



Minutes of the 9th FAIS General Assembly held on 3rd December 2014

The 9th FAIS General Assembly took place during the 9th FAIS conference at Safari Park Hotel, Nairobi, Kenya, on Wed 3rd December 2014. The secretary-General (Henry Mwandumba) chaired the meeting.

1.0 Minutes of the 8th General Assembly. These were not available for discussion. The Secretary-General would check with FAIS secretariat and communicate them directly with national societies.

2.0 Matters arising: In the absence of minutes the last General Assembly, there were no matters arising.

3.0 FAIS President's Report, Thomas Kariuki

The President thanked the Kenyan Society for Immunology (KSI) for hosting, and delegates for attending the 9th FAIS conference despite concerns regarding security and potential health (Ebola) threats facing Kenya. He also thanked national societies and IUIS for supporting the FAIS Executive Committee since its election at the 8th FAIS General Assembly in Durban, South Africa in December 2012.

The president cited the following since December 2012:

3.1 Achievements

- a) **Membership:** Mali, Tanzania, Gambia, Nigeria and Burkina Faso had formed national immunological societies. Except for Burkina Faso, all have become registered members of FAIS.
- b) **FAIS Constitution:** The constitution, which was amended at 8th FAIS General Assembly, was formally approved by IUIS.
- c) **FAIS Strategic plan:** FAIS members who attended the 15th ICI in Milan, Italy in August 2013, drafted a strategic plan for the Federation. Further development of the plan awaits input from national societies.
- d) **Hosting the FAIS Conference:** Despite several hurdles, the 9th FAIS conference was successfully hosted by KSI and was well attended. An immunology workshop and IUIS Council meeting preceded the conference.

3.2 Challenges

- a) **Maintaining the FAIS secretariat at UCT:** FAIS should decide on the future of its secretariat at UCT. Willem Hanekom who was responsible for the secretariat arrangement with UCT has since left the university.

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- b) **Representation of FAIS at international events:** FAIS has had limited visibility at international forums e.g. ICI. As a federation, we should participate more in continental and inter-continental events to increased our visibility and presence.

3.3 Opportunities

- a) **Strengthen partnerships with IUIS:** FAIS should work closely with IUIS Council and its committees, e.g. Education, Clinical, Gender etc.
- b) **Embrace the goodwill for training:** FAIS should take advantage of support offered by IUIS, the German Society and other potential funding bodies by organizing regional immunology courses/workshops annually, thereby increasing its activity and reaching out to many of its membership outside the 3-yearly conferences.
- c) **Identify new sponsors:** FAIS should be proactive in mobilizing resources to support its activities. Organizations such as the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, EFIS, the Wellcome Trust, the UK Medical Research Council, SIDA etc, should be approached for support.

4.0 Secretary-General's Report, Henry Mwandumba

- a) **FAIS Membership:** The S-G welcomed the new national societies of Mali, Tanzania, Nigeria, Gambia and Burkina Faso into FAIS. This brings the total number of FAIS members to 14. Mali applied for IUIS membership and awaits a decision by IUIS Council.
- b) **Strategic plan:** The strategic plan that was drafted in Milan in August 2013 should have been sent to all national societies for their input in early 2014. So far, none of the national societies has commented on the plan.
- c) **Communication:** The S-G noted that communication with national societies has not improved significantly over the past 2 years. The secretariat was given the responsibility of communicating with national societies but this did not work as well as we had hoped.

5.0 Treasurer's Report, Pa Tamba Ngom

The Treasurer explained that FAIS finances were directly managed by the FAIS Central Office at University of Cape Town (UCT), South Africa. The Treasurer having never visited UCT, had limited ability and many challenges running the Treasury by remote. The Treasurer presented statistics of the Durban and Nairobi FAIS conferences, as well as a summary of the Federation's finances as available from documentation provided by the Central Office. It was agreed that the FAIS Central office, through the UCT/FAIS jointly funded position, currently held by Alison September, will provide a full finance report to the Treasurer for sharing with the Executive Committee.

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a) **Conference statistics:** Below is a summary

	<u>Durban 2012</u>	<u>Nairobi 2014</u>
Registered delegates	161	165
Exhibitors	8	2
Scholarships	15	14
Short oral talks	12	26
Posters	113	63
Funding	ZAR908,932	ZAR1,355,826

b) **FAIS Income:** ZAR924,313 was reported to be the total income received by the secretariat. However, there was no information about the period covered by this financial statement or details of expenditure. There was also lack of detail regarding how and who made some decisions on spending.

6.0 Matters arising from the Reports

6.1. FAIS Secretariat at UCT: It was agreed that we should close the secretariat at UCT and move it elsewhere, preferably a more permanent location. The African Academy of Sciences (AAS) was proposed as a potential permanent location, with a move to Tunisia (new President's home country) as the alternative.

Actions:

- 1) The new FAIS President (Hatem Masmoudi) to write an official letter to Clive Gray at UCT asking him to act on behalf of FAIS and start the process of closing down the secretariat.
- 2) FAIS currently employs one person to manage the secretariat. The President to liaise with Clive to ensure termination of her contract complies with South African labour laws.
- 3) Tom Kariuki to explore this possibility of relocating the secretariat to AAS.

6.2. Financial report: It was agreed that the financial statement presented by the Treasurer needed further information from the FAIS Central Office to be reviewed again for completeness.

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Actions:

- 1) The outgoing President (Tom) and Treasurer to ask FAIS secretariat and UCT for more details on FAIS income and expenditure since December 2012.
- 2) In future, FAIS financial transactions should not happen without the knowledge and approval of the President and Treasurer. Preferably, the Executive Committee should review regularly the Federation's financial activities.

6.3. FAIS Strategic plan: It became clear that member national societies have not seen the draft strategic plan, hence the lack of feedback.

Action: The outgoing S-G (Henry Mwandumba) to personally circulate the draft strategic plan to all national society chairs and their deputies by end of Jan 2015. National societies will have up to 3 months to send their comments/input to the S-G.

6.4 Seeking new partners for long-term funding: We agreed to take advantage of the goodwill shown by various institutions including IUIS, the Wellcome Trust, SIDA, and the University Health Network (Canada) etc. These partnerships would help to mobilize resources to enable FAIS to run regular regional activities.

Action: Clive Gray will lead and draft a case for support. This will be circulated to Executive Committee members for their input.

6.5. Immunology courses/training in Africa: We agreed that an area that FAIS partners could help with is training. Clive Gray (FAIS), Michelle Letarte (IUIS Education Committee) and Eleanor Fish (University of Toronto) will lead this initiative.

Actions:

- 1) The S-G to send Clive, Michelle, Eleanor and Hatem names of chairs of FAIS national societies for communication.
- 2) S-G to find out what immunology courses regularly take place in Africa.
- 3) Consider involving AAS in FAIS issues to do with training.
- 4) Ahmed El-Gohary to send the Egyptian MSc course plan/curriculum to the S-G and IUIS Education Committee to see if this would be a suitable model.

7.0 Election of the Executive Committee: An important agenda for the General Assembly was the election of new officials to manage the affairs of the Federation for the next three years, up to 2017. Thumbi Mwangi, an independent visitor, presided over the elections, which were conducted in a transparent, competitive and democratic manner. The composition of the new FAIS Executive Committee is as follows:

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Committee Member: To be Identified- must be a woman representing an under-represented region of Africa.

8.0 Vote of thanks from the new President, Hatem Masmoudi: The President-elect thanked delegates for electing the new Executive Committee and asked for their continued support during his tenure of office. He also thanked Tom for his leadership over the last 2 years and promised to work hard to ensure growth and prosperity of FAIS.

9.0 10th FAIS Conference: This will be hosted by Tunisia in 2017. Before the main conference, the new committee under the leadership will work with FAIS partners to increase Federation-sponsored activities at national and regional levels in the form of training workshops and regional meetings.

Minutes prepared by :

Secretary General (Out-going)

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