



IAF.16. Communiqué

The IAF 16th Annual Meeting was held in the Hotel Berlin on 21 and 26 September 2002. The meeting was attended by 115 participants from 45 economies and six international organisations. A large number of other meetings were held in association with the IAF 16 meeting, including the ILAC General Assembly, a Joint IAF-ILAC General Assembly, a two day Conference on Accreditation in Global Trade and a Developing Countries Seminar.

The Annual Meeting was pleased to appoint a new Chairman, Dr Thomas Facklam, the former Vice-Chairman, for a one year term until the end of 2003. The meeting also thanked the former Chairman Dr Takashi Ohtsubo, who was retiring after four years in that role, for his enormous contribution to the IAF. A new Vice-Chairman, Elva Nilsen, was appointed together with the Director representing the Industry and User Association members, Dale Misczynski, and the Director representing the accredited Certification/Registration Body Association members, Sandy Sutherland.

Membership of the IAF continues to grow at an impressive rate and the Annual Meeting was able to welcome the admission to membership of KAS (Korean Accreditation System) and TUNAC (Tunisian Accreditation Council) as new Accreditation Body Members and APEDA (the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority of India), AIOICI (the Association of the Independent Certification and Inspection Bodies of Italy and ALPI (the Association of Independent Test Laboratories and Certification Bodies of Italy) as new Association Members. Also admitted to membership was SADCA (Southern African Development Co-operation in Accreditation) as a Special Recognition Regional Group and the QuEST Forum and ISO (International Organisation for Standardization) as Special Interest Liaison Groups with Special Recognition.

Following the approval of their applications for membership the Annual Meeting also voted to extend invitations to NAA (North Korea) and SA (Slovenia) to become Accreditation Body Members and to EFAC (the European Federation of Associations of Certification Bodies) to become an Association Member.

A particular highlight of the week was the signing of the IAF Quality Management System Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (QMS MLA) by CNAB (Chinese Taipei), NABCB (India) and BAS (Philippines) at a ceremony during the IAF/ILAC Ceremonial Reception.

The IAF Executive Committee proposed amendments to rules for selection of Executive members, with a particular focus on the balance of representation from regional accreditation groups granted Special Recognition status. The Executive also proposed that the IAF Code of Conduct for Accreditation Bodies should now be circulated to members for comment before being voted on for adoption by members.

The Annual Meeting confirmed that the date of 15 December 2003 for transition to ISO 9001: 2000 for accredited certification will not be extended. The meeting also agreed that the draft Guidance on Cross-frontier Accreditation should now be circulated for comment by members prior to being voted on for approval.

The Joint Committee for Closer Co-operation between ILAC and IAF (JCCC), which is co-chaired by the Chairmen of IAF and ILAC and which has responsibility for managing joint activities, reviewed strategies for the implementation of international accreditation marks and the preparation of common rules for protection. Also considered were a number of different proposals and alternatives for future IAF and ILAC Annual General Assemblies.

The Joint IAF-ILAC General Assembly, the IAF General Assembly and the ILAC General Assembly decided that members of both organisations should be asked to select from a number of alternatives for the development of a MLA Mark ranging from the design of a combined IAF/ILAC Mark to separate individual IAF and ILAC Marks.

The Joint IAF-ILAC Development Support Committee, which is responsible for programs to assist developing and emerging accreditation bodies, conducted a very successful one-day Seminar covering the prerequisites for establishing and operating an Accreditation Body, as well as advice on best practice and key performance indicators.

The Joint Working Group on accreditation of Inspection Bodies held its second meeting and continued to consider the needs of both IAF and ILAC in the inspection field. Members of the Working Group agreed that this was an effective mechanism for working together cooperatively for the benefit of the members of both organisations and their customers.

The Joint IAF-ISO/TC176-ISO/IEC CASCO ISO 9000 Advisory Group held its second meeting and further developed its terms of reference as well as identified activities currently being undertaken in support of the implementation of ISO 9001. The Annual Meeting approved the proposal that the Advisory Group should develop consensus on best practices for auditing of management systems, recognising the need for innovation following the introduction of ISO 9001: 2000 and the new ISO 19011.

IAF will meet in Bratislava, Slovakia, for its 17th Annual Meeting, between 15 and 26 September, 2003. Members accepted invitations to hold 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.

Further information about IAF may be obtained from the IAF web site at <<http://www.iaf.nu>>, or by contacting the Secretariat at email <secretary@accreditationforum.com>.