History and development of the WFLD

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In 1988, the first International Congress of Laser in Dentistry hosted by Prof. Hajime Yamamoto, took place in Tokyo in Japan (Fig. 1). This was the first world-wide meeting of clinicians and scientists in the area of laser dentistry. People from around the world in total 16 countries and 400 participants came to this conference to discuss the application of lasers in research and clinical practice in the dental field. Owing to the high-quality presentations, the event was a huge success. Thus, it was decided to hold an international conference once every two years. Out of this intention, the International Society for Lasers in Dentistry (ISLD) was born (Fig. 2).

Later, the ISLD was renamed to "World Federation for Laser Dentistry" (WFLD). The objective of the association has always been to serve as a non-profit medium for the exchange, advancement and dissemination of scientific knowledge related to the use of lasers for application and research in the oral and dental environment.

Transitioning from ISLD to WFLD

In 2006, there was an important transition period in the WFLDs history. At the tenth ISLD congress in Berlin in Germany (Figs. 3 & 4) the executive board agreed on several changes. Although the ISLD had already met for the tenth time and could record many achievements in the development of laser dentistry to that date, it was still weak on an organisational level. Thus, the board considered how to form the associa-

Fig. 1: International Congress of Laser in Dentistry in Tokyo in 1988.
Fig. 2: First executive meeting in Tokyo in 1988.
Figs. 3 & 4: Organisational changes were discussed at the ISLD executive board meeting in Berlin in Germany in 2006.

Fig. 1

Fig. 2

Fig. 3

Fig. 4

tion into a more powerful academic body. Significant changes were made that also affected the association's legislative.

1. Reformation of the organisational structure

The organisation was grouped into five divisions: The North American Division, the South American Division, the Middle East and Africa Division, the Asian Pacific Division and the European Division. For each division, one board director was elected. In addition to the director of the newsletter and website and the already existing directors, that resulted in a total of 13 board directors.

2. Renaming the organisation

In the course of restructuring, the executive board decided on renaming the ISLD. To reflect the organisation's worldwide reach and importance, they agreed on the new name "World Federation for Laser Dentistry" (WFLD).

3. Adapting the annual membership fee

After the restructuring had been approved at the executive board meeting, it was again discussed at the country representative meeting. After a partial revision, approval for the proposal was reached at the general assembly meeting. In the course of this, the annual membership fee was also adapted.

Based on these approved changes, the reformation of the organisation was launched by Prof. Samir Nammour, who was president from 2006 to 2008. The ISLD/WFLD has gone from strength to strength owing to the expert guidance of its engaged presidents (Fig. 5).

Present WFLD activities

Nowadays, the WFLD is a powerful academic association in which each board member contributes to the organisation's success according to his or her respective role. The current board consists of 11 members headed by Prof. Kenji Yoshida as the president (Tab. 1). Furthermore, 14 associations in the area of laser dentistry from all over the world are registered as affiliate society members of the organisation (Tab. 2). In each of the five divisions, they perform academic activities, such as lectures, trainings and seminars. For example, the European Division has held six WFLD division conferences so far.

Besides its academic activities, the WFLD is involved in two professional publications. In its official journal *Photomedicine and Laser Surgery* (published by Mary Ann Liebert), it publishes current papers dealing with phototherapy and the use of lasers in various fields of medicine, including dentistry. The journal has an impact factor of 1.680. Additionally, the WFLD publishes *laser–international magazine of laser dentistry* (published by OEMUS MEDIA AG) in cooperation with the German Association for Laser Dentistry (DGL). This bilingual (English/German)

1988–1990 **Hajime Yamamoto** Japan

1990–1992 **Jacques Melcer** France

1992–2000 **Lynn Powell** USA

2000–2002 **John Frame** UK

2002–2004 **Loh Hong Sai** Singapore

2004–2006 **Isao Ishikawa** Japan

2006–2008 **Samir Nammour** Belgium

2008–2010 **Norbert Gutknecht** Germany

2010–2012 **Jean-Paul Rocca** France

2012–2016 **Aldo Brugnera Junior** Brazil

Fig. 5: Past Presidents of ISLD/WFLD.

Fig. 6

Fig. 7

magazine provides regular updates on international laser dentistry in the form of user-oriented case studies, scientific reports and product information focusing on the international and German laser market. Additionally, the magazine includes reports from international scientific congresses and symposia. The WFLD is also planning to publish a book titled *Laser Dentistry: Current Clinical Applications* with Profs. Aldo Brugnera Jr. and Samir Nammour as editors. Over more than 700 pages, the book will deal extensively with the latest findings from laser dentistry, presented by professionals from all over the world.

The WFLDs activities as an academic organisation are noteworthy. After the organisational restructuring of the WFLD, the official website, www.wfldlaser.com, was launched. Here, members can obtain the latest information on the organisation and upcoming events.

Past and future congresses

The last congress of the WFLD was held from 17 to 19 July 2016 in Nagoya in Japan, under the theme "Light to brighten the future" (Fig. 6). With this theme, the aim of the 15th congress was to move ahead from existing laser dentistry and dental health, seeking new developments through extensively incorporating "light" into the diagnosis and treatment of patients. Approximately, 510 participants from

WFLD executive committee 2016–2018

Kenji Yoshida (Japan)	President
Toni Zeinoun (Lebanon)	President-elect
Sajee Sattayut (Thailand)	General Secretary
Umberto Romeo (Italy)	Treasurer
Ambrose Chan (Australia)	Chairman of Asian & Pacific Division and Website Editor
Melissa Andreia Marchesan (USA)	Chairman of North American Division
Dimitris Strakas (Greece)	Chairman of European Division
Aldo Brugnera Junior (Brazil)	Chairman of North American Division, Immediate past President
Roger Bassit (Lebanon)	Chairman of Middle East & North African Division
Samir Nammour (Belgium)	Chairman of WFLD Legal affairs and international
Norbert Gutknecht (Germany)	Chairman of WFLD Headquarter & Governmental affairs

Tab. 1

Fig. 8

Fig. 6: WFLD President Prof. Kenji Yoshida was Chairman of the 15th WFLD congress in Nagoya in 2016.
Fig. 7: Industry exhibition at the 15th WFLD congress presenting the latest developments in dental laser technology.
Fig. 8: WFLD executive board meeting in Berlin in June 2017.

40 countries came to this forward-looking congress. In total, 174 papers were presented by speakers from all around the world. Furthermore, participants were able to visit the impressive industry exhibition presenting the latest developments in dental laser technology (Fig. 7). In addition, WFLD Basic Laser Certification Courses were held on 16 July 2016 by eight overseas speakers with 69 attendees.

In 2018, the ISLD/WFLD is now celebrating its 30th anniversary. This event will take place alongside the 16th World Congress in Laser Dentistry in Aachen in Germany. The congress will be held from 1 to 3 October 2018 in conjunction with the 27th annual meeting of the DGL. The Chairman of the congress organising comittee Prof. Norbert Gutknecht (RWTH Aachen University hospital, Germany) and the German team have already planned projects for the upcoming joint congress. The planning was already discussed at the WFLD executive committee meeting in June 2017 (Fig. 8). We hope for many interesting lectures and lively participation that will make this special congress a great success. Finally, we strongly hope for happiness, peace and harmony, contributing to the future of the WFLD and oral health promotion._

contact

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WFLD Affiliation

Belgian Academy of Laser Therapy in Dental Medicine
Brazilien Association for Laser Dentistry
Bulgarian Denal Laser Society (BDLS)
Dental Laser Academy
German Society for Laser Dentistry (DGL)
Greek Society for Laser Dentistry (GDSL)
Indian Dental Association
Israel Society of Laser in Dentistry
Italien Society of Laser Dentistry
Iranian Medical Laser Association
Japanese Society for Laser Dentistry (JSLD)
Polish Society for Laser Dentistry
Spanish Society of Laser an Light Therapy in Dentistry (SELO)
Ukrainian Society of Laser Dentistry

Tab. 2