With the foundation of the WFO in 1995, the oldest dental specialty became truly international. In my leadership positions, I witnessed the evolvement of an extensive communication and cooperation network of orthodontic organizations in almost all five continents. The assistance of the WFO was crucial in advancing national orthodontic associations all over the world.

Based on collective leadership, all members of the Executive Committee contributed significantly to the efficient governance of our organization and the promotion of its goals. I am proud about the following WFO actions during the last 5 years, which are very important for our specialty and our organization:

• The WFO Executive Committee approved and adopted an exemplary curriculum for postgraduate orthodontic studies, which was published in the June 2009 issue of the WJO.
• The WFO Committee on National and Regional Orthodontic Boards established a network of boards around the world and assisted in the development of standards and guidelines for new national and regional certifying boards.
• The WFO hosted last February the very successful 7th International Orthodontic Congress in Sydney, Australia. The scientific program covered all aspects of contemporary orthodontics and related sciences presented by the best lecturers in the corresponding fields. The joint efforts of the WFO, the Australian Society of Orthodontists, and the Asian Pacific Orthodontic Society maximized the scientific, cultural, and political impact of this event, which was highly appreciated by thousands of participants from all over the world.
• The WFO affiliated at the end of 2008 with the Chinese Orthodontic Society, which was a historic moment because one of the biggest orthodontic societies in the world joined our organization. Since then, about 1,000 Chinese colleagues receive all WFO membership benefits and enjoy the hospitality of the international orthodontic community.

Looking into the future of our specialty, much must be improved. However, looking back, significant progress in sciences, education, and legislation as related to orthodontics can be observed. This should make us optimistic. Challenges of the future are:

• The standards of orthodontic education will continue to rise and orthodontic organizations will become more involved in community politics, thus facilitating better orthodontic services. In many parts of the world, individuals will get access to orthodontic treatment for the first time.
• Developing countries will improve their postgraduate education, which will reflect positively on dentistry, including orthodontics. Well-structured university programs; dedicated, qualified, and ambitious teachers; and enthusiastic and hard-working students will result in well-trained modern orthodontic specialists.
• Patient awareness regarding the merits of treatment of malocclusion by qualified specialists will increase and be supported as one of the prime goals by the orthodontic organizations.

I am confident that the WFO will continue to contribute to the advancement of the art and science of orthodontics throughout the world by fulfilling various organizational and educational objectives.

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