January, 25th, 2012

WOFAPS President’s Annual Report

Dear colleagues and friends,

As we have just entered the New Year, this provides me an opportunity for reflection of the past year and opportunities for WOFAPS going forward. 2011 has been very busy and productive for WOFAPS which I am pleased to report to all of you. Since I assumed the honor and privilege of being the president, we have had several major accomplishments and many plans set in motion that are yet to be fully realized.

We have had 3 Executive Committee Meetings during the calendar year (Paris, Barcelona and Tuzla). I will outline these accomplishments and also describe some of the plans for the next 2 years.

1. A restructuring of the Committees has been accomplished and charters have been developed or proposed for each Committee. Initial Committee Chairpersons have been appointed and members have been invited. Please refer to attachment for committees and appointed Chairpersons.

2. Prof. Michael Hollwarth did excellent work reviewing, updating and proposing changes to the WOFAPS bylaws to make them more congruent with the organizational activities and needs. These were reviewed and enhanced by the Executive Committee in our September (Tuzla) meeting. These important changes will be presented for ratification at the next Council of Delegates in Berlin 2013.

3. During the past year the WOFAPS Executive Committee evaluated and vetted a number of Professional Congress Organizers (PCO) to facilitate our operational activities, Congress planning and financial management. As the organization has grown in size and complexity, this type of service support is essential for our long-term success. I am pleased to announce that Paragon was selected as our PCO partner by our Executive Committee. The terms of the arrangement are strongly supportive of our mission and goals. We have already seen significant benefit from this arrangement and agreement.
4. WOFAPS is still in the process of upgrading the website. A contract with the web design company Cactus under the oversight of Dr. Takeshi Doi, Tokyo Japan, as Webmaster. This has gone much slower than anticipated and in the upcoming Executive Committee meeting in March (Cape Town) the Executive Committee will be addressing these issues.

5. We have also formally offered to house the Global Pediatric Surgery Network developed and managed by Dr. Marilyn Butler under the WOFAPS umbrella. Dr. Butler will continue to lead this important website to enhance connectivity between pediatric surgeons and organizations worldwide. The website is closely linked to the WOFAPS website for the use and disbursement of relevant information for pediatric surgeons.

6. We had a very successful WOFAPS World Area Meeting held in September in Tuzla, Bosnia Herzegovina. We had 185 Delegates from 32 countries particularly from Central and Eastern Europe. The faculty comprised of pre-eminent pediatric surgery leaders from all over the world. The feedback from the participants and faculty has been uniformly extremely positive. Paragon worked closely with Dr. Nesad Hotic, the Congress President, Prof. Boix-Ochoa and I to ensure a superb Scientific program in an excellent venue. The success of this meeting has reinforced our plans to hold an Annual World Area Meeting in regions of the world where the impact would be significant and be able to reach pediatric surgeons who do not have the economic means to travel to expensive venues in Europe or North America.

7. In 2012, the next World Area Meeting is in Cartagena de las Indias, Colombia. The Scientific Committees and local Organizers of the V CONGRESO IBEROAMERICANO DE CIRUGIA PEDIATRICA and the XVIII Congreso Colombiano de Cirugía Pediátrica with the WOFAPS’s Gral. Secretary - Prof. Boix-Ochoa are ensuring a superb Scientific program with a Faculty comprised of World leaders in each area of Pediatric Surgery Specialties. The venue is in one of the most Spanish colonial style World Heritage site, an historical and magical city.

8. For 2013, initial plans are being made for a World Area Meeting in China in conjunction with the Chinese Pediatric Surgery Association.

9. In 2011 and 2012, WOFAPS has sponsored, supported or endorsed a numerous Educational Workshops and Regional Congresses throughout the world. Several examples but not an inclusive list of past and upcoming events: Pediatric Trauma Workshop and Symposium held in Milan, Italy, March 2011 (Prof. Ernesto Leva and Prof. Maurizio Torricelli), Vascular Anomalies workshop, Chittagong, Bangladesh, February 2012, (Prof. Richard Azizkhan and Prof. Tahmina Banu); Pan African Association of Pediatric Surgery, Cape Town, RSA, March 2012 (Prof. Alastair Millar); Colorectal workshop in Accra, Ghana, April 2012, (Prof. Marc Levitt); Advanced pediatric Laparoscopy workshop, Alexandria, Egypt, June 2012 (Prof. Sameh Sehata).

10. WOFAPS has a successful presence and sessions in conjunction with the Japanese Association of Pediatric Surgery at the International Surgical Week (ISW) in Yokohama Japan, August 2011. Prof. Jay Grosfeld skillfully organized this meeting as usual. Plans are already in place for Helsinki, Finland in 2013 for the next ISW.

11. One of the areas of focus has been on working collaboratively with other international organizations to address pediatric surgical needs worldwide. This effort is multi-pronged. Prof. Azizkhan has created a link between WOFAPS and the World Health Organization Global Initiative for Essential and Emergency Surgery Care (WHO GIEESC) and Alliance for Surgery and Anesthesia Presence (ASAP). How WOFAPS can interface with these...
organizations is being explored. Ms. Kokila Lakhoo has connected with Dr. Paul McMaster from Medecins Sans Frontier (MSF) regarding opportunities for WOFAPS surgeons to participate and advise MSF on Pediatric Surgical issues. Being able to leverage our considerable expertise for disaster relief and building sustainable surgical systems is a new area of interest and emphasis for WOFAPS. Our relationship with International Pediatric Association (IPA) has been over 23 years in duration. The current IPA’s Director Prof. William Keenan, St Louis USA and Prof. Azizkhan are exploring the possibility of 1-2 joint pilot projects in sub-Saharan Africa. The Global Pediatric Surgery Network (Dr. Marilyn Butler) will play a crucial role in supporting these efforts.

12. The 2013 World Congress (Berlin, Germany) planning is well underway with Prof. Joerg Fuchs as Congress President. We are anticipating an excellent scientific program and a wonderful venue to host this major event.

13. The WOFAPS Foundation under Foundation’s President Prof. Prem Puri continues to offer scholarships to young pediatric surgeons. In 2012 the awards went to Shilpa Sharma (India), and Milena S. Verbis (Slovenia).

As you can see there are many things going on. WOFAPS leaders are actively engaged all over the world having significant impact and positive influence. I am truly grateful for all the hard work by the entire executive leadership team especially by Prof. Boix Ochoa, the General Secretary. I am also very grateful for the inspiring initial work of Committee Chairs and their Committee Members. The investment we are making will hopefully help improve access and quality of pediatric surgical care for children and their families. The opportunity to help improve clinical standards through robust educational activities, programmatic and individual twinning relationships and working with other organizations including receptive Government Health Ministries has become not possible but achievable. WOFAPS has become a very dynamic organization with a great future – all of you should be proud of this accomplishment but not be sanguine – we have much to do and achieve in the years ahead.

I wish you all happiness, peace, success and health in the year ahead.

Respectfully yours,

Prof. Richard G. Azizkhan
WOFAPS President
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World Federation of Associations of Pediatric Surgeons

WOFAPS Committee Structure

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Past Presidents Advisory Committee

Scientific Committee
R. Azizkhan Chair

Webmaster
T. Doi

Institutional Network Committee
R. Azizkhan Chair

Disaster/Humanitarian relief
H. Ford Chair

Education (Capacity Building/workshop) Committee
D. Sigalet Chair

Advocacy/Public Policy Committee
B. Ure Chair

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