“To be a Global Leader in Promoting Science and Education related to Blood, Cells and Transplantation”
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Dear colleagues and friends!

The period from spring 2009 to spring 2010 was again an active time in our society. Communication and education were, and will be key elements to the success of our society. Great efforts have been made in redesigning Transfusion Today, as you have seen by the last issues. Our society bulletin is now produced from the Central Office in Amsterdam and I would like to thank all our colleagues at the Central Office for their help in this transition. I can only encourage you to use this platform as one of several means of communications with your fellow ISBT members.

For our scientific journal Vox Sanguinis, its success story has continued thanks to the great job done by our editor Wolfgang Mayr, all the reviewers and, of course, all of you who publish regularly in our scientific journal. I sincerely hope, that every single ISBT member will also support the journal by submitting his or her scientific work in our fields of interest. An “online only” volume was uploaded to the web at the beginning of this year. The impact factor of Vox Sanguinis is on the rise and this is owed to the joint work of all our colleagues mentioned above. We are looking forward to the 100th volume of Vox Sanguinis in 2011.

Work commenced on the rebranding of ISBT, the new logo and the new website. This is not only a “facelift” for our society, but a new focusing on our mission and values. The ISBT CEO, Judith Chapman, is to thank here together with the colleagues at the Central Office in Amsterdam for their ongoing work and creative input.

The XXth Regional Congress of the ISBT, Asia in Nagoya, Japan in November 2009 was a magnificent experience and a great scientific success. Shigeru Takamoto and his scientific and organisation teams did a great job in preparation and putting on the congress. More than 2,000 colleagues participated during the congress in Nagoya. I wish to thank all of them not only for their excellent work, but also for their great hospitality which made this congress memorable!

Most of the working parties are actively participating in the scientific work of our society and it is with great pleasure that the Board of Directors follows their activities. I also want to encourage the few less active ISBT working parties to speed up their activities and share the great experience accumulated in the Working Parties with all ISBT members. Here, I want to thank the IT working party as “pars pro toto” for two guidelines recently published in Vox Sanguinis. The first one deals with validation of automated systems in blood establishments (Vox Sanguinis 2010;98 (suppl. 1):1-25), the second one with the use of RFID in transfusion medicine (Vox Sanguinis 2010;98 (suppl. 2):1-24).

Another milestone is the introduction of reduced price membership for colleagues from low and medium UN development index countries, which further strengthens our international orientation. In this context, the number of ISBT members rose from 1,398 at the end of 2008 to 1,604 members in March 2010, a 15 percent increase. And in 2010, the numbers are again rising! Also important, under the stewardship of our experienced treasurer, Steve Morgan, the finances of our society remain stable. This was no easy task during the financial crisis and many uncertainties in the global economy, so thanks Steve for a good job.

Finally, with my presidency ending this summer, I want to thank all members of the ISBT Board of Directors, all members of the active ISBT working parties and their chairs, the ISBT CEO, the ISBT Secretary General, all colleagues at the ISBT Central Office in Amsterdam and finally all of you, the ISBT members for their good cooperation, help and so many important contacts and contributions. I am sure the success story of ISBT will go on and achieve new heights. I wish all of you and our society a very good time, an excellent future and I am looking forward to meeting most, if not all of you, in Berlin and at future congresses.

Erhard Seifried
FOREWORD FROM THE SECRETARY GENERAL

Dear colleagues and friends,

Over the last year, the change of the activities at the ISBT Central Office and the progress of working into a professional way have been quite significant. The ideas and input of the Executive Director, Judith Chapman, became more prominent and visible, and for me it was a year of assisting her in improving her knowledge of ISBT and its activities in order to help her to take over fully the daily activities. As Secretary General, I was responsible for the activities which are now in professional hands, and I could do this because ISBT was like a hobby to me. Judith found her way in financial, legal, organizational, and congressional matters and I think it was a great achievement. Amsterdam became her home.

With this last ‘Foreword from the Secretary-General’ due to my resignation at the General Assembly in June, I have the opportunity to reflect on the last 14 years as member of the Board and Executive Committee and in particular on the 10 years being the Secretary General of ISBT, and to thank you for your support.

It was during the ISBT Regional Congress in Frankfurt a/M in 1997 that Harold Gunson asked me informally in one of the corridors of Frankfurter Messe, the congress venue, whether I was interested to be his successor as Secretary General of ISBT. At that time I was member of the ISBT Council for one year. I felt very honoured but since I could not believe this, I asked Hans Heiniger, ISBT’s Treasurer whether Harold was correct in doing so, which he confirmed. Pim van Aken, my boss at CLB in Amsterdam and former President of ISBT, permitted me to take the function and the Executive Board asked me to become co-opted member to the Executive Board in order to know more about the Society. Working together with well respected key figures in the global world of blood transfusion was a great experience and during the meetings I learned that great differences existed between demand and supply, not only in blood but also in the wishes and plans for blood transfusion medicine improvements world wide.

Science and education struggled for attention at ISBT Congresses and the developing countries supported by the WHO asked continuously for help which ISBT could hardly offer, due to lack of resources both in people and in funds. The members of the Council, with at that time was composed with experts and with representatives from WHO regions, and the Executive Board were devoted to their work. The aftermath of the disasters in blood of the 1980’s was very prominent on the agendas.

After two years in the Executive Committee in Vienna in 2000, I started as Secretary-General together with Geoff Lane who started as the Treasurer. I felt the cordiality within the Society immediately when at the AABB meeting in Washington D.C., Gerry Sandler, Honorary Member, invited me for an Indonesian style diner prepared by his wife at his home together with well known blood transfusion experts in order to get to know the blood situation in the US. In the following years, Geoff and I worked as a team: I was always full with ideas for changes and improvements and Geoff kept control on the finances while together we acted as sparring partners on what we would like and what ISBT could achieve. In the meetings of the Executive Committee and Board the ideas were presented, discussed intensively, changed, adapted, put in the forum of blood transfusion world wide, and if agreed by all approved. The demand for good governance worldwide asked for the legal founding of ISBT in the Netherlands with an optimal and transparent financial reporting system, which unfortunately was not carried by all and resulted in the separation of the ISBT Working Party on BEST from ISBT.

I still consider the fact that this most important Working Party decided to leave ISBT as a great disappointment. However, the start of the ISBT Central Office, the legal founding of ISBT, the start of the ISBT Academy and the founding of the ISBT Foundation, the decision to go into the world with ISBT Congresses with the successful Congresses in Cape Town and Hanoi, the centralisation of the organisation of the Congresses and the collaboration with the people of Eurocongress who helped us not to reinvent the wheel in organising congresses with great scientific and financial success, the modern change of Transfusion Today, the great developments with the ATMC, the difficult decision to postpone the Istanbul Congress, the transition of Vox Sanguinis into the hands of ISBT, and the agreement with the Dutch tax authorities by which ISBT is tax accountable without paying taxes were certainly quite some achievements. In order to keep at ISBT Congresses the balance between the scientific developments in blood transfusion medicine and the strong demand for educational presentations was quite an effort.

That the Society developed so well that a professional Executive Director in the person on Judith Chapman was needed, was certainly a sign that the ISBT was growing and had become professional. I did the work with great pleasure and energy being infected by the ISBT virus, but this could only happen with the great support of the members of the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors.

I am very grateful for their work and great support.
I like to thank especially Sophie Hamburger, my great assistant and supporter in Amsterdam, who helped me so much. I apologise that it might be that my responses were sometimes late, because my work at Sanquin in Amsterdam and CAF-DCF in Brussels needed to prevail and that I have let some of you to wait too long. Or, that my Dutch approach with a certain directness was too much for you to bear. It was not meant to be.

All of you I like to thank for your confidence and support. ISBT is a great Society. I have enjoyed in being your Secretary General. Thank you very much,

Paul Strengers
Executive Committee

President Erhard Seifried, Germany
President Elect Silvano Wendel, Brazil
Vice President Norman Kalmin, USA
Anne Husebekk, Norway
Secretary General Paul Strengers, The Netherlands
Treasurer Steve Morgan, United Kingdom
Past President Shigeru Takamoto, Japan

Members of the Board representing WHO regions

Africa Ravi Reddy, South Africa
North America Richard Benjamin, United States of America
South America Graciela Gonzáles de Léon, Venezuela
Eastern Europe Evgeny Selivanov, Russia
Western Europe Jean-Pierre Allain, United Kingdom
Eastern Mediterranean Amin Al Amiri, United Arab Emirates
Western Pacific Peter Flanagan, New Zealand
Diana Teo, Singapore
South East Asia Position vacant
Membership 2009-2010
ISBT membership has increased from 1398 in 2009 to 1604 in 2010 an increase of 15%. The membership according to WHO region and type of membership is shown in the tables below:

Table 1 Membership by type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of membership</th>
<th>No of members</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>1494</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honorary</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affiliate</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exempt</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1604</strong></td>
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Membership 2000 – 2010
Membership continues to increase year on year as shown in the chart below.

Table 2 Membership by WHO region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHO Region</th>
<th>No of members</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 = Africa</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 = Americas</td>
<td>267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 = East. Med</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 = Europe</td>
<td>667</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 = South East Asia</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 = Western Pacific</td>
<td>407</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1604</strong></td>
</tr>
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</table>

Thanks to the generous support of a number of organisations the society has been able to offer exempt membership to 75 people under the age of 40 from UN Medium and Low Human Development Index countries.

Deceased members
ISBT regrets the passing away during the year of the former member Harold Merymann, Rockville USA.
The XXth Regional Congress of the ISBT, Asia was held from November 14 to 18, 2009 at the International Congress Center in Nagoya, Japan. It was the third ISBT Congress held in Japan. (The first was in Tokyo in 1960, and the second in Makuhari in 1996.)

The Local and International Scientific Committees collaborated to create an inspiring programme, featuring scientists of world renown, subjects of importance, and problems relating especially to countries with limited resources. The programme was composed of Japanese and regular ISBT parts. The former was held on the first day, like other previous ISBT congresses, and subjects of current importance to Japan were discussed. From the second day, November 15, the regular ISBT programme, namely the educational programme commenced, and the evening saw the opening ceremony. With the presence of the vice governor of Aichi Prefecture, the mayor of Nagoya City, and the CEO of the Japanese Red Cross, the ceremony proceeded first solemnly then joyfully with a joint performance of Japanese-style drumming (Wadaiko) and a demonstration of calligraphy.

The presentations in the ordinary programme included state-of-the-art plenary lectures on induced pluripotent stem cells (iPS cells) and regenerative medicine as well as other concurrent items of interest. Three halls were used throughout the congress, and every hall was full of fruitful discussion and comments, which was a true indicator of the excellence of the program.

In addition to these scientific programmes, social events such as congress excursions and a Gala Dinner helped participants expand their networking. At the Gala Dinner, in addition to the officers’ speeches, “the Japanese thirteen string koto” was played by three kimono-clad professionals. Three panels of calligraphy, signifying “learning” “friend” and “dream” respectively, were presented to lottery winners and then followed by the Japanese traditional team folk dance Awa-odori. All participants were invited to join a dance team and a good time was had by all.

Before the congress, roughly 1,000 participants had been anticipated. However, actually 450 people from 50 countries and 1,150 from Japan, totaling 1,600 people registered for this congress. When invited speakers, accompanying persons, and exhibitors were included, there were over 2,000 participants, which was the biggest number for any Asian Regional ISBT Congress. On the other hand, the congress accounts were the most worrying subject because of the global economic recession. Just prior to the congress, a deficit of 20 million Japanese Yen (160,000 Euros) was estimated. However, thanks to the subsidies from over 20 Japanese companies and to the persevering efforts of relevant officers and staff, the deficit was drastically cut. Moreover, three foundations kindly offered to step in. Eventually, the final accounts of the Nagoya Congress showed a small surplus. On behalf of the Local Organising Committee, I am very pleased to inform all the participants and members of this result and to express my sincere gratitude to all of them.
Steve Morgan, Treasurer

ISBT has had a successful financial year, increasing its Net Assets (that is, ISBT Working Capital plus funds held on behalf of Vox Sanguinis and the ISBT Working Parties) from Euros 2.103m to Euros 2.297m. Bank accounts totalled Euros 2.322m at the end of the year.

The financial highlights were as follows:
- 72% growth in membership fee income
- 64% growth in bank interest income
- Much improved contribution from Transfusion Today, which is now close to breaking even after prudent measures to reduce costs
- Significant increase in the profits of Vox Sanguinis

In addition, the Cairo Regional Congress in March 2009 generated a surplus of Euros 155k, and the Nagoya Regional Congress later in the year achieved a smaller profit of Euros 28k that will be reported in 2010/11. The Nagoya result was much better than anticipated, with a high number of unexpected late bookings by Japanese participants. In addition the Japanese Society generously agreed to increase the proportion of the local participant admission fee payable to ISBT. The final turnaround factor was the financial success of the Gala Dinner, managed by the Japanese Society and sponsored by a number of commercial companies. Looking forwards, the International Congress in Berlin in June 2010 promises to attract a high number of people.

The strength of the Society’s finances enabled planned investment in the infrastructure to take place, with the first full year costs of the Executive Director being reported, and much needed investment in communications with the development of the website and ISBT’s new brand identity.

At a meeting in January 2010 in Amsterdam, the Society’s corporation tax position was clarified with its advisors, Ernst Young, this after protracted negotiations with the Dutch tax authorities. In summary, ISBT became liable for corporation tax with effect from 1 April 2008, but will not have to pay tax in any single financial year as long as:

i) ISBT does not make any taxable profit in that year; or

ii) ISBT makes a taxable profit of less than Euros 100,000, and donates the whole amount to the ISBT Foundation; or

iii) ISBT makes a taxable profit in excess of Euros 100,000, and donates the whole amount to the ISBT Foundation, less any sum that is needed to meet ISBT working capital requirements, effectively a contingency in case of significant loss at any one Congress. Working capital requirements have to be recalculated each year according to an agreed formula. The minimum donation to the ISBT Foundation is Euros 100,000 under these circumstances.

In 2009/10, ISBT took the decision to donate Euros 100,000 to the Foundation of the ISBT, even though not required to under the above stipulations, in order to fund grant awards. In 2010/11 it is possible that no donation to the Foundation will be made (a small deficit is budgeted), and therefore unless external funding sources are identified no grants will be awarded. However, ISBT is budgeting for substantial donations to the Foundation in each of the following four years. In 2010/11 and beyond, a substantial increase in investment in general educational activities and specific Academy Events is planned. ISBT Membership is predicted to grow further, and congress income is expected to be sustained at Euros 200,000 plus per annum, boosted by the 60:40 profit share ratio that will take effect from Lisbon onwards.

In summary, the society remains in good financial shape, able to continue to support its plans for generating improved services to its members.
Working Party on Apheresis
Chairperson: Hans Vrielink

On the request of the Secretary General of the ISBT, a Working Party on Apheresis was started in 2009. After a preparatory meeting in Cairo (ISBT meeting March 2009), the first meeting was organized in Nagoya (Japan, ISBT meeting November 2009). In this meeting basic aims for this new working party were formulated.

Basic aims / point of interest of the WP:
1. Global interest in the development of apheresis programs.
2. Promotion of international collaboration in projects involving apheresis.
3. Looking for collaboration with other societies active in apheresis in the world.
4. Identifying and promotion of safe practices in apheresis procedures.

In the WP there should be a collaboration between experts and users in the apheresis field (hospital / blood transfusion services, etc) and manufacturing industry on an equal base.

Details discussed regarding the aims
1. Development of apheresis programs is mainly directed at emerging countries. There should be programs for apheresis, including transfer of knowledge (apheresis nurses, physicians, etc), help with guidelines, SOPs, trouble shooting, etc. Based on gathering common questions from the field, sessions with topics could be considered for the local ISBT meetings held in 2013 / 2015.
2. Topics could include:
   - Research (products, machines, disposables, procedures, etc)
   - Role of apheresis in blood banking
   - Donor side effects
   - Donor recruitment
3. Good collaboration (not competition) with associations such as ASFA, ESFH, etc.
4. Guidelines for therapeutic apheresis based on world-wide indications (2016?).

Working Party on Cellular Therapies
Chairpersons: Paolo Rebulla (ISBT) and John McMannis (AABB)

The ISBT/AABB Working Party on Cellular Therapies was formed in 2009 as a joint effort by the ISBT and the AABB aimed at promoting the development of novel therapies based on the use of human cells.

Paolo Rebulla, MD (Italy) and John McMannis (USA) have been invited to jointly chair the WP on behalf of the ISBT and the AABB respectively.

The initial efforts of the Working Party have been to discuss the main focus for members’ activities. Harmonization of international norms and guidelines for cellular therapies has been identified as a key element for the development of the field. Accordingly, WP co-chairpersons have developed relationships with the recently formed AHCTA group, which includes several scientific organizations with direct and indirect interests in cellular therapies.

Meanwhile, some representatives from the international blood transfusion community have formally expressed their interest in joining the Working Party.

Further plans for the WP and for its membership development will be discussed at the forthcoming ISBT congress in Berlin and AABB meeting in Baltimore.
Working Party on Donors and Donation  
Chairperson: Diane de Coning  

The ISBT Working Party on Donors and Donation was established in September 2006, under the leadership of Diane de Coning, from South Africa. The Working Party now has nearly 30 members and has representation from South America, North America, Europe, the United Kingdom, Africa, South East Asia, the Pacific, China, Eastern Mediterranean region and is growing daily. The Association of Donor Recruitment Professional, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the International Association of Voluntary Blood Donors are represented on the Working Party.

The inaugural meeting of the Working Party took place in Madrid, Spain in June 2007, where the Terms of Reference for the Working Party were developed.

A small group of members of the Working Party on Donors and Donation met in Hanoi 2007, to discuss how the working party could contribute to the education, the networking and the improvement of the “Donors and Donation” content of ISBT conferences, thereby increasing the membership and the interest in this field of blood transfusion.

Following this meeting, a “pilot” education symposium was conducted at the Macao International Congress in June 2008. Day 1 of the symposium was dedicated to Social Marketing issues and Day 2 to youth Blood Donor Clubs.

The Donors and Donation Working Party met again in Cairo, Egypt in March 2009, where it was agreed that the working party would conduct a baseline assessment of the status of voluntary non-remunerated blood donation among the ISBT membership. This information would enable the working party to develop a strategic plan in Berlin, to address the working party’s terms of reference with regards to training in resource limited countries, networking, benchmarking and exchanging ideas. The working party will be meeting at the ISBT International meeting in Berlin.

Working Party on Granulocyte Immunobiology  
Chairperson: Jürgen Bux  

In the period between April 2009 and March 2010 the steering committee of the working party (J. Bux, Germany, L. Porcelijn, The Netherlands, G. Lucas, UK) accepted Lin Fung from Brisbane, Australia, into their group. Lin will be responsible for the release of the certificates confirming participation in the annual Quality Assessment Exercise (QAE) organized by the ISBT Working Party on Granulocyte Immunobiology. The steering committee decided that the QAE from 2009 will be organized each year by one of the committee members whose laboratory will not take part in the QAE organized by himself.

The QAE 2009 was organized by J. Bux and A. Reil from Hagen, Germany. A total of 12 laboratories participated in the workshop. The total score ranged from 25%-100% with a mean performance score of 79%. Although the results were in the range of the previous years, there is still a need for improvement, as five laboratories failed to achieve the target score of 70%. Detection of HNA-3a antibodies remains a problem as five laboratories at least missed one of them. The QAE 2010 will be organized by G. Lucas and is planned for August 2010.

The next meeting of the Working Party will be on October 21 2010 in Beaune, France, on the occasion of the XIth European Symposium Platelet and Granulocyte Immunobiology. The results of the QAEs 2009 and 2010 as well as the past and future activities of the working party will be discussed. There will be also elections for the chairman of the ISBT working party as well as for the members of the steering committee of the international working party.
1. **Significant achievements of WPIT for the period April 2009 – March 2010**
   - Publication process of “ISBT – Guidelines for the use of RFID Technology in Transfusion Medicine” version 1 (publication in Vox Sanguinis in April 2010).
   - Introduction of WPIT in Transfusion Today.
   - Three active Task Forces: Validation TF, RFID TF and Interface TF.
   - Unification of the WPIT By-Laws begun with the ISBT Working Party Operating Principles.

2. **Summary of the activities of WPIT for the period April 2009 - March 2010**
The majority of the WPIT activities were undertaken by three active task forces: Validation Task Force, RFID Task Force and Interface Task Force, and the WPIT Executive Committee.

Validation TF led by Janet Sampson and Robin Nozick published the validation guideline version two in February 2010. The TF had more than 20 members. Last meeting was at ISBT Cairo 21-03-09 where the final amendments to the guidelines were agreed. The publication process was initiated in June 2009 but unfortunately took longer than expected. The proofreading phase was particularly challenging but the lessons learned were helpful for assisting the RFID guidelines publication process. The Validation Task Force has previously considered an e-learning tool to be a useful complement to the guidelines, particularly for those in less developed countries. Links have been established with the Standing Committee on Education with the formation of the eLearning Task Team. It is hoped that the collaboration will support the development of a validation eLearning package which also conforms with the ISBT strategy for education.

RFID TF led by Ralf Knels and Rodeina Davis developed the RFID guideline. The TF had about 20 active members and held 1 meeting and a lot of contacts regarding the RFID-guideline. The team published articles in the Journal of Health Information Management (JHIM) and in Vox Sanguinis. Interface TF led by Pia Bruce and Paul Ashford developed future interfacing guidelines and planned a pilot project. The TF had about 15 active members and had three meetings.

The Executive Committee held seven meetings to implement the Assembly 2009 meeting decisions, to follow up the progress of the task forces and, among other issues, to develop the IT-related programme for the ISBT Congresses. The Executive Committee members were Pia Bruce (Chairperson), Paul Ashford (Treasurer), Ralf Knels (Secretary), Janet Sampson, Rodeina Davis, Judith Chapman, Mario Muon and Charles Munk.

The WPIT Assembly did not meet between April 2009 and March 2010. The Annual meeting 2010 will take place in June 2010.

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2. Transfusion Today 70, 2009, pp. 4-9
3. Briggs, L; Davis, R; Gutierrez, A; Kopetsky, M; Young, K; Veeramani, D. Journal of Health Information Management (JHIM), 23, 2009.
4. Davis, R; Geiger, B; Gutierrez, A; Heaser, J; Veeramani, D, Vox Sanguinis, 97, 2009, pp. 50-60.
Working Party on Paediatrics
Chairperson: Anneke Brand

The initiative for a Working Party on Paediatric Transfusion Medicine (PTM) started in 2004, more or less spontaneously after a conference in Italy organized by Umberto Rossi. During this meeting it became clear that virtually none of paediatric transfusion indications were based on evidence. Because many topics in PTM were on the level of “How I Treat” we thought that experts could help to develop practice guidelines. The group started with enthusiastically identifying the lacunae in the whole area from pregnant women with the unborn child to adolescents with cancer, resulting in an extensive list of potential items for improvement, which can be found on the website. Subsequently, priority was given to a few topics in order to reveal what is known from the literature, what is actually done in the various countries, what is the expert opinion and how to improve.

Dobrila Veljkovic designed an excellent questionnaire on treatment of haemolytic disease of the newborn and Ritta Kekomaki on neonatal cardiac surgery. Unfortunately their work was not rewarded with sufficient responses. Although the group has over 20 members willing to put effort in the WP, very few members could attend the ISBT congresses, either because of lack of finances or being too busy in other fields. Few if any of our members are purely dedicated to paediatric transfusion medicine and either have other demanding tasks in transfusion medicine or, for the paediatricians among us; transfusion is only a minor aspect of their clinical work.

An excellent analysis of this problem in PTM was recently published in Transfusion of March 2009 by Hillyer and colleagues, describing a similar history from the US. Despite a campaign launched a decade ago stressing the vital inclusion of children in transfusion research and despite stimulation by authorized bodies such as the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute (NHLBI) and AABB, too little has been achieved. I underscore their analysis that “the training pipeline to become a PTM specialist is long and difficult, resulting in too few newcomers. Moreover, noteworthy studies are not published in journals that focus on transfusion medicine. They also recognize the lack of a definition and curriculum for training in PTM and lack of a critical mass.

But, in general there is progress. From the UK, the SHOT started to publish on adverse transfusion reactions in children. Also in other countries haemovigilance initiatives, appropriate for neonates, infants and children are being developed. A couple of studies on transfusion triggers in prematurely born infants have appeared and Gauvin and colleagues in Transfusion (November 2006) published a first prospective surveillance of acute transfusion reactions in the pediatric intensive care unit. From the WP you find below in the contributions of Dobrila Veljkovic, reporting on fairly uniform management of HDN due to Rh-D in 3 European countries and Helen New on initiatives in the UK that may be open for all of us to participate. In addition, in several countries audits in paediatric transfusion medicine on the use of plasma and cell products are in progress and we can expect during the ISBT Congress in Berlin results from these and other audits.

The problem is how to proceed with this working party. One of the initiatives for the coming years may be that the WP attracts a secretary and uses the available ISBT grant intended for a WP to collect all publications in PTM in one yearly report. In addition the National Societies for Paediatric Medicine must be informed about the ISBT–WP–PTM and asked to consider a curriculum in PTM and a representative. At last, NBHL, AABB and ISBT may unite their efforts.
In 2009, The Platelet Working Party was mainly implicated in the preparation of the 15th international workshop and the submission of the report on the 14th International Society of Blood Transfusion Platelet Immunology Workshop to Vox Sanguinis for publication.

The 15th International Workshop
This workshop is organized by Institute for Clinical Immunology and Transfusion Medicine, Justus Liebig University, Sentot Santoso (Chair) and Ulrich Sachs (Secretary), in co-operation with the Institute for Transfusion Medicine, University of Rostock (Volker Kiefel) with the help of Gregor Bein, and Hartmut Kroll (Dessau), Germany.

The international workshops are dedicated to sharing knowledge, evaluating the different technologies in use, establishing proficiency testing and developing standardization and are organized in the format of wet workshops.

The specific objectives defined for this workshop are: circulating autoantibody detection, anti HPA-1a alloantibody detection and titration, anti HPA-3 alloantibody detection and HPA genotyping (HPA-1 to -5 and 15, and -6 and -9 if done in the laboratory).

Materials were provided by the organising laboratories in Giessen (Ulrich J Sachs, Sentot Santoso), Rostock (Volker Kiefel), and Dessau (Hartmut Kroll), and by the following institutions: Nelson H Tsuno, Department of Transfusion Medicine, The University of Tokyo, Tokyo, Japan; Brian Curtis, Platelet and Neutrophil Immunology Laboratory, BloodCenter of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, WI, USA; Cecile Kaplan, Gerard Bertrand, Laboratoire d’immunologie plaquettaire, Institut National de la Transfusion Sanguine, Paris, France; Krystyna Maslanka, Department of Immunohaematology, Institute of Haematology and Transfusion Medicine, Warsaw, Poland; Helen Pearson, Platelet Immunology Reference Laboratory, Australian Red Cross Blood Service, Sydney, Australia; Hermann Eichler, Institut für Klinische Hämostaseologie und Transfusionsmedizin, Universitätskliniken des Saarlandes, Homburg/Saar, Germany, and, as a commercial supplier, by Norbert Sauer, Karin Kissel from BAG Lich, Lich, Germany.

37 Laboratories are registered representing 24 countries. The results and evaluation will be discussed during the ISBT Congress in Berlin on Sunday, June 27th, 4pm.

14th International Society of Blood Transfusion Platelet Immunology Workshop report
This report was written by GG Wu, C. Kaplan, B. Curtis, and H. Person, Nanning Institute of Transfusion Medicine, Nanning, China; Platelet Immunology, Institut National de la Transfusion Sanguine (INTS), Paris, France; Platelet & Neutrophil Immunology Laboratory of BloodCenter of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, USA; Platelet Immunology Reference Laboratory, Tissue Typing, Australian Red Cross Blood Service, Sydney, Australia.

The main conclusions of this report are:
- Improvement of laboratory diagnosis for alloimmune platelet disorders
- Significant disparities observed in testing proficiency among participating laboratories.

The report is submitted to Vox Sanguinis for publication.

Platelet Nomenclature Committee
The Platelet Working Party was deeply involved in Platelet Nomenclature and new platelet antigens are now included in the HPA nomenclature.

In conclusion
The collaborative efforts shown by the world-wide participants and the exchange of experience of the ISBT Platelet Immunobiology Working Party is a major contribution to the development of platelet immunology.
Working Party on Rare Donors
Chairperson: Sandra Nance

The Working Party for Rare Donors membership represents 18 countries and all Working Party members are members of ISBT full stop. Attendance at Formal Working Party meetings is strong.

Terms of Reference #1 - To develop guidelines for standardization of listing, labeling, shipping, testing and reimbursement for rare donors blood

Actions: An International Forum on Donors with a Rare Pheno (geno) type was published in Vox Sanguinis. Working Party members responded and from the reports, a long list of red cell antigen types that were difficult to provide emerged. Discussion by the Working Party members resolved that use of the shipping form is critical to assessing and responding to the global needs for rare blood. The Working Party submitted an ISBT Foundation grant proposal that was approved in 2010 to communicate and gather information regarding international shipping outcomes. The project will begin in July 2010 utilizing a previously developed Shipping Outcome Form to collect the data on rare red cell units shipped between countries.

Terms of Reference #2 - To provide a resource for providing ongoing information on matters related to rare blood

Actions: Publications and presentations on Rare Donor activities have been published and also posted on the ISBT website as a resource for ISBT members. In addition, presentations were made at the ISBT Regional Congress in Nagoya, and at the ISBT Regional Congress in Cairo. An informal meeting of the Working Party along with two guests (one of which was nominated in 2009 and approved to be a member in 2010 and one is nominated for 2010) was held to review activities of the Working Party. A presentation was made to the ISBT Board of Directors at Nagoya ISBT Regional Congress by the Chair in 2009 to inform them of the activities of the Working Party. The Chair was also invited and wrote a review for Current Opinions in Hematology titled How to Find, Recruit and Maintain Rare Blood Donors.

Terms of Reference #3 - To develop and extend the liaison with the International Blood Group Reference Laboratory (Bristol, England), and thus assist blood services internationally to be aware of, and contribute to, the WHO International Donor Panel

Actions: A number of members updated or are in the process of updating their Rare Donor lists with the International Blood Group Reference Laboratory. A major effort was made to identify members with Rare Donor Programs in their country even if there was not a national program. We had added the following members in 2008: Dr. Heli Tankanen (Finland), France Noizat-Pirenne (France), Dr. Philippe Rouger (France), Dr Rita Fontao-Wendel (Brazil), Dr Erwin Andreas Scharberg (Germany). Dr K.Vasantha (India). This added two countries (Finland and India); the other new members replaced retiring members. We added the following new members in 2010; Dr Eduardo Muniz-Diaz and Mostafa Moghaddam from Spain and Iran respectively and replaced retiring members from Germany, New Zealand, Taiwan and The Netherlands with Dr Inge von Zabern, Dr Dhana Gounder, Dr Sujen Lin Tsai, and Dr Masja de Haas respectively. Strategic member recruitment has been the objective of the executive committee with the intent of representation from around the world.
Meetings
As there was no international congress during the year, the full Working Party did not meet.

Name of Working Party
Following an agreement that the Working Party should absorb red cell-related functions of the Molecular Genetic Expert Panel, it was agreed by email that the Working Party should be renamed the ISBT Working Party on Red Cell Immunogenetics and Blood Group Terminology.

Publications

The Working Party was featured in the March 2010 issue of Transfusion Today. Geoff Daniels put together the ‘in focus’ section of the newsletter, with articles on the history and purpose of the Working Party, the molecular genotyping workshops, the proposed new blood group allele terminology, recombinant blood group antigens, blood group genotyping, and ABO and malaria.

Provisional antigen assignments
Provisional new numbers were awarded for 10 blood group antigens. These will be put forward for ratification at the Working party meeting in Berlin.

Terminology for blood group alleles
A sub-committee of five members of the Working Party have been developing a terminology for blood group alleles for use in transfusion practice. The group met in Bristol in September and tables listing the alleles for 23 blood group systems and two other related genes have been posted on the Working Party website. Work continues on the remaining systems.

Workshop on Blood Group Molecular Genotyping
Geoff Daniels, Ellen van der Schoot, and Martin Olsson have organised a Workshop for 2010, in collaboration with Professor Urbaniak and the National Institute for Biological Standards and Control (NIBSC) in the UK. Samples will be sent out to over 50 participants in April 2010 and there will be a feedback meeting during the 2010 Congress in Berlin. Three of the samples to be sent out are proposed WHO reference reagents, prepared in collaboration with ISBT.

Collaborative study for a plasma DNA sensitivity standard
The Working Party collaborated with NIBSC in a study to establish the suitability of a plasma DNA sensitivity standard for fetal RhD genotyping.
The WP’s principal activity in 2009 was to provide further support to education and training in Transfusion Medicine in Chile and to provide assistance and advice in matters related to organisation of blood services and training in Transfusion Medicine to professionals in the developing world, as required (e.g. Malawi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Peru, Colombia). Specifically, the WP assisted in a Diploma in Transfusion Medicine, organised by the Bio Bio Blood Centre in conjunction with the University of San Sebastian.

The purpose of the Diploma is to increase Chile’s and Bolivia’s knowledge in Transfusion Medicine and the organisation of blood services, offering postgraduate training to medical doctors, medical technologists and nurses. This will contribute to the constant improvement of blood transfusion safety and quality and develop the next generation of specialists to lead Blood Services in the future.

The Diploma enabled Chile to contribute to its own commitment to work with neighbouring countries to share knowledge and resources to help with the achievement of improvements in blood safety set out by the Pan-American Health Organisation in its Regional Plan for Latin America. Among those attending as part of this international co-operation were the co-ordinator of the Bolivian National Blood Programme and the directors of the 3 Bolivian blood centres.

The Diploma is intended to give theoretical knowledge and practical application in a broad range of transfusion medicine and transfusion services topics. Given its international character, the Diploma meets high demands according to European standards. The Diploma started in 2008 and is divided into two curricula with four different modules. In 2009/10 the WP provided financial support for six speakers for two of the modules.

The first module had the theme “Blood Centres management, marketing and Transfusion Microbiology” and covered transfusion microbiology, safety, leucodepletion and pathogen inactivation. It also covered the essential management and marketing systems for an effective and sustainable national blood service, based on voluntary, regular donors. The second module had the theme ‘Quality assurance and transfusion in the clinical context’. It covered quality in hospital blood banks, appropriate use of blood components and, again microbiology. The Diploma has been very well received with formal evaluation reviews of the speakers scoring at consistently very high levels.

The main success of the Diploma is that there are now 35 newly trained doctors and medical technologists in Chile, mainly in hospitals, who are able to influence clinical practice by supporting hospital transfusion committees where they exist and introducing them where they do not. Also through promoting appropriate use of blood components, and adherence to clinical standards and guidelines for transfusion, the Diploma is helping to meet specific requirements set out by WHO. The training provided has been instrumental in improving standards in the newly formed regional Blood centres in Chile and Bolivia.

Finally, WP members were instrumental in the creation of Blood Transfusion International, a scheme of assessment for developing countries to assist them to make stepwise, sustainable improvements to their blood services. Although the WP has not been involved in supporting any assessments this year, members have nevertheless continued to be advocates for the scheme and the evidence is of a growing number of countries that wish to have an assessment. This should therefore be a major focus for the WP in 2010/11.
Transmitted Diseases
Chairperson: Silvano Wendel

Since the report of the group in November 2009 there were no additional reports from the Virology or Bacteriology groups. The activities of the other groups are given below.

Parasitology – The primary focus since the meeting in Cairo has been directed toward finalizing the parasite questionnaire, designed by Leiby & Assal, developed to assess the impact of parasites on transfusion medicine in blood collection agencies globally, such as data on transfusion transmitted parasites, local epidemiology of the agents, mitigation efforts and public health perceptions. The final questionnaire has now been validated by several members and distributed early in 2010 with responses due by the end of the first quarter. Several subgroup volunteers will be responsible for compilation of the data, solicitation of feedback from key contributors, and the development of a summary manuscript for submission to Vox Sanguinis.

Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathy (TSE) - The first work of the group has been published in Vox Sanguinis (Vox Sang. 2009; 96:284-91. Erratum in: Vox Sang. 2009; 97:362). At present, the group is working on a new project open to ISBT interest. In addition, new experts are planned to join the subgroup, since now there are only 3 members.

HBV Blood Safety- The activities of the group on both occult HBV infection (OBI) and HBsAg positive blood donor samples have been expanded to several countries such as Lebanon, Oman, Sudan, Finland, and new groups in Spain (Valladolid). Samples have been received at Cambridge and were tested according to the standard protocols. The interesting cases of vaccinated individuals infected by non-A2 HBV strains identified by the American Red Cross (S Stramer) have been extensively studied as collaboration between ARC, Prof Gerlich’s group in Giessen and Cambridge. A manuscript is being presently written reporting the findings. In parallel similar cases of donors carrying HBV DNA, low level of anti-HBs but no anti-HBc have been identified elsewhere such as Hong Kong, Singapore, Thailand, South Africa and Germany. Contrary to the situation found in the USA, the majority of these donors did not receive HBV vaccine but show evidence of an immune response to HBV indicating recent contact with the virus. This data is also being reported into a manuscript.

1. Change in the layout and process for data entry which is now achieved under separate tabs in the data section of the main page that break inputs into logical groups of related information.
2. Change in the results reporting that now separate risk and cost utility results. Both are available but under separate tabs in the results section thus allowing users to focus on different content according specific interest/relevance.
3. Report generation and data sharing capacity have been enhanced; b) Delivery of data for Brazil, South Africa, and USA for inclusion in the pilot project analysis; c) Progress report and presentation at the WP-TTID meeting in Cairo; d) A near final version of the dashboard has been developed; a few modifications are necessary before the version can be released for wider use.

Epidemiology and Surveillance- The group has been focusing on developing a survey for donor election criteria in different countries. The purposes of the survey will be to compare donor selection criteria in different countries that are intended to reduce the risk of transmissible disease, and to compare these criteria with factors that may have an influence on their appropriateness in that country, such as background epidemiology of disease, risk factors, TD testing, types of donors (voluntary or replacement), how screening is carried out, structure of blood centre etc. Dr. Sheila O’Brien from the Canadian Blood Services is taking the lead in developing the survey instrument.
REPORTS FROM THE ISBT STANDING COMMITTEES

Standing Committee on Education
Chairperson: Faten Moftah,
Secretary: Beryl Armstrong

Faten Moftah  Beryl Armstrong

2009
June: participation of ISBT at Training and Education meeting and Blood Transfusion Congress arranged by the Africa Society for Blood Transfusion (AfSBT) in Nairobi.
August: combined ISBT Working Party for elearning with ISBT Validation Task Force representatives to coordinate elearning activities.
October: Member joined Steering Committee, South African National Blood Service Transfusion Medicine Training Centre, to participate in development of elearning and web-based training for SADC countries.
December: Project initiated by AfSBT to coordinate a project for the step-wise accreditation of blood services in Africa, in collaboration with ISBT and other international partners.

2010
Two members have arranged to meet in Durban South Africa to finalize draft chapters for the proposed publication: Introduction to Leadership and Management Skills. It is planned to discuss these drafts with the Committee during the ISBT Berlin meeting.

Follow-up: last year’s achievement
Introduction to Blood Transfusion Technology, Science Series, Volume 3 Issue 2 (June 2008): ISSN 1751-2816 (Print), ISSN 1751-2824 (free online). Summary on dissemination of 6000 hard copies
- A copy was placed in each registered delegate’s congress bag, at ISBT Macao.
- Approximately 2500 were later distributed to Vox Sanguinis subscribers.
- Additional copies were disseminated as shown:
  - Members of AfSBT and other contacts in Algeria (1), Botswana (12), Burkina Faso (5), Burundi (1), Cameroon (2), Cap Verde (8), Côte d’Ivoire (1), Egypt (51), Equatorial Guinea (1), Eritrea (2), Ethiopia (1), Gabon (2), Ghana (1), Guinea (4), Kenya (11), Lesotho (3), Malawi (13), Mali (1), Mauritius (2), Namibia (72), Niger (2), Nigeria (13), Rwanda (1), Senegal (1), South Africa (50), Tanzania (11), Tunis (1), Uganda (2), Zambia (7), Zimbabwe (2).
  - Other countries outside Africa: Jamaica, Jordan, Canada, UK, Finland, USA, Switzerland, China, India, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Viet Nam.
  - Delegates to AfSBT Training and Education meeting (Nairobi June 2009) and in congress bags, Nairobi (25-27 June).
  - Sixty copies were distributed to delegates of South African National Blood Transfusion Congress, Johannesburg: 16-18 November 2009.

The remaining 380 copies were shipped to South Africa to distribute to African countries, with the help of AfSBT and sponsors. ISBT Central Office retained approximately 100 copies.

Important tasks not yet completed from last time period
- ISBT expert panel data still to be shared with the Committee.
- Committee members still to submit information on available publications for use in training initiatives.
- Formula for financing of training still to be forwarded to committee members.

Comments in conclusion
Many members of the Education Committee do not communicate, participate or attend meetings. It is therefore very difficult to establish and grow enthusiasm or strengthen its purpose and usefulness. Redefining the terms of reference and the credibility/suitability of individual committee members may help to resolve this challenge.
Standing Committee for Vox Sanguinis
Chairperson: Paul Strengers

The Vox Sanguinis standing committee had the intention to hold its annual meeting in April 2010, but unfortunately due to the volcanic eruption in Iceland and the subsequent restriction in air traffic, the meeting had to be cancelled.

Instead during a telephone conference, the committee reviewed Vox for the year 2009. The journal received 260 manuscripts. The rejection rate was 53%. The average time from submission to print was 5.6 months and from submission to online publication of 3 months, which is very fast. The impact factor rose from 2.588 in 2007 to 2.755 in 2008, an increase of 6%. The Science Series is now well established. Science Series publications were associated with the Regional Congresses in Cairo and in Nagoya. In 2009 Vox Sanguinis has awarded for the first time the Vox Sanguinis Best Paper Prize.

Out of eight papers the selection committee, i.e. the members of the Jean Julliard Prize Committee selected the paper: Reil A, Keller-Stanilawski, Guenay S, Bux J: Specificities of leucocyte alloantibodies in transfusion-related acute lung injury and results of leucocyte antibody screening of blood donors. Vox Sang 2008;95:313-317 as the best paper of 2008. The prize was presented to the authors at the Regional Congress in Nagoya.

Spotlight Series
In 2010 ISBT established a new Spotlight Series as part of the ISBT Science Series. The Spotlight series are individual Science Series Guidebooks containing papers published in conjunction with a number of recent congresses. The topic of the first Science Series Spotlight Guide was “Clinical Transfusion”.

WHO Resolution on Availability, safety, and quality of blood products

ISBT was asked to comment and support a new WHO draft Resolution on Availability, safety, and quality of blood products. In response to that request, Paul Strengers drafted a statement document on behalf of ISBT which at the meeting of the WHO Executive Board in January 2010 was presented by Charles Munk. The statement of ISBT being one of the stake holders in the effectuation of the resolution was very well received and the resolution was adopted for bringing to the World Health Assembly. At the 63rd World Health Assembly in May 2010, this important resolution and other resolutions which highlight the need for blood safety, including safe blood products, safe clinical transfusion, viral hepatitis and safe waste management and also on partnerships were adopted. As a consequence, member states of the WHO have committed themselves to put more efforts in the availability, safety and quality of all blood products.

Global Consultation on 100% Voluntary Non-remunerated Donation of Blood and Blood Components

ISBT participated in the Global consultation on ‘100% Voluntary Non-remunerated Donation of Blood and Blood Components’ (VNRBD). The consultation was held in June 2009 in Melbourne Australia just before the global launch of World Blood Donor Day 2009. More than 65 experts in transfusion medicine, policy makers, and government and non-government representatives from 38 countries across all WHO regions participated. The consultation was organised by the WHO in collaboration with the Australian Department of Health and Ageing, the Australian Red Cross Blood Service, the Australian and New Zealand Society of Blood Transfusion and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

The participants took part in plenary and workshop sessions. The plenary sessions focused on global and regional aspects of 100% VNRBD and on the ground experiences from different countries. The six working groups examined four different questions; what are specific constraints in the area for achieving 100% VNRBD, what are the strategies and interventions to address these challenges, how would you implement these strategies and interventions and how would you measure the impact of these interventions.

Finally the groups worked on the Melbourne Declaration which can be found at www.who.int/world-blooddonorday/MelbourneDeclaration2009.pdf

World Blood Donor Day 2009

Australia was the host nation for World Blood Donor Day (WBDD) 2009. The launch activities took place in Melbourne’s Federation Square and in the BMW Edge amphitheatre. Donors, recipients and special guests entering the BMW Edge were greeted by Blood Service mascot Billy the Blood Drop and 90 bright red mannequins strategically placed on every third chair to represent the one in three people who will need blood in their lifetime.

Speeches were given by various dignitaries including Chairman of the Blood Service, Dr David Hamill, Health Minister Nicola Roxon and Aboriginal representative Joy Murphy. A flag handover to Spain, the 2010 World Blood Donor Day international hosts was also featured in the ceremony.

Awards were given to outstanding donors from all over Australia for their valuable contribution a series of nine film vignettes especially produced for The Year of the Blood Donor were shown. Guests were asked to explore WBDD art installations in the square and get their blood type tested in ‘The Dome’. The Dome and its smaller counterpart ‘The Luna’ were part of a National travelling exhibition giving Australians the chance to not only find out what their blood types are, but also take in some of the Blood.

ISBT is one of the four founding partners of WBDD and was represented at the Global Launch by Judith Chapman, Executive Director.
The ISBT Award was presented during the General Assembly to Dr Yasmin Ayob, Kuala Lumpur and Dr. Shinji Yuasa, Japan.

Dr Ayob is Senior Consultant, National Blood Centre, Kuala Lumpur. She was the director of the National Blood Centre in Kuala Lumpur from 2000-2008. She drafted the blueprint for the reorganization of the Blood Transfusion Service, consolidated the service and played a major role in the development of the BTS in Malaysia. She established the Cord Blood Bank in Kuala Lumpur - the first Cord Blood Bank in the Country. She has also chaired various committees in establishing guidelines and standards for procurement, processing, storage and issue of stem cells. Together with the Advance Medical and Dental Institute, Universiti Sains, Malaysia, Dr Ayob developed postgraduate courses for scientists and doctors in Transfusion Medicine – Masters in Transfusion Science and Masters in Transfusion Medicine.

Dr Ayob holds a number of prominent positions; President Of the Malaysian Society of Blood Transfusion, on the Editorial Board of Transfusion Medicine – the official journal of the British Blood Transfusion Society, Chairman, National Working Committee on Stem Cell Procurement, Storage & Allocation (Malaysia), Honorary Lecturer, Advance Medical and Dental Institute, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Honorary Lecturer, National University of Malaysia and Visiting Pathologist, National Heart Institute, Kuala Lumpur Malaysia.

Dr. Yuasa graduated the Juntendo University School of Medicine in 1961 and took the post graduate course in surgery. In 1965 he met Dr. Charles Huggins of Massachusetts Hospital in Boston. Taking this opportunity, Dr. Yuasa was invited by Dr. Huggins to MGH as a surgical research fellow of Harvard Medical School. There he got big impact which he never imagined; that was the great difference in blood transfusion therapy between the two countries, glass bottle whole blood in Japan, while in the US blood components, apheresis platelet transfusion, and even frozen blood were used routinely. This “transfusion shock” changed his area of interest from surgery to transfusion medicine. In 1969, he returned to Japan. He immediately persuaded the director of the hospital to set up the Blood Transfusion Services to supply the most advanced transfusion therapy to all patients who need them. In 1973 the modern Blood Transfusion Services was opened. In 1996, Dr Yuasa became the congress president of 24th International Congress of the ISBT in Makuhari, Japan. This congress was the second one held in Japan. More than 1800 people including 700 guests attended the 24th congress from 69 countries and regions. The big transfusion impact he experienced at MGH had changed his life from surgery to transfusion medicine. Since then, more than 40 years, he has devoted himself to the development of Blood Transfusion and Blood Transfusion medicine in Japan.