

Minutes of the 33. EFOSA General Assembly Meeting

Monday, 3 June 2002, 03.00 p.m. – 07.30 p.m. "Hilton Sorrento Palace Hotel" Sorrento, Italy

On June 3rd, 2002 the 26th EFOSA General Assembly Meeting was held in Sorrento, Italy. It was attended by 36 participants, including 27 members from 16 countries and 9 guests from 7 countries. The attendance list is enclosed as part of these minutes.

1. Opening

The office-holding EFOSA President, Professor Jüri Kurol, warmly welcomed the delegates and guests of the 26th EFOSA General Assembly Meeting and opened it at 03.00 p.m. In order to introduce the delegates to each other, EFOSA Secretary Wolfgang Schmiedel called up each delegate individually, in the sequence of the member countries, and handed them their badges.

Apologies for absence

Schmiedel reported that the following persons had sent their apologies:

- The founder of the EFOSA, Professor Charles Bolender, France.
- The office-holding Vice President of the EFOSA, Boris Faure, France.

Schmiedel read out a letter from Faure in which he stated that he could not attend due to ill-health and, for the same reason, was not available for future assignments of the EFOSA Council.

Lars Medin from Sweden, who was proposed by the EFOSA Nomination Committee as future Secretary of the EFOSA, also sent his apologies.

Jose Llamas from Spain conveyed the apologies of the SEDO President Juan Canut, who regretted being unable to attend for private reasons.

02. Changes in and amendments to the agenda

With good reason and with reference to the EFOSA Council Meeting that had taken place that morning, a change of the EFOSA bylaws was proposed. This discussion was then relegated to item 20 on the agenda.

03. Minutes of the 25th General Assembly Meeting of June 18, 2001, Ghent, Belgium

The minutes of the 25th EFOSA General Assembly Meeting were approved unanimously by those delegates entitled to vote.

04. Correspondence

To begin with, Schmiedel pointed out that the entire correspondence of the past year had been sent to all delegates together with the invitation to the General Assembly Meeting. He reiterated his apologies to Chris Kettler, England, whose letter on ethical questions, which should have been dealt with the year before, was only discussed that day. Kettler again expounded in detail both the content of his letter and the intentions bound up with it. In the ensuing discussion, which was in parts controversial, Giuliano Maino, Italy expressed his agreement with the letter. Bart van de Vannet, Belgium, suggested to get legal advice before the proposals contained in the letter were put into practice, as they would widen the EFOSA's area of responsibility to include the monitoring of ethical matters. Frans van der Linden, Holland, pointed to the great responsibility shouldered by the Council Members. In this connection, Hans Sergl, the EOS representative, reported a change in the EOS constitution. Patrick Keating, Ireland, and Wolfgang Schmiedel supported the proposal of the BOS, as introduced by Kettler, to charge the EFOSA with this new task, which basically entailed the establishment of a European data-bank containing the names of colleagues who had committed criminal offences or who had been noted for dubious work practices.

A decision was taken to charge a committee with the elaboration and realization of this new task. As members of this committee, the delegates elected Chris Kettler, Ulrich Fellner, Germany, and Michael Kalavritinos, Greece.

Schmiedel reported about a lecture on the situation of orthodontics in Europe that he had held in Madrid in March 2002, following an invitation by the Spanish Association of Orthodontists (AESOR). He also reported about the problems of the Spanish orthodontists in obtaining official recognition as Orthodontic specialists.

He further reported the Cyprus Orthodontic Society's request that the EFOSA support its struggle for official recognition of orthodontic specialists, in particular in relation to general dentists. He referred the delegates to his reply, which was published on the EFOSA website.

05. Withdrawal of the decision reached in last year's GAM (change of Italy's status of membership)

The reasons for the withdrawal of last year's decision by the 25th General Assembly Meeting to divest Italy of its active membership had been thoroughly expounded in several letters and made known to all delegates prior to the Meeting. Therefore, no vote was required to establish that the previous decision was retracted by the EFOSA Council

and that Italy retained its status of active membership. Van der Linden pointed out that Italy, according to this procedure, had never actually lost its active membership status. Giuliano Maino thanked the Council and the delegates for this decision. Prior to this decision, the EFOSA Council had been given an updated register of the Italian orthodontists (ALBO).

06. Information from the Council

Referring to the issues discussed under the previous item on the agenda, Schmiedel explained once again that due to the circumstances which led to the divestiture of Italy's active membership status, the members of the Council felt obliged to resign in order to pave the way for the re-election of the entire Council as scheduled under item 11 on the agenda.

Kurol proposed that in the future the member countries should, as in the past, send a report to the EFOSA setting forth specific problems within their states. These reports should consist of no more than one page in DIN-A4 format and be presented two months prior to the General Assembly Meeting at the latest. The reports of the individual countries would be published on the EFOSA website and thus be made available to all members.

07. Report of the Secretary

As in every year, Schmiedel read out a written report on the activities of the EFOSA during the past legislative period. Within the framework of this report, he honoured the outgoing representative of the EOS, Hans Sergl, for his long years of rewarding collaboration with the EFOSA, as well as Charles Bolender for his far-sighted decision to found the EFOSA in 1976, and Frans van der Linden for his untiring support for the work of the EFOSA. To the applause of the Meeting, all those honoured received a present from the EFOSA.

The Secretary's written report forms part of these minutes and is attached to them at the end.

08. Report of the Auditors

In the name of the Auditors – Paolo Picchioni, Italy, and Ulrich Fellner, Germany – Fellner delivered a report on the cash audit which was carried out on the basis of the original documents. He proposed that the EFOSA's funds be invested with a profit in the future. In closing his report, he confirmed that the books had been kept in good order and recommended that the delegates discharge the Council and the Treasurer, Annlaug Stensland.

The "EFOSA Financial Report 2002" forms part of these minutes and is attached to them at the end.

09. Report of the Treasurer: Status of account / Resources

The Treasurer, Annlaug Stensland, reported on the financial situation of the EFOSA. A written report on income and expenditure had been sent to all delegates together with the invitation to the General Assembly Meeting. She reported that, regrettably, not all members had yet paid their annual subscription for the current year. She further reported that the EFOSA Council had decided on its meeting that morning to keep the account of the EFOSA in the country of the office-holding Treasurer. Referring to the remarks by Ulrich Fellner, she informed the delegates that the Council had also decided to invest the funds of the EFOSA with a profit.

The Meeting thanked Annlaug Stensland and discharged her unanimously.

11. Elections - a) Council, b) Nomination Committee

Kurol first explained the election procedure, referring in particular to the terms of office of the Council members, and stated that office-holders could be re-elected for a second term once. Giuliano Maino, Italy, proposed to limit the Council member's terms of office to three instead of four years. After some discussion, which was in parts controversial, the majority of the delegates favoured a four-year term.

The Council was charged with establishing a roster for the different election periods of the individual Council members. Paul Karvelas, Greece, proposed to keep the previous roster.

The office-holding chairman of the EFOSA Nomination Committee, Frans van der Linden, proposed the following candidates for the new EFOSA Council:

- President: Wolfgang Schmiedel, Germany
- Vice-President: Francesca Miotti, Italy
- Secretary: Lars Medin, Sweden
- Treasurer: Claude Bourdillat

Candidates Claude Bourdillat and Francesca Miotti introduced themselves to the delegates. Schmiedel described Lars Medin who had sent his apologies for private reasons.

All candidates were then elected unanimously by the Meeting.

The previous office-holding members of the EFOSA Nomination Committee, Frans van der Linden, Holland, and Chris Kettler, England, whose term extends until 2003, remain in office until the next General Assembly Meeting. The founder of the EFOSA, Charles Bolender, was proposed by van der Linden as the third member to replace Boris Faure. Annlaug Stensland proposed Jüri Kurol, so that a runoff had to be held. In a secret ballot

by the 12 delegates entitled to vote Jüri Kurol was elected with 7 to 5 votes to become the third member of the Nomination Committee.

After the election a controversial discussion flared up on when the new president actually assumes office. Schmiedel and others were of the opinion that the new president takes up his official duties immediately after a valid election. Kurol and others were of the opinion that the new president takes up his official duties, including the chair of the meeting, only after the work on the current agenda had been completed. As no agreement was reached, a secret ballot ensued. It was decided with a 7 to 5 majority that the outgoing president would continue his official duties and chair the current Meeting.

12. Applications for membership: Belgium, Luxembourg, Portugal, Turkey.

Bart van de Vannet, Belgium, announced that Belgium had finally gained official recognition of the speciality of orthodontics. An application by the Belgian professional association BBUSO, represented by van de Vannet, had been with the EFOSA for a long time. It was decided not to grant the application pending the creation of an official register of orthodontists for the whole of Belgium. The Meeting expressed its hope that Belgium would fulfil all requirements for admission into the EFOSA by the year 2003.

Schmiedel explained that in its application for membership, Luxembourg had fulfilled all the necessary requirements to be admitted as a new provisional member into the EFOSA that day and, on behalf of the Council, proposed that Luxembourg be accepted by a vote.

In the presence of the representatives of Luxembourg, Luxembourg was admitted by the delegates' vote as a third provisional member of the EFOSA, and the duration of its provisional membership status was limited to three years for the time being.

The representative of Portugal, Afonso Ferreira, described the situation of the orthodontists in his country. The Portuguese professional association of orthodontists had not yet handed in an application for membership. Again, the Meeting expressed the hope that Portugal would join the EFOSA in the coming year.

The representative of Turkey, Nejat Erverdi, presented an application for membership by the Turkish professional association of orthodontists, TOS. A number of delegates were of the opinion that these documents should have been presented earlier for evaluation by the Council. However, since neither the constitution nor the bylaws of the EFOSA clearly define the proper procedure, it was decided to interrupt the Meeting in order to give the Council the opportunity to assess the documents that were handed in.

The Council established that the documents gave no cause for complaint; all the compulsory requirements for admission into the EFOSA had been fulfilled. After the Meeting had reassembled, and in the absence of the Turkish representative, the Turkish

Orthodontic Society was unanimously accepted as a member of the EFOSA. As Turkey was not a member of the European Union, she received the status of a fourth "affiliate member" of the EFOSA.

The fact that the Turkish application for membership had been handed in at a very late point in time caused some discussion, and the delegates unanimously decided to revise the EFOSA bylaws to provide precise definitions of the proper time limits.

13. Relations with the EOS

Annlaug Stensland reported about the EOS Meeting in London on February 9th, 2002, which she had attended as the EFOSA representative. Schmiedel reported about the FORUM Meeting scheduled for the following day, which had been called by the EFOSA and the EOS as a joint event. Nearly all delegates felt that this meeting made no sense, since 90 percent of those attending participated in the General Assembly Meeting, too, and the items on the agenda were of little interest.

Schmiedel announced that, given the good bilateral relations between the EFOSA and the EOS, the minutes of the FORUM Meeting would be published on the EFOSA website.

In conclusion, Schmiedel reported on the joint reply of the EFOSA and the EOS to the EU discussion document entitled "The future regime for professional recognition". This letter had been sent off in due course and was published on the EFOSA website.

14. Relations with the FEO

Schmiedel complained about certain formulations in the FEO minutes, concerning in particular the reports on the EFOSA General Assembly Meetings. Athanasios Athanasiou, the FEO President, proceeded to comment in detail on these remarks and indicated the FEO's continued interest in close and good relations with the EFOSA. It was decided to intensify relations between the two associations, which cover different areas of responsibility, in order to prevent the emergence of misunderstandings at an early stage.

15. Report of the "EFOSA Quality Working Group"

Ulrich Fellner read out a written report on the activities and findings of the Working Group, analysing the strengths and weaknesses of the EFOSA. He stressed the importance of supporting the work of the EURO-QUAL. If at all possible, he said, the EFOSA should provide financial support for this project.

Jüri Kurol and Paul Karvelas, Greece, stressed the importance of collaboration with the Advisory Committee of the EU, even though it was unable to function at the moment due to financial restrictions.

The entire report of the Quality Working Group forms part of these minutes and is attached to them at the end.

16. New activities based on the EFOSA Constitution article 4g and 4h regarding the quality of education and the standardisation of European orthodontic examinations.

Frans van der Linden expounded the tasks and aims to which the EFOSA should devote particular attention in the future. He pointed to the constantly growing number of delegates and proposed to make more use of working groups in order to lighten the Council's workload.

He said that the aims defined by the EFOSA constitution – concerning the establishment of quality standards for the education for orthodontic specialists and the standardization of European examinations at the end of specialist training programs in orthodontics – were far from having been realized. On the contrary, in countries such as Germany there were attempts to undermine, if not cancel altogether, academic training programs for orthodontic specialists. Van der Linden's remarks were met with complete agreement by all those present. Frans van der Linden said he was prepared to collaborate closely with the Council on these issues and to hand in proposals for practical measures.

17. WFO: 6th International Orthodontic Convention 2005, Paris

Claude Bourdillat, Francesca Miotti and Schmiedel reported about the preparations for this world congress of orthodontists scheduled for the year 2005. The EFOSA will be represented in all the essential committees by the three delegates named above and by Charles Bolender. It is thus in a position to exert an influence on the organization of the Convention. Schmiedel and Bolender are both members of the committee charged with a report on the current situation of orthodontic specialists in European politics.

18. EFOSA-Questionnaire 2000: final report

The analysis of the EFOSA questionnaire that was handed out in 2002 has been completed. All members of the EFOSA have sent in their replies, including the new members accepted that day, Luxembourg and Turkey, as well as Israel. The results give a very accurate picture of the situation of orthodontics in Europe and have been published on the EFOSA website. However, pending publication in the "European Journal of Orthodontics", they may only be used internally. Van der Linden and Schmiedel will submit a paper with the results to the "EJO" before the end of the year.

19. EFOSA Website: Presentation / Discussion

Schmiedel reported on the work on the EFOSA website. He demonstrated some changes that had been made. He quoted figures showing a continuous rise in the number of visitors to the website, which had approached 30.000. He proceeded to demonstrate in detail the "EFOSA Directory" which had been completed. This directory provides access to the data of all orthodontic specialists in the member states of the EFOSA and replaces the old directory, which had been published as a book for the last time in 1997. The delegates acknowledged Schmiedel's work with prolonged applause.

20. Any other business

The Meeting decided to thoroughly revise the EFOSA Constitution as well as the Bylaws in order to adapt them to new requirements. Frans van der Linden agreed to provide significant assistance to this work.

It was announced that in the future the EFOSA Council would present to the delegates an interim report on its activities every six months.

In a personal statement, the outgoing President Jüri Kurol took his leave of the Meeting. In the name of the delegates, he warmly thanked the Italian hosts, represented by Giuliano Maino, for their invitation to the "Get together" that evening.

21. Date of next meeting

Schmiedel announced that the next EFOSA Assembly Meeting in 2003 would take place in Prague, where the EOS Congress would assemble as well. The precise time and place would be announced in good time on the EFOSA website.

22. Closing

Kurol thanked all delegates for their contributions and closed the Meeting at 7.30 p.m.