



## ■ EDITORIAL

# The 75th anniversary of SICOT

J. C. Y. Leong

The Société Internationale de Chirurgie Orthopédique et de Traumatologie (SICOT) was founded 75 years ago. The idea of an international orthopaedic association was first suggested in a letter written by Robert William Lovett of Harvard University in Boston, USA dated November 25, 1913 to Professors Hans Spitzky of Vienna and Vittorio Putti of Bologna who were both receptive of the suggestion. A scheme of statutes was already being prepared when the First World War broke out and interrupted plans. The idea was taken up again seriously in 1923, during a second meeting between Putti, Lovett and Jones, but had to be set aside because of Lovett's unexpected death. Prior to 1929, there had been several exchanges of correspondence between well-known orthopaedic surgeons from both sides of the Atlantic, including Robert Osgood, Fred Albee and Harry Platt, with some differences of opinion. During the joint Congress of the American and British Orthopaedic Associations in London in July 1929, the foundations of the Society were laid at a meeting chaired by Dr Fred H. Albee with Putti, Robert Jones of England, Murk Jansen of Holland, and Joel Goldthwaite of the United States. It was unanimously agreed that an international association should be established. The first meeting of the Society took place at the Hotel Crillon in Paris on October 10, 1929. The group of founders who attended included Erlacher and Spitzky from Austria, Lorthioir, Delchef and Maffei from Belgium, San Ricart from Spain, Albee, Baer and Meyerding from United States, Ombredanne, Rocher, Sorrel and Nove-Josserand from France, Fairbank from Britain, Bielsalski from Germany, Galeazzi and Putti from Italy, Murk Jansen from Holland, Frans Jiano from Romania, Haglund and Waldenstrom from Sweden, Machard from Switzerland, and Zahradnicek from Czechoslovakia. At the meeting, it was agreed that the membership would initially be restricted to 100, and the triennial dues would be US\$10 or the equivalent. Sir Robert Jones was invited to

become the first President of the Society and President of the First Congress, which was held in Paris in 1930. The Society was called "Société Internationale de Chirurgie Orthopédique". SICO was thus born, but it was not until 1936, that Traumatologie was added and the Society became SICOT. At the birth of SICO, 18 countries had their membership numbers allocated. At the end of 1930, another eight countries joined. The journal "International Orthopaedics" was started in 1974, following efforts by Merle d'Aubigne and Calogero Casuccio, and edited by Jacques Wagner.

Although by the end of 1930, countries from Central and South America, as well as Australia had joined, the major part of its activities and influence came from Europe and the United States. Slowly but steadily, internationalism expanded with SICOT becoming the only truly global orthopaedic association. Most presidents of SICOT have come from Europe, but there have been two from North America, one from Central America, one from Australia, and three from Asia. SICOT now has 105 member nations, and some 3000 members. Its head office is in Brussels with several permanent staff and most of its processes and communications are now in electronic form. Among its many activities include an Annual International Conference, a Triennial Congress, a Telediagnostic Website, a SICOT World Portal, a SICOT Education Centre (in Lahore, Pakistan), and an annual SICOT Diploma Examination. The 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of SICOT will be celebrated during the Triennial Congress to be held in Istanbul, Turkey in 2005.

SICOT feels that it is very important to have young blood, and has set up a Young Surgeons Committee to communicate with and attract high-quality and committed young surgeons to join the SICOT family, so that they can also play a part in its humanitarian activities, and influence the direction of orthopaedics and traumatology throughout the world.

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