

## **Commission on Latin America Affairs**

### **List of Commission Members**

Chair Manuel Campos (Chile)  
Secretary Eduardo Barragán (México)  
Treasurer Patricia Braga (Uruguay)  
LASSE Esper Abrao Cavalheiro (Brasil)  
Vice-President and EC Liaison Marco Medina (Honduras)  
EC Liaison Samuel Wiebe (Canada)  
Members  
Franz Chaves Sell (Costa Rica)  
Beatriz González del Castillo (Venezuela)  
Salvador González-Pal (Cuba)  
Silvia Kochen (Argentina)  
Magda Nunez (Brasil)  
Ex-officio Alejandro Scaramelli (Uruguay)

### **List of Sub-Commissions and Members**

Latin American Epilepsy Surgery Subcommittee  
Chair Mario Alonso (Mexico)  
Secretary Americo Sakamoto (Brazil)  
Members  
Carlos Barzallo (Ecuador)  
Manuel Campos (Chile)  
Carlos DiGiano (Argentina)

### **Aims**

Specifically:

1. To provide and promote epilepsy education and research with excellence, quality, efficient and humanistic approach for medical and non-medical professionals in Latin America
2. To coordinate academic activities among the ILAE Latin America Region Chapters

### **Mission of the Commission**

The Latin American Commission has an objective to improve the diagnosis and treatment of the epilepsies in Latin-American, in the frame our ILAE politics and it's strategic plan.

### **Commission activities from July 2009 through July 2010**

1) IV Latin American Summer School on Epilepsy (LASSE) - Escuela de Verano de Epilepsia. February 2010, Sao Paulo, Brazil:

LASSE is organized by Prof. Esper Abrao Cavalheiro with the support of many Brazilian colleagues (Drs. Elza Marcia Yacubian, Americo Sakamoto, Fernando Cendes, etc). LASSE IV occurred 1 - 10 February 2010 at the Santa Monica Hotel and Convention Center in Guarulhos, São Paulo, Brazil. The main topic was Epilepsy and Time. During the congress a special award was presented to Prof. Francisco Rubio from Mexico for his work devoted to the development of epilepsy treatment in Mexico and Latin-America. LASSE IV had more than 50 young professionals from across Latin-America in attendance for the ten day course. The participants

learned through conferences and working in scientific projects. The congress was supported in part by ILAE (20%) with the rest of the support from the Brazilian Government and research agencies. The success of LASSE is also dependant on the generosity of the many faculty (epileptologists) in great relationship with ILAE.

The previous LASSE were:

- 1) The First Latin American Summer School on Epilepsy: Epilepsy: translating basic knowledge into clinical applications , was held from 4 - 14, February 2007.
- 2) The Second Latin American Summer School on Epilepsy: Increasing knowledge and decreasing treatment gap , was held from 7 - 17, February 2008.
- 3) The Third Latin American Summer School on Epilepsy: Epileptogenesis in the developing brain: basis for treatment and prevention , 4 - 14, February 2009.

## 2) Latin American Epilepsy Congress (LACE)

The LACE is our main regional activity organized every other year in partnership with the International Bureau for Epilepsy (IBE) Commission in Latin-America. Our VI LACE was held in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, 1 – 4 August 2010. Participation in this Congress included more than 700 delegates from across Latin-America. The Liga Colombiana Contra la Epilepsia was in charge of the local organization. The local committee was: Orlando Carreño, Jaime Carrizosa, Daniel Nariño and Martín Torres. The congress had many activities: Plenary conferences, workshops and special educational courses of the Latin American Academy of Epilepsy (ALADE). During the congress several closed meetings of ILAE and IBE also occurred. One of the main activities was a meeting of all Latin American Chapters, where each Chapter gave a report on: epilepsy prevalence, resources (human and equipments), AEDs map, specific problems, etc. This helped to make our region more cohesive; re-evaluate special needs for each Chapter, and recognize the gap between different countries. The conferences were recorded and soon we will have the audio and slides in the ILAE Web site.

## 3) Latin American Academy of Epilepsy (ALADE)

ALADE depends on our Commission and is its academic arm. The members of the ALADE Executive Committee are: Elza M. Yacubian (Brazil), Patricia Campos (Perú), Silvia Kochen (Argentina), Francisco Rubio Donnadiou (México), Alejandro Scaramelli (Uruguay), Esper Cavalheiro (Secretary, Brazil) and Marco T. Medina (President, Honduras). They will serve from 2008 to 2011.

**ALADE Mission:** To provide and promote epilepsy education and research with excellence, quality, efficient and humanistic approach for medical and non-medical professionals in Latin America.

**ALADE Vision:** To promote and provide epilepsy education and research, aiming to improve the health care of people with epilepsy in the region.

**Goal:** The goal of ALAE is to promote epilepsy education and research in the Latin American region in order to improve health care of people with epilepsy.

ALADE offered courses at the LACE 2010 and published educational materials. The courses were:

- A) Neurobiology
- B) EEG
- C) Epilepsy prevention
- D) Advances in genetics and epilepsy
- E) Clinical Trials

The first textbook of ALADE was “*Semiología de las crisis epilépticas*” (Seizures semiology) edited by Silvia Kochen (Argentina) and Elza Marcia Yacubian (Brazil), with support from an academic grant from Abbott.

#### 4) Latin American Epilepsy Surgery Subcommittee

The ILAE Commission on Latin American Affairs with the approval of the ILAE President, Peter Wolf, appointed a new Latin American Epilepsy Surgery Subcommittee. The members of this Subcommittee are: Mario Alonso (Chair, Mexico), Americo Sakamoto (Secretary, Brazil), Carlos Barzallo (Ecuador), Manuel Campos (Chile), Carlos DiGiano (Argentina) and a member from Central America (Guatemala).

The term of this Subcommittee will be the same as the ILAE Commission on Latin American Affairs. The main goals of this Subcommittee are improving the epilepsy surgery gap in Latin America; promoting education and research on epilepsy surgery; and working closely with the Latin American Academy of Epilepsy (ALADE). The main achievement of this Subcommittee has been the accomplishment of the first Fellowship in Epilepsy Surgery. Due to the underdevelopment of Epilepsy surgery in many countries in the region, we obtained ILAE support for one fellowship in surgical treatment of epilepsies (neurosurgeon) with Dr. Mario Alonso at the National Neurological and Neurosurgical Institute of Mexico as mentor and coordinator. The first fellowship was for a young colleague from Peru.

#### 5) Relationships with North America Sub-commission:

The Latin American Commission worked with the North American Commission, its chair (Jacqueline French, USA) and the Education Task Force of the North American Region. Our main point goal was education, through the program Partnering Epilepsy Centers in the Americas (PECA). This program was developed by José Cavazos (USA) with economic support from UCB. It consists of visiting American professors in Latin American epilepsy centers giving support for the development in specific areas of the epilepsies. Many countries were involved: Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, etc.

In addition, CAMELICE (Mexican League Against Epilepsy) received 20 fellowships to the best young researchers for attendance at the American Epilepsy Congress in San Antonio, Texas. The persons involved in these activities were Eduardo Barragán (President, CAMELICE) and José Cavazos (AES, local committee). This reflects the possibility and the capacity of collaboration between not only two different chapters but between commissions and can help in planning this kind of support in the next Latin American congress.

6) ILAE chapters in Latin-America:

a) New Chapters: In the region only two countries do not have ILAE chapters yet (Bolivia and El Salvador). In the last year, with the participation of Eduardo Barragan and Samuel Wiebe, both countries prepared the formal requirements and are now ready for ILAE evaluation. We hope we will soon have them as formal chapters in our Commission.

b) Renewal of already established ILAE chapters: Due to lack of recent and updated information on some chapters, policies were conducted to contact them and to help them to give a newreport on their activities. A good example was Nicaragua which is again involved in our ILAE activities. Our tasks on the topic are not finished yet. We would also like to include new physicians in the management of each chapter, because one of our main duties is identification of new and young colleagues with interest in epilepsy. These people will be the next generation for the development of epilepsy care in Latin America.

7) Regional Journals in Epilepsy: There are three epilepsy journals in Latin America, where now it is possible to publish local research. The *Neurophysiologic Journal* from Brazil, is published in English; *Revista Chilena de Epilepsia*, is published in Spanish and *Revista Uruguay de Epilepsia* has been published since the early 90 s, but so far it has only a local distribution.

8) Work together with IBE (International Bureau for Epilepsy): Our commission has an excellent relationship with the Latin American IBE Commission (Lilia Nuñez, Chair, Mexico and Tomás Mesa, Secretary, Chile) and the international Vice-President (Carlos Acevedo, Chile). We work together in academic and social activities for development of epilepsy in the region as well as organizing the LACE. Our next step is to work with the Global Campaign, Epilepsy Out the Shadows together with the World Health Organization (WHO). Another goal is to include the epilepsies in the PAHO (Pan-American Health Organization) agenda in the next meeting of the health minister with the PAHO.

#### **Accomplishments (2009-2010)**

- IV Latin American Summer School on Epilepsy (LASSE).
- Successful Latin American Epilepsy Congresses in Colombia (2010).
- The Latin American Academy of Epilepsy (ALADE)
- Creation of the Fellowship in Epilepsy Surgery.
- Successful Global Campaign regional activities.
- Establishing a collaborative educational project with the ILAE North American Commission.

#### **Recommendations for Future Work**

- 1) Support to LASSE as an important educational activity.
- 2) Support to the Latin American congresses, as the main activity in our region.
- 3) Continuous support to the Latin American Epilepsy Academy (ALADE) and the regional educational activities (i.e., Mesoamerica and Caribbean, Andean, etc).
- 4) Improve basic and epidemiological research and improve epilepsy care in Latin America (i.e., neurocysticercosis project, epilepsy surgery gap and treatment gap).

5) Develop fellowships in our region for young epileptologists, where main epilepsy centers in the region will be involved.