

African Organisation for
Research and Training in
Cancer

Organisation Africaine
pour la Recherche et
l'Enseignement sur le
Cancer

AORTIC NEWS

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In this edition:

- Story of AORTIC
- IV International Conference on Cancer in Africa - October 6-10, 2003, Accra, Ghana
- Progress Report
- Membership
- Information for Contributors

Protem Officers Of AORTIC 2002-2003

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(New York, NY, USA)

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MD, FRCPC (Nanaimo, BC, Canada)

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PhD (West Lafayette, IN, USA)

History of AORTIC

The African Organization for Research and Training in Cancer (AORTIC) had its beginning during a lunch break meeting in Seattle, WA, USA, during the 13th International Cancer Congress, September 8-15, 1982. The meeting was at the recommendation of Dr. James F Holland of the Mount Sinai School of Medicine, New

York, NY, USA. A tabled working paper was to form the basis for action until the organization could be formally inaugurated. A committee was established comprised of: Dr. Victor A. Ngu of the Republic of Cameroon, Protem Chairman; Dr. Toriola F Solanke of Nigeria, Chairman of the Organising Committee; Dr. Chris KO Williams of Nigeria, Protem Secretary-General; and Dr. James F Holland, Scientific Adviser. The Committee was to identify and contact established African doctors and scientists interested in neoplastic diseases and raise funds for the maiden meeting of AORTIC.

The inaugural meeting took place at the Sarakawa Hotel, Lome, Republic of Togo on the 22nd and 23rd of July, 1983. Twenty-four doctors from fourteen countries, namely, the People's Republic of Benin, Republic of Cameroon, Republic of Congo, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, Sweden, Togo, the United States of America, and Upper Volta participated in the meeting. Dr. Jan Stjernward, Chief of the Cancer Unit at the World Health Organization, Geneva, Switzerland, represented the Headquarters of the Organization. Dr. Charles L M Olweny of Canada/Uganda and Dr. Papa Toure of Senegal represented the WHO Regional Headquarters in Brazzaville, Congo.

The Need for an International Organization for Cancer Research in Africa

The need for AORTIC becomes obvious as reports show that cancer is rapidly emerging as a major public health problem in Africa. The erroneous myth that cancerous diseases are rare in Africa has been nullified by numerous publications of various investigators on cancers in Africans. From available information, it is now recognized that cancer is a common disease, incidence rates are increasing with greater exposure to risk factors, and the burden of cancer in Africans is taking an exorbitant toll on individuals, communities, and resources of African countries.

In most developing countries, cancer work is rated low as more emphasis is placed on the control of communicable diseases and environmental sanitation. With improvements in the control of communicable diseases and environmental sanitation, increasing industrialization, urbanization, and concomitant increase in life expectancy, it can be confidently predicted that cancer will assume an even larger share of morbidity and mortality in the years to come. Significant progress is being made both in understanding the disease process and in the development of methods for prevention, treatment and cure through the activities of organized bodies for research and teaching in cancer on continents other than Africa. It is, therefore, imperative that workers in oncology in Africa increase their awareness of the cancer problems in developing countries and

prepare to meet the challenges of cancer control for the future. This can be accomplished through the establishment of appropriate cancer control programs based on knowledge and understanding of cancer trends, educational preparedness, and purposeful research to address specific issues of cancer in the region.

AORTIC can certainly meet these challenges and fill the vacuum in cancer activities in Africa through long range goals, specifically defined research objectives, epidemiological studies, and the acquisition of medical case materials in sufficient numbers for meaningful deductions to be made. These efforts would require a cadre of bio-statistical researchers to assure statistical validity of research methods and conclusions, and a training mechanism on a continuing basis for physicians and other health related professionals, nurses, data managers and laboratory scientists involved in cancer and cancer-related research.

IVth International Conference On Cancer in Africa, October 6-10 2003, Accra, Ghana

This cancer conference will bring together clinicians, scientists and researchers from Africa and other parts of the world and representatives of international agencies and organizations working in cancer and related fields to further develop a plan of action for cancer research and training in Africa. Mark your calendar and meet us in Accra.

International Organizing Committee:

J Abiodun Elegbede, PhD (Chairman): responsible for the overall development, coordination, and implementation of the 2003 AORTIC Conference as directed by the AORTIC Steering Committee; works with IOC sub-committees and the Local Organizing Committee (LOC) to ensure all aspects of conference preparations.

Scientific Program Committee:

Carrie P Hunter, MD, MPH, (Chairperson) (USA)

James Holland, MD, Scientific Adviser AORTIC (USA),

Lucille Adams-Campbell, PhD, (USA)

Clement Adebamowo, MD, (Nigeria)

Alex A. Adjei, MD, PhD, (USA/Ghana)

Basil Bloch, MD, (South Africa)

Doris Browne, MD, MPH, (USA)

Oscar Kashala, MD, PhD, DSc, (USA/Republic of the Congo-Kinshasa)

Hussein Khaled, MD, (Egypt)

Olufunmilayo Olopade, MD, (USA/Nigeria)

Nicholas A Othieno-Abinya, MD, (Kenya)

Verna Vanderpuye, MD, (Ghana)

Joel Yarney, MD, (Ghana)

Ex officio members:

C K O Williams, MD, FRCPC (Canada/Nigeria)

Founding Secretary-General, AORTIC

J. Abiodun Elegbede, PhD, (USA/Nigeria)

Chairman, International Organizing Committee

Kwame Kyere, PhD (Accra, Ghana)

Chairman, Local Organizing Committee

Finance Committee:

Oscar Kashala, MD, PhD, DSc. (Chairman) (USA/Republic of the Congo)

Barrie Adedeji, CPA, BSc.

(New York, NY, USA)

Responsible for securing funding support for the IVth International Cancer Conference/
General Meeting.

Publication and Hospitality Committee:

Doris Browne, MD, MPH (Acting Chairperson)

Sulma Mohammed, DVM, PhD

Responsible for coordination and preparation of conference arrangements and activities in collaboration with the Local Organizing Committee.

For more information about the conference, please contact:

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Founding Secretary-General of AORTIC

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Progress Report on AORTIC 2000 – 2002

In April 2000, AORTIC was re-activated during the annual meeting of the American Association for Cancer Research that was held in San Francisco, CA, USA. A major impetus for the reactivation was that the global revolution in electronic media and Internet access allowed for better communication among members within and outside of Africa. Furthermore, numerous African expatriate basic scientists and healthcare professionals in the disciplines of oncology (many of whom work in major European and North American institutions) have shown willingness to develop cancer research in Africa. Membership has been expanded to include other health professionals (nurses, pharmacists, and psychologist).

Major activities and accomplishments of AORTIC in 2000 - 2002 include:

- AORTIC Steering Committee established. Monthly teleconferences to discuss program plans
- Organization and implementation of regular meetings of the AORTIC membership concurrent with the annual meetings of the American Society of Clinical Oncology and the American Association for Cancer Research
- AORTIC Web Page created and e-mail communication instituted with members to facilitate communication and the exchange of ideas. Additional information on the organization may be found at our web site: <http://www.aortic.org>
- AORTIC Bylaws and Constitution – Draft document completed
- Surveys of the AORTIC membership concerning cancer problems in Africa, areas of interest, and recommendations for program activities
- Incorporation of AORTIC on October 25, 2001 by the State of New York, USA
- Implementation of plans for the **2003 AORTIC Fourth International Conference on Cancer in Africa - Accra, Ghana, on October 6-10, 2003.**

- Co-sponsorship of the 2003 International Conference on Cancer in Africa approved by the International Affairs Committee of the American Society of Clinical Oncology – May 2003.

Several international organizations have expressed interest and would welcome the opportunity to collaborate with AORTIC in addressing the challenges of cancer in Africa. These include:

- International Network for Cancer Treatment and Research (based at the Institut Pasteur in Brussels; President: Dr. Ian Magrath, formerly of NCI, USA)
- "Special Program on Liver Cancer" (a subdivision of Environment and Health In Communities of Africans" (led by Dr. Enitan Bababunmi, Nigeria/USA)
- American Society of Clinical Oncology (based in Alexandria, VA, USA)

Several other organizations have made their interest known since learning of the re-activation of AORTIC

Membership

Please note that the 2003 membership fees are now due and payable. For persons in developed countries of North America (USA and Canada), Western Europe, and Asia (Japan), the membership fee is \$75.00 US. For all other countries, the fee is \$25.00 US. Membership fee is \$25.00 US for trainees from developing countries studying or training in developed countries.

We appreciate your valued support. Please make your cheque payable to AORTIC and forward same to:

AORTIC

c/o Dr. Christopher Williams

Founding Secretary-General

British Columbia Cancer Agency

University of British Columbia

Nanaimo Cancer Clinic

1200 Dufferin Crescent

Nanaimo, B.C., Canada, V9S 2B7

If you have changed your mailing address or e-mail address, notify AORTIC by sending e-mail to: <mailto:Ann.McIntyre@CVIHR.bc.ca>.

AORTIC AT ASCO Annual Meeting in Orlando, Florida, USA May, 2002

Who can join AORTIC?

1. Membership of AORTIC is open to all, regardless of race, ethnicity or nationality.
2. Physicians, clinical research scientists, basic research scientists, nurses, social workers, psychologists, social scientists, epidemiologists, dentists and oral surgeons, pharmacists, laboratory technologists and other professionals at the Master's or Doctoral level as well as those individuals with professional equivalence who have been actively engaged in the research or clinical aspects of cancer.
3. Those in training to become physicians, basic scientists, epidemiologists, psychologists, nurses, social workers and social scientists.

Individuals recognized for their distinguished contribution to some aspect of oncology as it pertains to Africa or to another specialized field relating to oncology are eligible for nomination to honorary membership and can be nominated by any member.

4. Organizations at local and national levels which have aims similar to those of AORTIC or which support the aims of organizational members

AORTIC AT AACR Annual Meeting in San Francisco, CA, USA 2001

AORTIC AT ASCO Annual Meeting in San Francisco, CA, USA, 2001

How to join AORTIC

Contact AORTIC at: <mailto:infomail@aortic.org> and request membership materials.

Advantages of joining AORTIC.

Members will benefit in reaping the rewards of AORTIC'S aims and goals. Opportunities exist for members to assist in or benefit from:

- 1.** Developing an Africa-based organization dedicated to providing coherent advice, counsel and co-coordinating research planning that relates to prevention, early detection and cure of cancer;
- 2.** Developing and funding of training programs in oncology in member institutions or elsewhere.
- 3.** Organizing symposia, workshops, meetings and conferences in keeping with the organization's objectives.
- 4.** Assisting in the formulation of cancer research programs that are relevant in Africa.
- 5.** Providing international collaboration in cancer research.
- 6.** Arranging, sponsoring or participating in periodic lectures by distinguished scholars in oncology.
- 7.** Collaborating with existing organizations interested in neoplastic diseases in order to establish or assist in the setting up of journals and publication of monographs and books in oncology.
- 8.** Advising international and regional agencies about issues related to the challenge of cancer care and research in Africa.
- 9.** Encouraging and stimulating the formation of local, regional, national and international chapters, which further the goals of the organization.
- 10.** Recognizing exceptional contributions to the field of cancer control in Africa through Distinguished Service or other awards.

Information For Contributors

If you have a contribution to make to the Newsletter, please e-mail Ann McIntyre at <mailto:Ann.McIntyre@cvihr.bc.ca>