



## **IAF.15. Communiqué**

The IAF.15. Annual Meeting was held in the Kyoto International Conference Hall on 6 and 8 November 2001. The meeting was attended by 154 delegates from 39 economies and six international organisations. A large number of other meetings were held in association with the IAF.15. meeting, notably the ILAC General Assembly and events associated with the ILAC meeting.

At the 2001 meeting IAF moved forward on a number of fronts to meet the needs of customers of the conformity assessment system and to make IAF and its members ready to meet the challenges of the future.

A significant development was that for the first time IAF and ILAC shared a number of meetings and social events and began development of a number of joint activities, including harmonisation of accreditation and peer evaluation procedures between the two organisations.

The Executive Committees of IAF and ILAC held their second joint meeting, the first having been in the United Kingdom in July 2001. They agreed to delegate responsibility for managing joint activities to the Joint Committee for Closer Co-operation between ILAC and IAF (JCCC), which is co-chaired by the Chairmen of IAF and ILAC and has equal membership from both.

The Joint Development Support Committee operates as a joint body with the task of developing programs to assist developing and emerging accreditation bodies which may operate in the areas covered by either or both IAF and ILAC. The Committee operated a one-day Seminar for developing accreditation bodies in association with the IAF and ILAC meetings.

A new Joint Working Group on accreditation of Inspection Bodies began work. The JWG will operate as a single body serving the needs of both organisations in the Inspection field. Already it is clear that the members of the two organisations can work effectively together for the benefit of the members of both organisations and their customers.

As part of its long term program to assist developing and emerging accreditation bodies IAF in association with UNIDO sponsored a number of delegates from developing economies to attend the peer evaluators' workshop held in association with the IAF meeting. IAF is also working with UNIDO to assist developing accreditation bodies by conducting pre-evaluations which will lead to the newly established accreditation body raising its operational capacity.

For the first time IAF also sponsored a number of delegates from developing and emerging accreditation bodies, by subsidising their attendance at the IAF meeting. The intention of this program is to give those delegates the opportunity to meet with delegates from more experienced accreditation bodies and to learn from them. The IAF budget for 2002 adopted at the meeting provides for increased assistance to developing accreditation bodies.

IAF adopted a new organisational structure at the meeting which is designed to make the organisation more flexible and responsive. The new Executive Committee and main Committees which report to it met for the first time and established their operational methods.

IAF agreed on updated guidance documents for the application of ISO/IEC Guides 61, 62 and 66, and updated versions of a number of its procedures documents. It agreed to put increased emphasis in future on promotion of the value of the IAF MLA, and will more actively promote identification of membership in the MLA. IAF agreed to start work, in co-operation with ILAC, on the development of a single world-wide logo which may be used to identify membership in the MLA.

IAF adopted a Quality Manual for its internal operations and approved internal audit procedures. The first internal audits of the IAF management and of the management of the MLA will be conducted during 2002.

Membership of IAF is continuing to increase, with three new members admitted during 2001. The Mexican Accreditation Entity, EMA, was admitted to the IAF MLA for QMS on 6 November 2001, making it the 30<sup>th</sup> member of the MLA.

IAF was advised that ISO/TC176 had appointed Dr Nigel Croft as its special liaison officer with IAF. TC176 had recognised that the co-operative work carried out with IAF in the past year or so had made a significant contribution to the effective implementation of the ISO9001:2000 standard and it wished to develop that co-operation in the best interests of users of standards. IAF welcomed this increased level of co-operation between IAF and ISO standards writers, and agreed to set up a joint task force to facilitate communication between ISO/TC176, IAF and their common stakeholders.

IAF received a number of reports from industries interested in conducting sector specific conformity assessment under the IAF program. During the meeting a special meeting on sector schemes was held. IAF agreed to co-operate with industries such as telecommunications, aerospace and food safety to further develop its ability to meet the special needs of those industries.

IAF will meet in Berlin, Germany, for its 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting, between 17 and 26 September. Members accepted invitations to hold the 2003 meeting in Bratislava, Slovakia, the 2004 meeting in Cape Town, South Africa and the 2005 meeting in New Zealand. Each of those meetings will be held in association with ILAC.

For further information about IAF, go to the IAF web site at <<http://www.iaf.nu>>, or contact the Secretariat at email <[secretary@accreditationforum.com](mailto:secretary@accreditationforum.com)>.