

A Report from the Asian and Oceanic Affairs Commission

Byung-In Lee, Chair

It is a great honor to be elected as Chair of the Commission of Asian and Oceanic Affairs. It is one of the most culturally diverse Regions of the ILAE, and it also the Region with the largest population. This Region also varies greatly in the resources that are available in each of our member Chapters for treating epilepsy. The activities of the Commission range from encouraging breakthrough advances in the laboratory and in clinical technology to advocating for access to basic epilepsy care. It has been a great satisfaction to all of us in this Region to see our efforts recognized through the many Ambassador for Epilepsy awardees that have come from Asia and Oceania in recent years and the Michael Prize for promising research that was given this year to Ding Ding of China. This recognition encourages us to continue our efforts, and I am proud and honored to be involved as Chair of the Commission. We have many goals on our agenda for the coming term, and I would like to outline them briefly:



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One of the great educational efforts in our Region has been the collaboration between the CAO and the Asian Epilepsy Academy (ASEPA). In the coming term we expand this collaboration and work with individual national Chapters to promote the quality of teaching courses and workshops that have worked well to improve local professional understanding about epilepsy. We will also work together to increase press coverage of the Conferences, TV-interviews and public awareness programs so that general knowledge about epilepsy improves.

To improve our involvement in medical care and research we are expanding interactions with other epilepsy-related organizations [e.g., Infantile Spasm Society (ISS), Asian Epilepsy Surgeon's Congress (AESC), Asian and Oceanic Congress of Neurology (AOCN)]. We want to promote joint conferences and provide an epilepsy-teaching program at each Congress. We also hope to provide another perspective to each of the organizations.

The Global Campaign Against Epilepsy has had a major impact on the delivery of epilepsy care in our Region. We wish to continue that success by implementing CAO-Demonstration Projects for the reduction of treatment gap in such countries as Myanmar, Bangladesh and Laos, where little care is available.

It is important to improve communication among the individual Chapters through the development of

Information Committees for each Chapter to allow networking with information officers of the Chapters.

To improve epilepsy care in the Region, it is essential to have knowledgeable experts in each country. To meet that goal we will work to expand the Epilepsy Fellowship Programs for the training of young epileptologists from resource-poor countries. The success of this program in the past and into the future depends on support from advanced individual Chapters of the Region (e.g., JES, ESA, KES, TES, etc.). We will also look to fund-raise from many sources, including governmental support in collaboration with ILAE, IBE and the WHO.

In developing talent for the future, we must provide more learning and research opportunities to our young, talented colleagues throughout our Region. To encourage their success we have the Young Investigator programs and awards at the Asian and Oceanic Epilepsy Congress and we are actively recruiting young brains to the ILAE-Topic Oriented Commissions. To improve interaction and collaboration throughout the Region we are developing exchange programs of Fellows among the many advanced epilepsy research institutes.

These are exciting and challenging times for epilepsy care and research in our Region. I am honored to serve as Chair of this very dynamic Region, and I look forward to working with my regional colleagues to move the epilepsy field forward.