 in Melbourne (Australia) 4th International Conference on Nursing Informatics organized by IMIA Working Group 8. This congress was very successful and was attended by over 700 participants from all over the World.
- August 17-22, 1991 in Vienna (Austria) : Regional European Conference on Medical Informatics organized by EFMI.
- A meeting on Dental Informatics scheduled for June 1990 in Stockholm had to be called off as a result of the Gulf War.
- In Sept. 1991, a working conference will be held in Goettingen (Germany) on New Trends in Hospital Information Systems (HIS).

PUBLICATIONS

Conference Proceedings of the first 5 conferences have already been published by North Holland, the Elsevier Science Publishers. Proceedings on the Goettingen Conference will also be published by North-Holland, whereas the Proceedings of the EFMI Conference will be published by Springer Verlag.

Proceedings of the 4th Intern. Conference on Nursing Informatics were published on a local university press in order to reduce the costs.

MEDINFO 92

- The 7th World Congress on Medical Informatics will be held in Geneva from September 6 to 10th, 1992.
- The Organizing Committee is chaired by Prof. Dr. J.R. Scherrer of the University of Geneva. Dr. Salah Mandil of the Computer Support Division of WHO is chairman of the Scientific Programme Committee.
- The first announcement and call for papers have been sent out on schedule. The Scientific Programme and Local Organizing Committees of MEDINFO 92 have sofar not encountered any specific problems.

CONTACTS with OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

- Contacts have been made with IFMBE in order to set up some joint conferences. "Technology Assessment" and "Biosignal Processing" were selected as topics during a meeting of IMIA and IFMBE representatives at the World Congress on Medical Physics and Biomedical Engineering in July 1991 in Kyoto.
- Working Group 4 of IMIA on Data Protection in Health Information Systems has expressed interest to organize a Working Conference in the Spring of 1993 in Harrogate in the United Kingdom, whereby collaboration would highly be appreciated from the corresponding group of IFIP. In a letter dated April 8th, 1991 to Prof. Dr. A. Rolstadas, Prof. Dr. J.L. Willems, President of IMIA, expressed IMIA's interest in having such a joint meeting.
- In this line IMIA is supporting Ir. Korpela from Kuopio, Finland who wants to set up a Working Conference on Health Informatics for Africa (HELINA) in Nigeria, as a joint activity of IFIP TC 9 and IMIA WG 9.
NEWS RELEASE

The 42nd WORLD MEDICAL ASSEMBLY which will convene in Rancho Mirage, California, U.S.A. from October 24th to 28th will devote 2-1/2 days to a scientific session on MEDICAL EDUCATION. The themes that will be developed are:

1. Forces that will Change Medical Practice in the Twenty-First Century.

2. Forces that will Change Education in the Twenty-First Century.

3. Identifying Interdependent Roles and Responsibilities for Promoting Positive Changes in Medical Education.

4. Responsibility for Funding Medical Education.

Speakers are highly respected specialists who will focus on factors that influence social evolution, the impact of changing biological and other technologies, the consequent changes in medical practice, and the roles and responsibilities of medical associations and governments.

The World Medical Association will consider adoption of a Declaration insisting upon the fact that medical education therefore becomes a continuum that is gradually removing the distinction between basic, postgraduate and continuing education. Consequently, society will have to revise the financing of medical education in a way that resources be equally apportioned during the studies and the entire professional life of the physician.

Press section - October 1, 1990 - 8/90

Toni Rubin, Press Attache.
There will also be discussion and possibly adoption of Declarations of the topics mentioned hereunder:

- **Therapeutic Substitution**: urges that the prescriptions made by physicians should be scrupulously respected as to product and dosage;

- **Traffic Injury**: draws attention to the fact that traffic injury is nowadays a public health problem with consequences equal to those of major diseases such as cancer and cardiovascular diseases and consumes an estimated 10% of total hospital resources; considers ways and means to prevent road accidents;

- **Chemical and Bacteriological Weapons**: reminds physicians that it is their ethical duty to refuse to use their professional knowledge in research and development of chemical and/or bacteriological weapons;

- **Tele-Medicine**: while tele-medicine is a remarkable aid for health care at home, attention must be paid to maintain an evolutive equilibrium in three dimensions: to respect the individual, to develop support and communication networks, and to make appropriate use of new technologies.

Press Section - October 1st, 1990
690

Toni Rubin, Press Attache.
Dear Professor Willems,

In accordance with our short discussion in Sevilla last December, we have discussed briefly within the Administrative Council of our Federation in our recent meeting in Nice (February 15-16.) possible ways of cooperation with IMIA.

First a few words about IFMBE. It is an international organization for medical and biological engineering. Currently we have little over 30 national MBE societies as our members. Enclosed is our Directory for 1990 outlining in detail our structure and activities. In addition we organize every three years a world congress on medical physics and medical engineering. The next one is in Kyoto, July 7-12, 1991. These congresses are organized jointly with the International Organization of Medical Physics (IOMP). Some years ago we established together with the IOMP an International Union on Physical and Engineering Sciences in Medicine (IUPESM) which is currently an affiliate member of the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU).

Areas of potential interest range from signal and image processing to decision support and to technology assessment in health care (the last one in cooperation with ISTAHC as well).

Knowing that you will personally be in Kyoto, we suggest that we first exchange information about both organizations and then have a preliminary discussion of cooperation possibilities with you in Kyoto.

Looking forward to hearing from you,

Yours sincerely,

Vice-President

Niilo Saranummi

Ref: Initiative for cooperation between IFMBE and IMIA
Ref. : EC/JW/jt/91-138 Leuven, 8/4/’91

Dear Dr. Saranummi,

I have well received your letter dated March 12th, 1991 and have discussed it during the IMIA Board Meeting, which was held in Bordeaux March 21-23rd, 1991.


The areas of potential interest for some joint activity are indeed signal and image processing, decision support and technology assessment in health care.

I look forward to meet you in Kyoto for an exchange of views on cooperation possibilities between IFMBE and IMIA.

Yours Sincerely,

Prof. Dr. Jozef L. Willems
President of IMIA

c.c. M. Ball, President-Elect of IMIA
S. Kaihara, Past-President of IMIA
F. Grémy
Dear Dr. Persson,


I hope that we will find each other in Kyoto to explore the possibilities for joint activity of IFMBE and IMIA on the topic of Health Care Technology Assessment.

I will submit a copy of your annual report for discussion to the Board of IMIA, which will convene in Washington DC on November 16th and 17th, 1991.

Sincerely Yours,

Prof. Dr. Jos L. WILLEMS
To: The Board of ISTAHIC (Dr. Per Buch Andreassen, President)  
The Board of IMIA (Prof. Jos Willems, President)  
The Adm. Council of IFMBE (Mr. O.Z. Roy, Secr. General)  
The Board of ISQA (Dr. William F. Jesse, President)

From: Jan Persson, representing 1) IFMBE, 2) Planned Project "ACTORES" within EC AIM

Date: May 30, 1991

Re: 1. New Division for Health Care Technology Assessment, IFMBE (for information and comments)  
2. Joint Working Group IMIA-ISTAHC-IFMBE "The Montpellier proposal" (for action)  
3. Workshop in a future AIM project "ACTORES" (for action/blessing).

1. New Division for HCTA within the IFMBE

The IFMBE is in the process of setting up a division for technology assessment in health care. One of the important objectives is multidisciplinary cooperation. We will therefore seek cooperation with other organizations like ISTAHIC, ISQA and IMIA. This issue will be on the agenda of the IFMBE administrative council at its meeting in Japan, July 4-5. In enclosed proposal for the establishment of such a division I propose that individual members and members from organizations outside IFMBE might be members of the division and, which is important, should also be represented in the board. In the first election such members must be coopted by the administrative council according to our charter for divisions. In the following elections, with a proposed change in our present charter, such individuals could be elected to the board in a regular way.

For your information I enclose the annual report of the division and the proposal for its establishment. I expect that, after a discussion and possibly a decision at the council meeting in July, we can approach your societies for nomination of representatives to the board of that division.

I would very much appreciate your viewpoints and comments on the proposal and all kinds of reactions to it.
2. Working Group on Quality Development and Technology Assessment in Health Informatics

I propose that actions are taken to establish the Working Group proposed in Montpellier last autumn. Probably, these matters would be handled by the above Division for the IFMBE.

3. Workshop within the project "ACTORES"

For the main phase of ECAIM (Advanced Informatics in Medicine) a project "ACTORES" is under planning with the objective of developing methodological tools for the assessment of IT in health care in conjunction with case studies. "ACTORES" will offer other AIM projects consultancy, a.o. by organizing regular workshops. Costs will be covered by "ACTORES". These workshops may take place under the auspices of the IFMBE, IMIA and ISTAHC; this proposal to be considered by the organizations.

Sincerely yours,

Jan Persson
Board Member of IMFBE
Center for Medical Technology Assessment
Linköping University
S–581 83 Linköping, Sweden

Tel +46 13 28 23 48
Fax +46 13 28 23 21

Encl.
Proposal and annual report, Div. for HCTA

cc. Dr. Elisabeth van Gennip, prime contractor of "ACTORES"