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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE The Meaning of MEMC

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As I write this article during a long Trans-Atlantic flight after the Mediterranean Emergency Medicine Congress (MEMC), I reflect on the centrality of this meeting for international emergency medicine. The approximately 1,500 delegates at MEMC make it the largest international meeting of emergency physicians. The coordinated efforts of AAEM with the European Society of Emergency Medicine (EuSEM) remain a model of cooperation. The meeting not only attracts emergency physicians from the U.S. and around Europe, but also the eastern and southern Mediterranean countries, as well as increasing numbers of physicians from Africa, Central and South America and throughout Asia.

We held another great meeting with fine speakers from around the world. Joe Lex and Gunnar Öhlén served as executive chairs, doing an outstanding job of organizing a complex meeting. Richard Shih organized the U.S. track chairs, Roberta Petrino and her team organized the European track chairs and speakers, and Antoine Kazzi and Peter Cameron organized track chairs and speakers from the rest of the world. The structure of the meeting blended speakers and delegates from around the world at almost every session. The Sociedad Española de Medicina de Urgencia y Emergencias (SEMES), served as gracious hosts. They have more than 5,000 members and have an active campaign to achieve primary board recognition from the Spanish Ministry of Health.

MEMC serves as an essential meeting for those interested in international emergency medicine. The Society for Academic Emergency Medicine (SAEM) sent a delegation of their international committee to forge links with emergency physician researchers around the world. The International Federation for Emergency Medicine (IFEM) staffed an exhibit booth promoting their International Conference in Emergency Medicine in Singapore (ICEM 2010). Delegations from South America, Mexico and Korea also met at MEMC to plan their upcoming meetings.

At MEMC, a number of representatives from national societies around the world requested AAEM presence at their upcoming meetings. Most of these requests did

not include material support, but only educational support because of the fine reputation of speakers at our CME conferences. I encourage any of our members with a strong interest in international emergency medicine to consider joining our international committee. Virtually unlimited opportunities for overseas involvement in emergency medicine education exist at this time.

Indeed, with great satisfaction, we now see the rapid proliferation of emergency medicine around the world. Many European countries now have multiple residency programs and organized boards. EuSEM recently issued a statement recognizing the primacy of residency training and developed a set of "core competencies" for European emergency physicians. We recognize EuSEM as an equal partner. I highly recommend not only our biennial MEMC conferences, but also EuSEM's conferences for cutting edge information of relevance to emergency physicians around the world. EuSEM holds its scientific assemblies in even years, with the next meeting set for Stockholm in October 2010. Our greater attendance at the EuSEM meeting will strengthen the relationship between our organizations and increase the involvement of AAEM in international emergency medicine.

Of course, I hope to see many of our members at the next MEMC on the Greek island of Kos in September 2011. We expect MEMC VI to be the most successful international meeting ever, in an incredibly beautiful beach setting. Come to the home of Hippocrates, renew your oath in the ancient amphitheatre of Odeum, cruise the Greek Isles or visit nearby Turkey whose beautiful shores can be seen from our conference center.

We owe a great deal of gratitude to the visionary founders of MEMC, Roberta Petrino and Francesco Della Corte of Italy, and our own Antoine Kazzi. They founded MEMC as a catalyst for all in the Mediterranean area and around the world with an interest in emergency medicine. What is the meaning of MEMC? MEMC serves as a shining example of emergency physicians from around the world interacting in a cooperative manner, learning from each other and building bridges in a manner not possible by politicians.

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