Date: Tuesday, 30 May 2017  
Time: 10.00 – 18.00  
Venue: Steigenberger Hotel Herrenberg, Vienna, Austria  
Room: Torberg/Kafka/Loos/Werfel

**Participants:**  
National Delegates from National Member Societies  
Members of the EFORT Board and Executive Committee

**Guests:**  
Presidents National Member Societies  
Presidents Associate Scientific Member Societies and Observers  
Presidents European Specialty Societies

**Topics**

1. **Welcome and introduction to the General Assembly strategy meeting Vienna**

JV welcomed all present and introduced the two topics to be discussed during the morning session.

This year the strategy meeting broke from the pattern of previous years and instead of 2 concurrent rooms discussing different topics, all delegates stayed in the same room and 2 topics were debated consecutively with all present. The format was a short introduction of the topic by the president, Jan Verhaar, after which the room broke up into small, lively discussion groups for 10 minutes. After this a spokesperson from each group summarised any issues and conclusions from each group, which in turn led to an open debate from the floor.

2. **Discussion on EU activities and how to influence policy at European Union level**

**Short summary of key points:**

- EFORT should continue its strategy to act as an umbrella organisation, representing the collective views of national associations and specialty societies to politicians at European level.
- Simply spending money on lobbying would be a waste – we need to arm ourselves with information and strategically approach political influence.
- We should endeavour to include the voice of patients in what we do – the advantages and problems associated with this were recognised.
- Collecting meaningful data in a way that can be pooled from different nations is a vital first step.
- Need to develop methods to do this effectively – pooled data will be very powerful.
- We need to work on how it is presented and even proactively put
messages from our data into the hands of the press and patients as well as directly to politicians.

- It may be better to shift from talking about the economic burden of an ageing population to the challenge of maintaining mobility and economic productivity by T&O activity which is part of the country’s economic activity as a whole.
- EFORT should move forwards in identifying reliable data sources, pooling national data, building up a picture of the need for T&O services, what is being provided, how much it varies and what is the impact on outcomes. Ultimately what can we say needs to be done, with what resources, to maintain a mobile, economically active population.
- The intention to hold a ‘road map’ meeting and progress with the European Affairs strategy recently communicated to national associations, and summarised at this strategy meeting, was upheld.

3. Discussion on Guidelines and Recommendations: How to harmonise guidelines and clinical standards across Europe

**Short summary of key points:**

- Guidelines and Standards can be costly to prepare as they are only useful if produced with rigour. As an example the recent EFORT/EULAR guideline on fragility fractures cost 30k€
- Guidelines can and should be shared – initially they could be made available for countries to exchange and adapt, but there was an appetite for European guidelines and EFORT could be a key player in moderating the development of these.
- This would be facilitated if existing or new guidelines could be translated into English to facilitate sharing from a common platform which EFORT was invited to, and would be happy to, host.
- Many countries volunteered to share what they have now.
- EFORT should aim to produce European guidelines on common and economically important problems such as fragility fractures, chronic pain, joint replacement, education standards, thromboprophylaxis, trauma standards, joint replacement etc, with appropriate specialty society input.
- EFORT will invite National Associations to submit guidelines they are prepared to share and will consider setting up a guideline group to rationalise how guidelines and standards can be shared, developed, checked, agreed and maintained.
- The aim will be to have a set of guidelines for common problems facing T&O surgeons. At the moment it has been pointed out that even for something as common and with such theoretically ‘standard’ treatment as open fractures, only 2 European countries have any existing guideline.
1. Welcome and minutes of the General Assembly Geneva

The minutes of the last General Assembly Geneva 2016 were unanimously approved, no further comments.

2. Elections

2.1 Statutes changes

The statutes changes as presented were unanimously approved, no rejections.

*Please refer to the updated version of the statutes incl. the 2017/2018 Board members in annex 1.*

2.2 Election new EFORT Board members

Appointment of tellers and presentation new candidates

Dieter Wirtz from Germany and Hans-Andre Schuppers from the Netherlands were appointed as tellers.

All candidates shortly presented themselves and the votes took place afterwards.

Tellers reported 49 votes in total.

**Votes for:**

- 2nd Vice President
  
  Philippe Neyret was elected 2nd Vice President for the period 2017/2018 with 48 approvals and 1 rejection.

- Treasurer
  
  Theofilos Karachalios was elected Treasurer for the period 2017 to 2019 with 47 approvals and 2 rejections.

- One Member at Large
  
  Enrique Gómez Barrena was elected Member at Large with 48 approvals and 1 abstention.

- One Young Member at Large
  
  Mirza Biscevic was elected Young Member at Large with 46 approvals and 3 abstentions.

All candidates accepted the votes and will take office as of 3 June 2017.
According to the EFORT Statutes and as per election during the General Assembly meeting in Prague 2015, Önder Aydingöz will be the EFORT President 2017/2018, also starting his term of office also on 3 June 2017.

3. Activity report 2016/2017

- Report from the President

*Please refer to the annual report in annex 2.*

There was no further discussion or comments from the audience.

4. Finance report

- Financial statements

AO shortly talked about the different measures that have been taken over the last year to secure EFORT’s financial status and also mentioned the change of environment, namely the new industry code, which started influencing the finances already.

Mr. Fappiano from the accounting company doing EFORT’s accounting then reminded all present of the 2016 recommendations from the Finance Committee (FC), presented the different measures taken in 2016 and also the current state, showing that all recommendations have been followed successfully.

Due to the fact that the EFORT Head Office is now directly responsible for sponsoring and industry relation and that industry payments are done directly through EFORT and not anymore through the PCO, EFORT now has a high level of cash flow.

The audit done by PWC confirmed the 2016 results as being positive and according to Swiss law.

- Budget forecast 2017

The 2017 budget forecast does not anymore include the pre-financing through the PCO, but in case it is needed, there would be a safety net of almost EUR 800k.

- Report from the Finance Committee

The report from the FC was done by Karsten Dreinhöfer (KD), member of the FC and substituting the spokesperson Benn Duus who was not able to attend the GA, due to other commitments at his hospital.

KD also confirmed that the FC recommendations from 2016 have been followed and that the new accounting system is much more transparent and more compliant.
The FC interprets the current financial situation as follows:

- EFORT has successfully achieved a “turn around”
- Net wealth of the society is positive
- Positive and increased cash flow
- Accumulated debts are being reduced and expected to disappear in 2018
- Less financial involvement of the PCO

However, major threats for 2017 could be:

- EUCOMEND compliance rules
- Potential reduced numbers of participation

The FC therefore recommends the following considerations for 2017/2018:

- Try to generate more income, independent from the congress
- Maintain economically evaluation of every new initiative
- Maintain the lowering of VIP benefits
- Consider further lowering of expenses
- Close follow up on economics
- Secure reserve funds of the size that the organisation can be driven for at least one year
  - Approval of accounts and election auditor

The accounts of the Federation and the auditors have been approved unanimously.

However, EFORT was asked to also consider different auditors for the future. This is already the case and different providers were included in the tender procedure and will be for future calls.

5. EFORT Individual fellow programme

JV presented the updated programme, which is a revamp of the former EFORT Academy, presented and approved during the General Assembly in Berlin 2012. EFORT felt the change was necessary, due to the changing and more challenging environment; changing requirements from the MedTech industry force EFORT to get closer to the individual. In 2016, EFORT conducted a survey on this topic with more than 1,000 answers, helping to update the programme, which would offer four different categories.

The official launch of the programme is planned for 01 October 2017.

Even though the new programme is an update of the Academy as mentioned above, some countries, namely Portugal, Greece and Spain,
and partly the UK, were reluctant to support the programme.

**ACTION:**
⇒ The EFORT Board will fine tune the programme and come up with an updated version

### 6. EBOT-UEMS/EFORT cooperation
- **Latest developments**

JV shortly reported that since the end of 2016, EBOT-UEMS and EFORT are working on an agreement to closely cooperate re. the EBOT exam, the aim is to establish an independent organisation with a combined board of both, EBOT-UEMS and EFORT representatives. During the meeting of the UEMS orthopaedic section in Bergen in May 2017, a draft, had been presented to the UEMS orthopaedic section and was accepted.

Following the acceptance of the EFORT General Assembly, both parties will now work out the detailed bylaws and do the necessary steps to set everything up.

### 7. EU Activities
- **EU Affairs Committee and priorities**

As already mentioned during the strategy meeting, EFORT asked all National Societies to nominate members for the new EFORT EU Affairs Committee and so far, 9 nominations have been received from 8 different countries (Germany, Portugal, Netherlands, UK, Denmark, Italy, France, Turkey).

EFORT will continue to act as an umbrella organisation, being the one voice in Brussels to raise awareness of musculoskeletal diseases among the European political arena.

Next steps will be to start working on the EU Affairs Committee and to set up a roadmap of activities for the end of 2017 and then 2018.

### 8. EFORT Congresses
- **Scientific highlights from the 18th EFORT Congress VIE 2017**

*Please refer to the presentation in annex 3.*

- **Scientific highlights from the 19th EFORT Congress BCN 2018**

*Please refer to the presentation in annex 4.*

- **EFORT Congress 2019**

*Please refer to the presentation in annex 5.*
9. Objectives 2017/2018

**Education** will be at the top of our key action areas. One of the greatest tasks achieved in the last few years was the introduction of European Curriculum of Orthopaedics and Traumatology in collaboration with EBOT and EFORT will continue to support this project. Other educational activities will be: organizing courses, providing e-learning opportunities, providing fellowships, publishing our journal, collaborating with other organizations and further developing the European Orthopedic and Trauma Education Platform.

Other pillars of our activities are **research, harmonization of guidelines, setting the clinical standards and providing a platform and voice for the discussion and promotion of orthopaedics and traumatology related issues for the European domain.**

ÖA stresses the fact that the Board’s main tasks are preserving the main pillars, strengthening the overall structure of EFORT and, if need arises, reorganizing some of its components to make the federation more relevant and responsive to the changing world.

So the Board will ensure the sustainability of regular EFORT activities. EFORT will work on the upcoming congresses of the next 2-3 years, collaborating with national associations, specialty societies and our industry partners to meet your expectations.

EFORT values the connection with UEMS–EBOT and is working towards an increased collaboration. Boards of both EFORT and UEMS-EBOT accepted the principles, which constitute the core of the procedures EFORT will hopefully finalize by the end of 2017.

EFORT will continue to try to find better ways to be more influential in the designation of **European-wide musculoskeletal health policies.**

Another important goal for the next year under the presidency of ÖA will be to collect data on orthopaedics and traumatology from all EFORT countries to display the current situation as realistically as possible. A task force within EFORT will guide the activity, which may bring the opportunity to see the big picture including research, training and service facilities and manpower data with further useful details. A lot of collaboration with the national associations will be needed to complete this task.

2018 will be a tough and unpredictable year for EFORT because of the changes coming from industry. The new MedTech code for ethical business practice will be in effect starting from 1 January 2018.

10. Miscellaneous
- Next General Assembly in Barcelona
The next General Assembly meeting will take place in Barcelona, Spain, on 29 May 2018 just before the EFORT congress.

- Any other business

No other business was discussed, JV closed the meeting and invited all present to join the General Assembly Welcome Reception.