

**Report of the 17th WSMI General Assembly**  
**Puerto-Vallarta, Jalisco, Mexico, 27-28 October 2011**

Hosted by AFAMELA, WSMI's member association in Mexico, the 17<sup>th</sup> WSMI General Assembly took place in Puerto-Vallarta, Jalisco, Mexico, on 27 and 28 of October 2011. With an excellent panel of speakers and high quality presentations, the two-day conference, entitled "Achieving the Self-Care Future", covered a broad range of aspects related to the challenges and opportunities of the self-medication sector in Latin America and worldwide. The conference benefited from a very interested and interactive audience of delegates from over 15 different countries.

A new model of benefit-risk framework for the OTC industry which has been developed by three independent experts with the support of WSMI was introduced by Professor Eric P. Brass, M.D., Ph.D., Professor of Medicine, David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA and Director, Harbor-UCLA Center for Clinical Pharmacology. In an environment where risks are increasingly seen as outweighing benefits, the objective of the model is to provide regulators with the information and tools they need to make balanced informed decisions when evaluating nonprescription medicines.

On the afternoon of the second day, a roundtable discussion covered the three aspects of the benefit-risk equation, distribution and advertising of nonprescription medicines. Industry and regulatory agency views were discussed transparently and extensively, and questions and comments from the audience allowed a rich and in-depth discussion. The World Health Organization's (WHO) views were also represented through the presence of a PAHO representative. WSMI is grateful for everyone's contribution. Overall, the conference allowed developing a better understanding of the benefits that self-care and responsible self-medication bring to individuals and health systems in the Latin-America Region and all over the world.

The 17<sup>th</sup> WSMI General Assembly was also the place for the handover of a WSMI chairmanship: Dr Zhenyu Guo, Chairman and CEO, Dihon Pharmaceutical, Kunming, China, took over the WSMI chairmanship from Mr Christopher Combe, President and Chairman, Combe Incorporated, USA. During the Welcome Dinner on the evening of the first day a cordial ceremony marked the occasion. Short speeches were given by WSMI D-G Dr David Webber, Chris Combe and Zhenyu Guo. David Webber then presented a thank-you gift to Chris Combe in acknowledgement of his three years of Chairmanship on behalf of the WSMI Board of Directors. The WSMI chairmanship alternates representation from the American, Asia-Pacific and European regions.



*WSMI D-G Dr David Webber presenting gift to WSMI immediate past-Chairman Chris Combe, President and Chairman of Combe Inc., USA.*



*Dr Zhenyu Guo, Chairman and CEO, Dihon Pharmaceutical, Kunming, China, new WSMI Chairman.*