35 YEARS OF ESSKA!

Dear ESSKA members and friends,

Another very busy and exciting ESSKA year is coming to an end. This was actually ESSKA’s 35th anniversary, an age at which we’ve generally attained maturity, and where many of us are blessed to experience parenthood. That’s precisely the feeling my fellow Board members and I had when we represented ESSKA at many meetings of our 38 affiliated European national societies.

We travelled to literally every country in Europe — from Sweden to Greece, from Portugal to Lithuania, from the UK to Russia — to share our knowledge, provide education and spread the message and spirit of ESSKA to our fellow surgeons and scientists. This European national affiliated society programme emerged from an idea ESSKA’s Board had in 2008. While preparing the Porto Congress, we invited the award-winning authors of our European sister societies’ national congress to present their work on a European platform. When we saw how popular this was becoming, we responded with our affiliated national society programme. This now allows for members of national societies to join ESSKA at a reduced fee, which provides benefits to both societies. The schemes have been a tremendous success. So far, 20% of ESSKA’s members belong to this category.

Some of those affiliated societies are as old as ESSKA, but many are new, especially in eastern Europe, such as the latest affiliated society which comes from Estonia (we wish you a warm welcome!). The success of this programme encourages us to build bridges in Europe and to federate our medical field as much as possible.

From an extra-European perspective, ESSKA was also well represented overseas during the last few months. As always, this was an opportunity and a privilege, to make positive encounters and to experience the dynamism and rapidly increasing globalisation of our medical specialty.

In April, several of us had the privilege to represent ESSKA in Seoul, at a wonderful meeting of APKASS, our sister society covering the Asian-Pacific region. The same month, I had the honour of being invited to give an honorary guest lecture by the Indian Arthroscopy and Sports Medicine Community in Pune. In May, we convened at the very successful ISAKOS Congress in Shanghai, a first for our global sister society in China. Two months later, we assembled in Toronto for AOSSM’s annual congress, where our North American friends made their meeting as international as never before. On all these occasions, we met with the leadership of our sister societies to identify grounds for future collaboration, and to discuss the opportunities and threats of our speciality. Finally, as a tradition in the non-congress year, our travelling fellowship groups visited North and South America over the summer, under the leadership of their respective godfathers Matteo Denti and Joan C. Moillau.

Earlier this year, many of you were contacted about our membership survey, which had been designed by a specialised professional agency, in close collaboration with our staff. I would like to thank those of you who participated in the survey. It confirmed that the biennial congress and KSSTA are the two main assets of ESSKA membership, but it also revealed that other benefits - ESSKA’s initiatives (e.g. the Meniscus Consensus Initiative), the Academy, the surgical skills courses, our book programme etc. - have become increasingly popular. You will find more results from this membership survey, later in this Newsletter.

We had a partial Board meeting in Shanghai, and two full Board meetings in Lugano and Milan. These meetings were very intense, but allowed us to assess ESSKA’s daily activities, as well as the implementation of our strategic meeting. A large part was spent on planning the next congress. Our scientific planning team, under the leadership of Gino Kerkhoffs, is making great progress on the programme planning, and have good relations with our dynamic Sections, Committees and working groups as well as invited groups and societies (e.g. our affiliated societies, the Football Research Group, ISAKOS, AOSSM, SLARD, APKASS, ICRA, the IOC, the European Handball Federation etc.). Special attention will be given to the European Allograft Initiative under Tim Spalding and Peter Verdonk, as well as the Paediatric ACL Monitoring Initiative. To date, six new books will be presented in Glasgow.

This autumn, our four sections held their respective Open Meetings, in Bordeaux, Berlin, Krakow and Munich. This was the first time that four of our working groups have organised their individual meetings in ESSKA’s non-congress year, testifying to ESSKA’s steady growth. I would like to thank the various teams who worked so hard, to achieve this.

Finally, I would like to wish you a well-earned rest, Merry Christmas and a good start to 2018, another exciting year in ESSKA’s history. It has been a great privilege and pleasure to serve the society over these last months.

Romain Seil
ESSKA President