

Minutes of the 25. EFOSA General Assembly Meeting

October 12th, 1996, Paris, France

The annual general meeting of the European Federation of Orthodontic Specialists Associations was held at 8 Avenue Simon Bolivar, Paris on Saturday the 12th of October 1996.

Dr. Flood (Ireland) presided. Other delegates present were Dr. Bolender (France), Dr. Schmiedel (Germany), Dr. Ferrini (Italy), Dr. Moerens-Duque (Belgium), Dr. Karvelas (Greece) and Dr. Bijlstra (the Netherlands). Also in attendance were Dr. Faure (France) and Dr. Picchioni (Italy). Invited were Dr. Kettler (U.K.), Dr. Medin (Sweden) and Dr. Gonzalez-Giralda (Spain). There were no apologies for absence.

At. 9.20 Dr. Flood opened the meeting.

1. Minutes of the 1995 annual meeting

The minutes were read by Dr. Bijlstra. After the change of - parttime consultants - into - parttime specialists - in the report of Ireland, the minutes were adopted.

2. Minutes of the extra meeting in May 1996.

The minutes of this meeting were read by Dr. Bijlstra and were adopted.

3. Correspondence

The secretary. Dr. Bijlstra, said that he had sent around the most relevant correspondence together with the agenda. An extensive report from Greece came in, about the situation with the different orthodontic societies in Greece. Decided was that Dr. Karvelas should provide further information about this matter later on during the meeting. A statement about points 4 and 5 of the agenda from the council of the Dutch Specialist Association was handed out before the meeting.

4. Discussion of the Brighton meeting

Dr. Flood explained the backgrounds that led to the organization of this meeting. The E.O.S. proposed to create a new professional political branch. The EFOSA as a federation of orthodontic specialist associations of member countries of the European Union, is existing already for many years. The Swedish Association of orthodontics asked

Prof. v.d. Linden to help to create a new umbrella organization (E.F.A.S.O.). Conditions for regular membership should be:

1. The specialty of orthodontics is recognized
2. There is a specialist register
3. The association represents specialists only
4. The association represents the vast majority of the specialists. At this moment there are 3 groups of countries:
 - o Those who fulfil all these conditions.
 - o Those who do not yet meet all the requirements, but are striving to do so.
 - o Those who do not agree with these criteria.

Dr. Flood asked what to do with this confusing situation. Of course we can do nothing and let there be three different groups. He thinks that this is an undesirable development. He suggested that EFOSA should provide an updated constitution which goes into the direction of the Swedish/Dutch proposal. This should mean that all regular members of EFOSA should meet the above mentioned four criteria. Those who do not fulfil all those criteria, but are striving to do so could become provisional member, with the right to attend all meetings, but without the right to vote. This should mean that some of the present members of EFOSA should get the status of provisional member.

He asked those present for comment on this proposal. Dr. Bijlstra asked Dr. Medin if it is true that the Swedish orthodontists think that all orthodontic treatments should be provided by specialists. Dr. Medin explained that this is not the case, but that they think that the decision-making on educational, professional and political level must be in the hands of specialists. Dr. Medin thought that the introduction of Dr. Flood fitted well in the agenda of the Brighthelm working group.

Dr. Gonzalez explained the policy of the E.O.S.. The E.O.S. appointed a reorganization committee. One of the aims of this committee is to explore the possibilities to create an assembly of national orthodontic societies and to establish a professional-political branch within the E.O.S.

Dr. Gonzales told that the reorganization committee will examine the possibilities of cooperation with EFOSA

This might lead to a decision that there is no need for the E.O.S. to establish an assembly of national societies. The president of EFOSA will be invited to the next meeting of the E.O.S. reorganization committee on November 30th in London.

Dr. Bijlstra's comment is, that it is confusing that the E.O.S. speaks about an assembly of national orthodontic societies, while EFOSA is a federation of national specialists associations, which is an essential difference.

Dr. Schmiedel asked Dr. Karvelas which Greek society must be considered to be the proper one to represent the Greek orthodontists in E.F.A.S.O.. During the Brighton-meeting a very confusing situation arose about this matter. Dr. Karvelas explained the history of the existing orthodontic societies. There are: 1. The Greek orthodontic association, 2. The association for orthodontic and maxillofacial study and research 3. The professional Union of orthodontists. The first two are scientific societies open for orthodontists and general practitioners. The third one is a professional organization, exclusively for orthodontists.

Dr. Karvelas states that this Union meets all the requirements for membership of EFOSA. About 60% of the orthodontists are members of this Union. On a question of Dr. Bijlstra why not 95% of the orthodontists are members. Dr. Karvelas answers that the Union only exists since 1992 and that the membership is rapidly growing. Dr. Schmiedel says that he wants to go to the Amsterdam working group meeting only when there is a draft for a new constitution of EFOSA.

Dr. Bolender asks who is organizing the working committee. Is it necessary to hold the Amsterdam meeting when the EFOSA decides to change its constitution? Dr. Medin finds that the ideas of those organizing the Amsterdam meeting run parallel to the ideas ventilated here.

Dr. Schmiedel: We have to purify our constitution and ask the E.O.S. for cooperation. Germany and France already decided that the name of EFOSA shall not be changed, so: why shall we go to Amsterdam.

Dr. Bijlstra disagrees with Dr. Schmiedel because of some items on the Brighton working committee's agenda, to which the EFOSA has never paid attention. He thinks that EFOSA does not deserve belief when they think that they can look after their own interest.

Dr. Schmiedel then admits that it might be better to go to Amsterdam. Dr. Bolender thinks that items such as the European Board and the European examination are controversial and not the most important.

Dr. Flood asks for reactions on the proposal to change the constitution in a way that the status of some of the present members will change into a provisional membership. He states that Ireland, which is one of these countries, has no objections. Dr. Picchioni says that in Italy there is a recognized specialty. There is a 3 year specialist training open for graduates from medical school and school of odontology. Dr. Bolender says that in Italy it is possible to practice more than one specialty which is in defiance of the E.U. directives.

According to Dr. Flood the Italian Government has never recognized the specialty. Dr. Bolender says that it is important that there will be a clear definition in the constitution of

"specialist in orthodontics". He also points to the necessity to act conform the E.U. directives.

Dr. Medin asks what is the connection between EFOSA and the E.U. Dr. Bolender explains that in the advisory committee of the E.U. no specialists are represented. It is therefore important that EFOSA/s constitution is in accordance with the directives of Brussels.

Dr. Moerens-Duque is wondering how the EFOSA can help the Belgians. Dr. Flood replies that EFOSA can help by exerting an influence on the specialty of Orthodontics. It is necessary that in such cases EFOSA must be able to speak with a strong voice, adhering to their own principles. The countries of course have to try to put their affairs in order. In Belgium there are four orthodontic societies: two national, one French and one Flemish speaking.

Dr Schmiedel asked which society will be representative for Belgium in the future. According to Dr. Moerens it will be the S.O.B.O.R, which is the oldest society and which is representing Belgium at this moment in the EFOSA. She does not understand why Prof. Dermaut was invited for the Brighthon meeting. She did not receive an answer on a letter to Prof. v.d. Linden about this subject. Dr. Bolender explained that the EFOSA certainly can put pressure on the Belgium authorities, but only when the constitution will be changed in a way that the regular members meet the directives of the E.U. In the directives there are articles about the requirements for education but also that a specialist has to work exclusively in that specialty and also that there must be a register of recognized specialists. On a question if the members of the S.O.B.O.R. are working exclusively in orthodontics, Dr. Moerens answers that this is the case for the regular members. General practitioners can become adherent members without the right to vote. 75% of all orthodontists are member of the S.O.B.O.R.

Dr. Gonzalez says that the directives of Brussels are the law. University professors can never decide who are specialists. The competent authorities have to do so. In Spain the orthodontic specialty does not yet officially exist. There is not yet a recognition and there is no register. One is working on it now. As example Dr. Gonzalez tells that dentistry as a separate profession was introduced in Spain in 1986 due the directives of Brussels. He expects that the same will happen with the specialty of orthodontics. He pleads for support from other countries to be able to fulfil the requirements of the directives.

Dr. Bolender explained how the specialty was recognized in France. Dr. Picchioni explained that the S.U.S.O. is a professional organization of orthodontists, while the S.I.D.O. is a scientific society where also G.P.'s can become a member. Dr. Kettler explained the situation in the U.K. and the structure of the B.O.S.

Dr. Schmiedel asked him why the British colleagues cannot establish an association of only specialists as soon as there will be a register in the U.K.

Dr. Kettler replied that it took five years to unite all orthodontic societies and to set up the B.O.S. and that they certainly will not change this structure. Dr. Kettler said that the generalists will have no influence when the B.O.S. should join the EFOSA. Dr. Kettler is not afraid that the generalists will ever get the majority in the B.O.S. He is not in favour of making the proposed changes in the constitution of EFOSA. There are 2 G.P.'s in the council of the B.O.S. and the G.P.'s have the right to vote. Dr. Gonzalez said that the G.P.'s in the Spanish Society of Orthodontics (S.E.D.O.) had no right to vote.

Dr. Flood suggested that the E.O.S. will make a draft of a new constitution in a way that this problem can be solved and that the B.O.S. will make a draft for a solution. Dr. Bijlstra suggests to put in the constitution that membership will be open for associations or groups of specialists as is laid down already in the present constitution of EFOSA. It becomes clear that the original French version of the EFOSA constitution does not exactly correspond with the English translations. Dr. Bolender suggests to make a new constitution in English and to translate this in French.

5. Revision of EFOSA's constitution

Dr. Flood reads some articles from the present constitution and some discussion follows. Dr. Flood proposes not to mention the names of the member societies in the constitution but to add them in a special register. The decision was made to form a working group to update the present constitution in a way as discussed.

Dr. Bijlstra asked if this had to be done together with the working group of the Brighthelm meeting. Dr. Bolender said that we ourselves have to change our constitution and that we have nothing to do with the Brighthelm working group.

Dr. Schmiedel: we have to do it before the Amsterdam meeting, we must have our own constitution when we go to Amsterdam. Decided is that a working party consisting of Dr. Bolender, Dr. Schmiedel, Dr. Bijlstra and Dr. Flood will try to make a draft for a new constitution during the same afternoon and forward it to Dr. Medin, who will send it around with the agenda for the Amsterdam meeting.

6. Acceptance of the B.O.S. as a member of EFOSA

Dr. Bijlstra explained that the decision was made in the annual general meeting in Dublin that there should be made a decision about the acceptance of the B.O.S. in this meeting. In Dublin was proposed that the U.K. possibly could be accepted when

1. the B.O.S. will be represented by a delegate, who must be a specialist.

2. The delegate will only represent the specialists groups within the B.O.S.
3. Only specialists will be mentioned in the EFOSA directory.

Dr. Kettler discussed these requirements in the Council of the B.O.S. and they agreed with it. The secretary of EFOSA asked the delegates to discuss this within their respective councils.

The Dutch society had some objections and so did the German society. Dr. Bijlstra said that since Dublin the overall situation in and around EFOSA changed essentially. He wondered if it would be advisable to accept Britain now and maybe had to change its membership status next year.

Dr. Kettler again explained the structure within the B.O.S. He said that the B.O.S. wanted to be involved in all political discussions in Europe and that a relative small amount of G.P.'s being a member of EFOSA may not be a hindrance. It was agreed last year that there should be made a decision about the acceptance of the B.O.S. this year and Dr. Kettler asked for this decision to be made. Dr. Schmiedel proposed to postpone the decision until there is a register in the U.K. Dr. Bijlstra said that the B.O.S. as a society cannot be accepted but only the specialist groups within the B.O.S.

Dr. Schmiedel asked Dr. Kettler if he could guarantee that the G.P.'s in the B.O.S. will have absolutely no influence in the decisions that will be made in the EFOSA Dr. Kettler says that there are two G.P.'s in the council of the B.O.S. and that the council makes the decisions.

Dr. Flood says that it will probably be easier to admit Britain when there is a new constitution. If there will be a vote now, this must be unanimous. Dr. Schmiedel says that if there will be a vote he has to vote against admission. A discussion follows if the U.K. can be admitted as a group under the present constitution.

Dr. Bijlstra thinks that it is more elegant when Dr. Kettler withdraws the application to avoid a voting at this moment. There follows a discussion if the English word "group" means the same as the French word "groupement" in the original French constitution. The policy of EFOSA was to attract more members, but the situation changed drastically and it seems the best to make no decision on the membership of the B.O.S. at this moment.

Dr. Kettler is not happy with the course of things but says that he has no choice and withdraws the application.

7. Election of Executive Officers

Dr. Flood decides to discuss this item of the agenda before point 6. He announces that he will retire, because he is ending his active professional career and that he will leave

Ireland. He proposes Dr. Schmiedel to be the new president. Dr. Schmiedel accepts and is chosen.

Dr. Bijlstra is asked to stay on as secretary. He agrees to do so but that he may withdraw when all new structures are settled. Dr. Bolender is chosen as vice president and Dr. Karvelas as treasurer (with the account staying in Germany).

8. Any other business

Dr. Schmiedel gives an oversight of the financial position of EFOSA There is a surplus of DM 17.458,59 at 12-10-1996. He says we have to think about the finances in the future and that the incomes must not be totally dependent on the directory. Decided was that the next annual general meeting will be held in Valencia, preceding the E.O.S.-meeting. Dr. Gonzalez offered to assist in organizing this meeting. Dr. Medin and Dr. Gonzales thanked the EFOSA for the invitation to be present at this meeting. The outgoing president was thanked by Dr. Schmiedel for the work he had done for the EFOSA during many years. The president thanked our French hosts for their hospitality and the lunch they offered.

The president closed the meeting.