

4.1.16. FIRST STEPS AND RESULTS OF WORK OF THE ACADEMIA NDT INTERNATIONAL

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In the beginning, it was a dream which, afterwards, became a reality. In ancient times “ACADEMIA” was a term that described the sacred place in Greece where Plato is said to have had his Centre of Learning. The idea to recreate Plato’s attitude to learning and science and to apply it in a wider and practical sense to non-destructive testing was a key point in the first proposal to establish the Academia NDT International. The first stone in the road of the Academia establishment was put in place in Moscow, when a Steering Committee, following preliminary discussions and a meeting in Opatija, Croatia, in May 2007, made the final decision and gave birth to the Academia. So, the Academia was founded in Moscow on March 10th 2008, declaring itself as non-governmental, non profit-making and impartial. It was decided that the Academia would be governed by a Council, consisting of a President (G. Nardoni), two Vice-presidents (V. Klyuev and B. Raj), three Advisory Members (R. Link, V. Krstelj and S. Vahaviolos) and an Executive Secretary (I. Pushkina). The membership of the Academia comprises Full and Honorary Members who meet at least once a year for discussion of the latest developments and in order to collectively make decisions on relevant matters. Such meetings are held with open doors, taking into account all opinions. The place of the seat of the Academia is Brescia, Italy.

It was decided that the scope of activities of the Academia should embrace all means possible to prevent accidents and negative consequences caused by natural, technical or terrorist events for the benefit of all mankind.

The condensed purposes and objectives of the Academia NDT activities are as follows:

- ◆ To promote science, research and development encouraging the application of the findings in the field of NDT at Universities, R&D centres and Institutions and other relevant bodies throughout the world.

- ◆ To establish and maintain a network among Scientists and Technologists involved in the basic sciences, research and development for NDT methods, techniques, equipment and implementation advancement.

- ◆ To highlight the work of the research and development in NDT.

- ◆ To be mindful of the contributions from scientists and distinguished professionals in NDT field, inviting them to join the Academia.

- ◆ To attract attention of international authorities, government and public organizations to the importance of the benefits that NDT provides.

The Academia sees itself as complementary to NDT associations and institutions, NDT groups and national societies.

In spite of its young age, the Academia has already arranged several important meetings. During the 17th World conference in Shanghai the Academia Council arranged Special Lecture meeting: “Science and Technology for NDT and Diagnostics” at which, for the first time in the history of such important NDT events, one of the lectures was given by a Nobel Prize winner in the field of Physics (2002), Prof. R. Giaconni, as well as by two Academia members, Dr. G. Dobman from Fraunhofer Institute (Germany) and Dr. Baldev Raj from India Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research in India.. On May 15 2009 the second scientific meeting was arranged in Brescia ,Italy, as along with the first General Assembly. In those first official meetings were present 17 of the 39 Full Mem-

bers from 12 countries. The keynote talk: “New frontiers of physics” was presented by invited guest Prof. A. Zichichi (Italy), one of the originators of LHC project in CERN and founder of Gran Sasso National Laboratory. Academia members Acad. V. Klyuev from Research Institute of Introscopy (Russia) and Prof. V. Vengrinovich of the Institute of Applied Physics of Belarus National Academy of Sciences (Byelorussia) also made very interesting and useful presentations.

During the 1st General assembly that also was held on May 15 2009 those members present at the meeting approved the Academia Statutes, Council members and list of Full and Honorary Members. To date the Academia has 39 members including 7 highly respected Honorary members: Prof. J. Karle (Nobel Prize winner, USA), Prof. R. Giacconi (Nobel Prize winner, Italy), Prof. A.K. Gurvich (Russia), Dr. I. Karle (USA), Dr. Yu.V. Lange Russia), Prof. M. Onoe (Japan), Acad. B. E. Paton (Ukraine). More information can be found on Academia website: www.academia-ndt.org.

All participants made short presentations of their activities; this was very interesting and demonstrated that the Academia collected under its “roof” specialists of the highest level who can act as leaders in their fields of interest and authoritatively speak about the most urgent and modern problems facing people and countries.

It is absolutely clear that only by combining with an open mind the efforts of specialists from different countries and fields of interests, willing to improve the world, is it possible to assure them a better professional life. The doors of Academia are opened to everybody willing to contribute.