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TO OPENING A NEW  
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## UPDATE

### The World Federation of Chiropractic

By Gerard W. Clum, D.C.

The WFC Council meeting in June in Johannesburg began as it traditionally has with reports from each of the regions of the Federation. These reports ranged from stunning developments on a national level such as the appointment of Greg Kawchuk, D.C., Ph.D. to a Canada National Research Chair to a cessation of prosecution of chiropractors in Taiwan. Upon conclusion of the regional reports several things were very apparent: first, the profession is growing internationally at an astounding rate and second the range of circumstances among the associations of the Federation is equally as astounding.

The remaining business before the Council included a wide range of briefings and reports covering the efforts of the agency with various offices of the World Health Organization (WHO), symposia being presented by or sponsored by the Federation, to the needs of member associations with respect to specific circumstances. Most notable among the activities related to WHO was the publication of the *Guideline on Basic Training and Safety in Chiropractic*. This document will prove to be of profound importance to the profession around the globe. While it may have limited application in North America, Europe, Australia and elsewhere, it is perhaps one of the most significant accomplishments of the WFC. Looking at the document today there are aspects of it I would have written differently, but when you understand where the document and the thinking behind it began and where the finished product is today the accomplishment grows even

larger. For example, in its first iteration, parties at the WHO proposed that an M.D. could be provided an additional 200 hours of training and be qualified as a chiropractor! As it stands today that minimum requirement is more like 2,000 hours, a development of remarkable importance for the future of the profession.

It was my pleasure to have participated in the recent World Health Assembly in Geneva, Switzerland at the World Health Organization. I was pleased to report to my colleagues on the Council of the WFC the level of respect, rapport and cooperation I saw with each and every office of the WHO with which we interacted. The increasingly productive portfolio of the WFC in its relations with the WHO helps to open more and more doors for the Federation as well as for the profession. The cessation of prosecutions I referred to earlier was, in part, the product of a decade of effort to become known and trusted within the circles of the WHO.

In addition, feedback was received related to the following activities:

- The status of the Bone and Joint Decade (2000-2010) in general and by nation
- Planning and implementation efforts related to the Consultation on the Identity of the Chiropractic Profession
- Applications for membership from several associations around the world
- The 9<sup>th</sup> biennial Congress to be held in Vilamoura, Algarve, Portugal in May 2007, the 2008 Council meeting in Seoul, Korea and the 10<sup>th</sup> biennial Congress to be held in Montreal in 2009

- Encouraging the implementation of WFC supported initiatives such as the Tobacco-free initiative, the Health Professions Alliance and Straighten-Up developed by Life University's Dr. Ron Kirk

Some of the challenges facing the profession around the world with which the WFC has been helpful in addressing include the assertion in Brazil that the practice of chiropractic is a subset of the practice of physiotherapy, or in South Korea where it is asserted that the practice of chiropractic is a component of oriental medicine known as Chuna therapy. In addition testimony and presence in Taiwan regarding the recognition of the profession there and cooperation with the chiropractic educational programs in Brazil to see that their degrees are recognized by the appropriate authorities in Brazil.

The WFC Council meeting was followed by the three-day annual Congress of the Chiropractic Association of South Africa (CASA). It was my pleasure to participate in this Congress as a presenter as well as attend a number of the lectures. Our hosts from CASA did a wonderful job of organizing and presenting an exciting weekend that brought speakers from five continents to their membership. A highlight of the weekend was the opportunity to hear and meet Louis Brugman, D.C. a Lincoln graduate who has practiced in South Africa for over 50 years. He spoke with great pride about the accomplishments of his nation in this last generation and of his profession in the last half century. It was inspiring!

On a personal note I would like to thank ICA President Dr. Maltby for his confidence in continuing my appointment to the Council of the WFC. Through his support and the support of the ICA presidents over the past 18 years I have been privileged to represent ICA to the world through the WFC. Some among our membership have questioned the involvement of ICA in the WFC. I can appreciate their concern, but having had the experiences I have had, having seen the shifts in thinking, I would respectfully suggest the concern is unfounded.

ICA hasn't "taken over" the WFC as some would perceive the role of our involvement. ICA has had a voice at the table from the very first strike of the gavel through today. That is the reason to be involved — to have input, to exercise counsel and concern and to seek to advance the perspectives of the organization sponsoring involvement. For those who have supported the involvement of ICA in the WFC I say thank you and I hope I have been an effective emissary on your behalf. For those who have expressed concern, please note the consideration given the "adjustment" in the WFC identity outcome, consider the strong non-drug, non surgical stance of the identity documents and the WFC at large, read the proceedings of the Fort Lauderdale Conference on Philosophy in Chiropractic. If you still have concerns consider the keynote speaker at the 9<sup>th</sup> biennial Congress of the WFC in Vilamoura, Portugal — Bruce Lipton, Ph.D.!

The WFC is not a panacea. It is a gathering of almost 90 national associations from around the world that are

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