

SPECIAL ARTICLE

From SUMROC to CTSUM—A Brief History of Politics in Ultrasound[†]



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Received 18 October 2014; accepted 27 February 2015
Available online 28 April 2015

KEY WORDS

AFSUMB,
CTSUM,
history,
SUMCMA,
SUMROC,
WFUMB

A brief history of the affiliation process of the ultrasound society of Taiwan to the Asian Federation of Societies for Ultrasound in Medicine and Biology and the World Federation for Ultrasound in Medicine and Biology is described. Although such an affiliation sounds very easy today, it required complicated and delicate negotiations and moderations in those difficult days (from 1986 to 1991). This was a typical past example of how politics was brought into the field of medical ultrasound. As some of the people involved have already passed away, a record of the hidden history might be needful and brought up from the viewpoint of the mediator.

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Prologue

I have been engaged with the World Federation for Ultrasound in Medicine and Biology (WFUMB) as well as with the

Asian Federation of Societies for Ultrasound in Medicine and Biology (AFSUMB) for 27 years as an officer. Owing to the responsibilities of this position, I was particularly involved with the affiliation of the ultrasound society of Taiwan to international organizations from 1986 to 1991. These matters have been a serious problem to the society throughout its history. On this occasion, I would like to address this somewhat delicate series of events in the past from the viewpoint of the mediator.

The story dated back to October 1986. At that time, I was invited to the third Annual Convention of the Society of Ultrasound in Medicine of the Republic of China (SUMROC) as a guest speaker, an event that marked my first visit to Taiwan.

[†] Lecture given at the 2014 Annual Convention of Taiwan Society of Ultrasound in Medicine, Taipei International Convention Center, Taipei, Taiwan, October 19, 2014.

Conflicts of interest: The author has no conflicts of interest relevant to this article.

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The late Professor Hsi Yao Chen (Fig. 1), who was the founding president of SUMROC, was the key person of the story. In the then tiny building of Chiang Kai Shek Airport, Professor Chen kindly picked me up by himself and took me to the hotel in his car. As I was totally unaware of who he was and what position he was holding, we had a chat on common topics in English for an hour. But when the car arrived at the hotel, he suddenly spoke to me very fluently in Japanese in an informal manner: "Tokorodene-, Sensei!" (By the way, Professor!). Can you imagine how shocked I was at that time? Although I had heard about many senior Taiwanese speaking Japanese very well, it was only a superficial knowledge. Moreover, I had had no experience of talking in Japanese to people in foreign countries before.

Professor Chen's Japanese belonged to the one spoken in affluent society in the northern area of Tokyo before the Second World War and sounded to me as if my late grandparents had talked. The modern-day Japanese language has changed substantially and has been polluted with various dirty expressions rooted from the TV era. I realized how beautiful classic Japanese was, when making conversation with Professor Chen.

Inwardly, I was seriously baffled why Professor Chen used English when we first met, instead of speaking in Japanese, which would have been far more convenient for both of us. Later, when I told one of my American friends about this story, she pointed out to me: "You were tested!"

I was deeply impressed by Taiwan. In my diary, I described my visit as follows: What I experienced in my first visit to Taiwan was a notion that this country must be special, not to be confused with other countries. I sensed that a classic Japanese culture was still breeding here, which showed in the display of rows of houses and streets and in people's daily life actions. I really felt the urge to contribute something to this country.



Fig. 1 The late Professor Hsi Yao Chen (left) and the author in 1986.

Professor Chen told me that SUMROC was the largest medical society in Taiwan with 1200 members, accounting for 10% of all medical doctors. He also mentioned that SUMROC wished to be affiliated with AFSUMB and that it was difficult because politics might pose an obstacle; he further noted that at least presenting some relevant papers to the Federation Congress would be possible.

How were WFUMB and AFSUMB organized?

To clarify the international situation in the field of medical ultrasound at that period, I have to explain how WFUMB and AFSUMB were organized [1,2].

The oldest ultrasound society in the world is the American Institute of Ultrasound in Medicine), whose origin goes back to 1952. The second one is the Japan Society of Ultrasonics in Medicine, which was established in 1961 (Table 1).

The World Congress of Ultrasonic Diagnostics in Medicine, held in Vienna in 1969, is thought to be the first event for ultrasound at an international level. This was organized as part of the third meeting of the Societas Internationalis pro Diagnostica Ultrasonica in Ophthalmologia, which was a special ultrasound society for ophthalmology, started in 1964. During this event, several individuals came up with the idea that a joint international organization, which would consist of national or federational units, should be organized as a matter of urgency because, even at that time, several national bodies had already been set up in the United States, Japan, Germany, Australia, etc. Responding to this idea, the European Federation of Societies for Ultrasound in Medicine and Biology was established in 1969 [3].

The planned, across-the-world organization was founded during the second World Congress in Rotterdam (The Netherlands) in 1973. WFUMB was adopted as its official name, and the first congress was set for 3 years later in San Francisco, CA, USA. In addition, a grand scale of WFUMB—that it would unite each geographic federation to be established throughout the five continents of the world in the future—was also approved [3] (Table 1).

Table 1 Pioneer societies for ultrasound.

	Established
American Institute of Ultrasound in Medicine (AIUM)	1952
Japan Society of Ultrasonics in Medicine (JSUM)	1961
Societas Internationalis pro Diagnostica Ultrasonica in Ophthalmologia (SIDUO)	1964
World Congress of Ultrasonic Diagnostics in Medicine = SIDUO III (Wien)—Concept of "World Federation"	1969
European Federation for Ultrasound in Medicine and Biology (EFSUMB)—the first geographic federation	1969
2nd World Congress (Rotterdam)—WFUMB organized	1973

The first WFUMB Congress was successfully held in San Francisco in 1976, hosted by the American Institute of Ultrasound in Medicine and with the mutual cooperation of other four already existing organizations. From then on, the organizational activities of geographic federations throughout the continents of the world accelerated. The first candidate was the AFSUMB.

In Asia, in the early 1980s, ultrasound societies existed, or were being organized, in some countries (Table 2). In India, two societies had been established, one of which had already been directly affiliated to the WFUMB, although we were not aware of it at that time.

Professor Toshio Wagai (Fig. 2), one of the worldwide pioneers of ultrasound and who organized the second WFUMB Congress in Miyazaki in 1979 as the WFUMB president, began to construct AFSUMB with six national societies in Japan, China, Korea, Indonesia, Malaysia, and India. Although SUMROC was established in 1984, the news had not arrived in Professor Wagai's office. Preparatory meetings for organizing AFSUMB were held twice in Sydney and Kobe in 1985[3].

The first AFSUMB Congress took place in Tokyo in June 1987, in association with the 50th Memorial Annual Meeting of the Japan Society of Ultrasonics in Medicine. The late Professor Thompson (Fig. 3), who was the then president of WFUMB, made a congratulatory address in the opening ceremony.

My first visit to Taiwan occurred 8 months prior to the AFSUMB opening. Professor Chen might have already known about this upcoming scenario very well. So I now suspect that the main purpose of his inviting me to Taiwan might probably be to check if I would be one of the candidates for mediation between SUMROC and AFSUMB.

Relation between the societies in Taiwan and Mainland China

The 1970s and 1980s were particularly difficult decades for politics between Taiwan and Mainland China. Anything

Table 2 Ultrasound Societies in Asia in the early 1980s.

JSUM (Japan society)	
SUMCMA (Beijing, China)	
KSMU (Korean society)	
ISUM (Indonesian society)	AFSUMB
MSUM (Malaysian society)	
USI (New Dehli, India)	
ISMU (Mumbai, India)—affiliated to WFUMB	
SUMROC (Taipei, Taiwan)	

AFSUMB = Asian Federation of Societies for Ultrasound in Medicine and Biology; ISMU = Indian Society of Medical Ultrasound; ISUM = Indonesian Society of Ultrasound in Medicine; JSUM = Japan Society of Ultrasonics in Medicine; KSMU = Korean Society of Medical Ultrasound; MSUM = Malaysian Society of Ultrasound in Medicine; SUMCMA = Society of Ultrasound in Medicine of Chinese Medical Association; SUMROC = Society of Ultrasound in Medicine of the Republic of China; USI = Ultrasonic Society of India; WFUMB = World Federation for Ultrasound in Medicine and Biology.



Fig. 2 Professor Toshio Wagai, past president of the World Federation for Ultrasound in Medicine and Biology (WFUMB), and founder president of the Asian Federation of Societies for Ultrasound in Medicine and Biology (AFSUMB).

against the policy of “One China” was opposed by both sides. In such a situation, I decided to begin my small battle against politics, responding to Professor Chen's expectation.

In my letter to Professor Chen on December 15, 1986 (Fig. 4), 2 months after my return from Taiwan, I wrote as follows: In the Second International Meeting for Doppler Ultrasound held in Kyoto on November 26–29, 1986 I incidentally met with Professor Jian-Fang Ren, President of the Society of Ultrasound in Medicine of Chinese Medical Association (established officially on July 16, 1986) in Beijing, and we discussed the matter of the affiliation of SUMROC to AFSUMB. Subsequently, he wrote to me on the matter, proposing ‘four choices for the name of your society, because the term ‘ROC’ was not recognized by the government. If you will agree to change the name to one of them, your society can be affiliated to AFSUMB without any problem.’

The proposed four names by Professor Ren are shown in the red square in his letter on December 12, 1986 (Fig. 5, left). However, those names were rejected by Professor Chen as shown in his letter on December 29, 1986 (Fig. 5, right), because the term “Taiwan” meant “Taiwan section in China,” which spoiled the standing of ROC.

In parallel with this movement, Professor Chen consulted with the Foreign Ministry, Taiwan, and proposed three candidate names, which are marked by the red square in his letter to me on December 12, 1986 (Fig. 6, left). However, those names were rejected by Professor Ren on January 15, 1987, in his letter (Fig. 6, right), describing that all the names could not be accepted because they could be misconstrued as “two China.” Professor Ren, by the way, was another key person in this story.



Fig. 3 Professor Horace Thompson, World Federation for Ultrasound in Medicine and Biology (WFUMB) president, made a congratulatory address, before the first Asian Federation of Societies for Ultrasound in Medicine and Biology (AFSUMB) Congress held in June 1987.

Professor Wagai, who had been appointed as the founder president of AFSUMB, wrote to me on January 16, 1987, explaining that he received a telephone call from Professor Chen, but noted that it was difficult for the Taiwan society to be affiliated to AFSUMB with full members. Professor Wagai had a good connection with ultrasound people in Mainland China and could have been worried about their feeling against Taiwan.

At the same time I received a letter from Professor Morimichi Fukuda, secretary of AFSUMB, on February 2, 1987. He sympathized with my unfruitful efforts to mediate between Mainland China and Taiwan and remarked on his suspicion that Taiwan might be in danger of separation from its affiliation to WFUMB, in consideration of the marked difference in population between the two sides. In this way, the general recognition among AFSUMB leaders was not so favorable to the Taiwan side in those days.

Meanwhile, a similar dispute was also ongoing regarding the affiliation of Taiwan to the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

After the Second World War, two Olympic Committees were set up in each of Mainland and Taiwan independently in 1954, but the Mainland Olympic Committee withdrew from the IOC in 1958. In 1976, the Taiwan Olympic Committee also withdrew from the IOC, because delegates from Taiwan were collectively referred to as "Formosa". Then, after careful negotiations for more than several years, the Taiwan team returned to the Olympic games using the name "Chinese Taipei" in 1984. This tactic was widely applied in different areas following the Olympic template (Table 3).

When the first AFSUMB Congress took place in June 1987, in Tokyo, I had several chats with Professor Ren, the president of the Mainland society. Occasionally, the topics would cover the Seoul Olympic Games, which would take place in the following year; then, it extended to the

possibility of using the Olympic model to dissolve our standoff on the name issue.

On the last day of the Congress, I suddenly received a phone call in my hotel room from Professor Ren. He proposed two candidate names, including the "Olympic form," and expressed his opinion that there was a high possibility that the Mainland government would agree to this idea.

Following his suggestion, I wrote two official letters with the same content, one to Professor Ren and another to Professor Chen on July 16, 1987, with a proposal of those two names (Fig. 7).

A little more than 2 months later, I received a call from Professor Chen and was informed that the Taiwan government accepted one of the two names, which was the Chinese Taipei Society of Ultrasound in Medicine (CTSUM). I immediately wrote to Professor Ren to let him know the news and to urge a response from the Mainland side.

Before the arrival of my letter, however, Professor Ren had already sent a letter to me. The answer was also "Yes". The Mainland government accepted either of the two names I proposed, as the principle of "There is only a China and Taiwan is a part of China" had been recognized.

In this way, the problem with the naming of the Taiwan society was solved. The late Professor Horace Thompson, who was the president of WFUMB during that time, kindly sent his congratulatory note on the successful resolution of the matter in his letter on November 11, 1987. "Tomy" Thompson hoped additionally that, reflecting the then complicated political situation, the differences between China and Taiwan could be resolved, at least in the ultrasound field, by this mechanism.

In November 1987, I was invited to Tehran, Iran, to give a lecture in an International Urology Congress, organized by the Iranian government, which was led by the Reverend Khomeini, who was then at war with Iraq under the regime

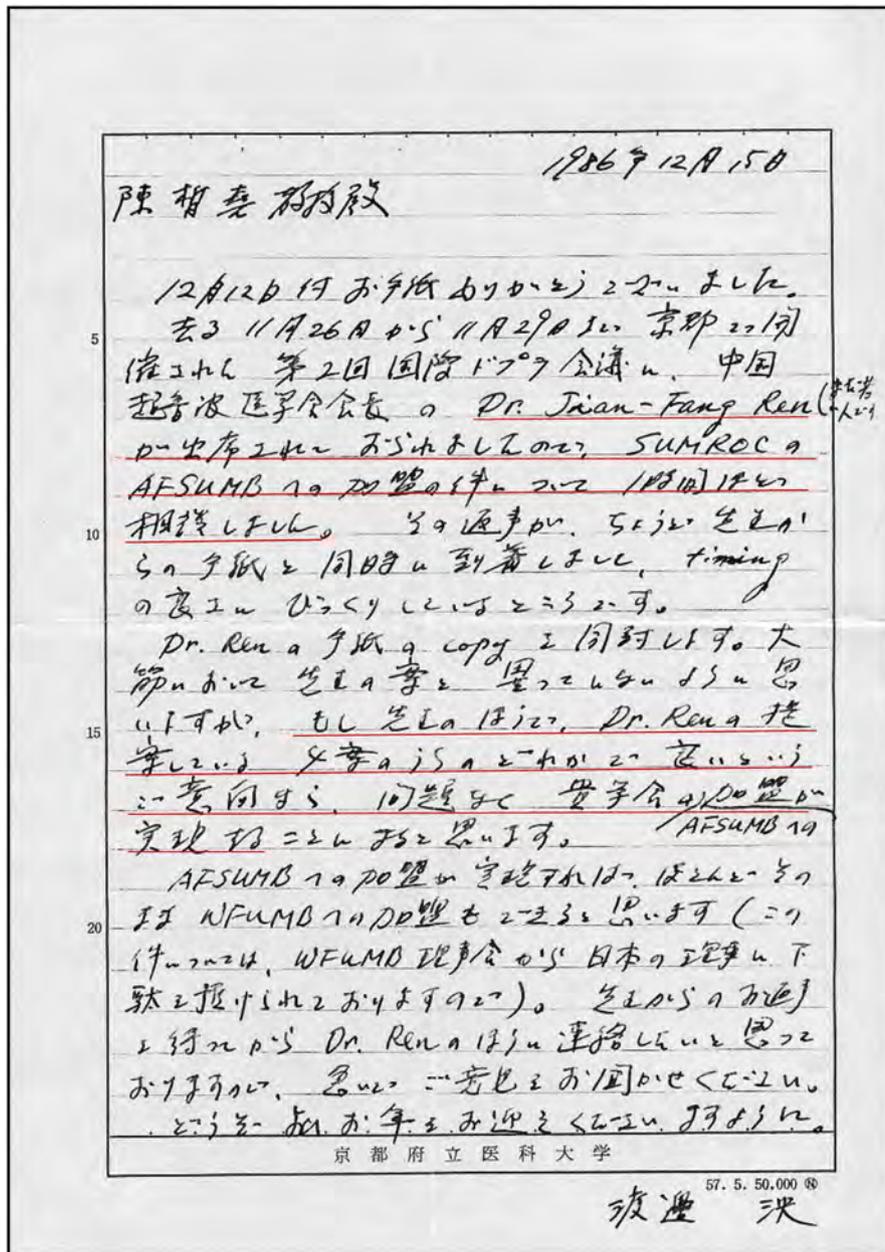


Fig. 4 My letter to Professor Chen on December 15, 1986.

of Saddam Hussein. On my way home, I stopped at Beijing for a couple of days to discuss with the staff of the China Medical Association on several matters, including the affiliation of the Taiwan society.

In the meeting, they confirmed that the matter of naming was resolved and welcomed the affiliation of CTSUM to AFSUMB. The AFSUMB Board would accept that both societies were the representatives under only one China (Fig. 8).

In Table 4, false names and a correct name are shown, which appeared throughout the mediation process. Each of the names had its own special meaning. From my viewpoint at this time, however, I have no idea how they could be so different from one another.

For this particular visit, I learned that the name of the Taiwan society was again changed recently to "Taiwan

Society of Ultrasound in Medicine." This sounds very normal and healthy.

Relation between CTSUM and AFSUMB

Thus, we resolved the issue on names; however, another pressing matter was the affiliation of the Taiwan society to AFSUMB and WFUMB.

In February 1987, Professor Chen gave me a letter. He quoted an example in the International Federation of Gynecology and Obstetrics, wherein the organization made an amendment to its constitution to accept a society from Mainland China in addition to another group from Taiwan, as an exceptional circumstance. He recommended that AFSUMB could follow suit. Professor Chen was a tough

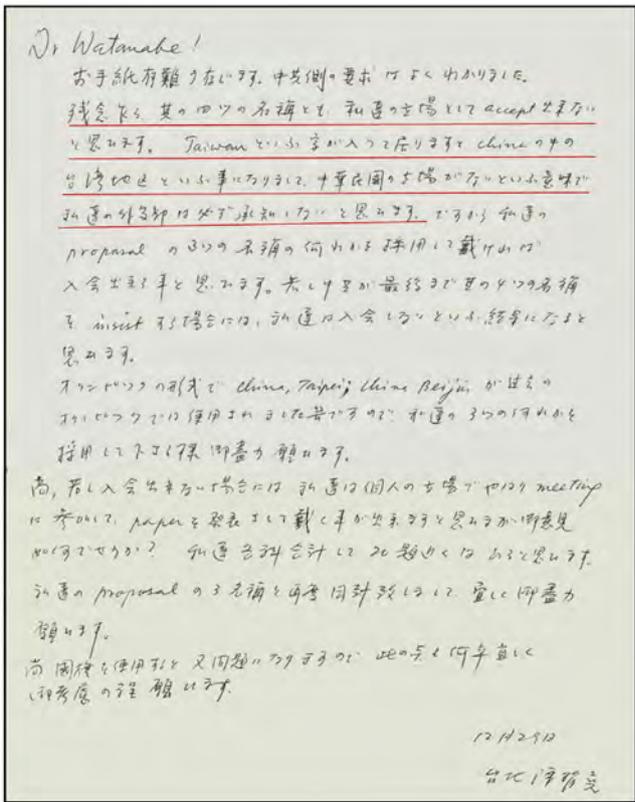
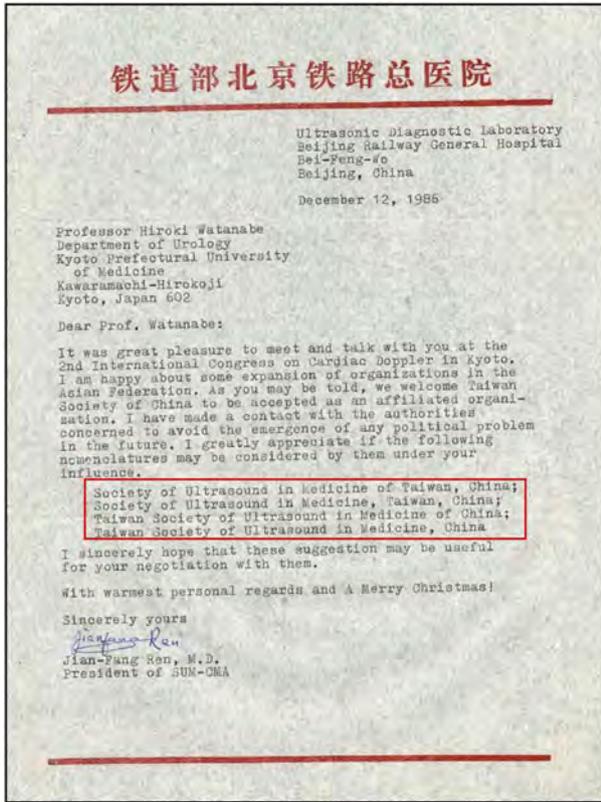


Fig. 5 Four proposed names from the Mainland side (inside the square) were not accepted by the Taiwanese side on December 25, 1986.

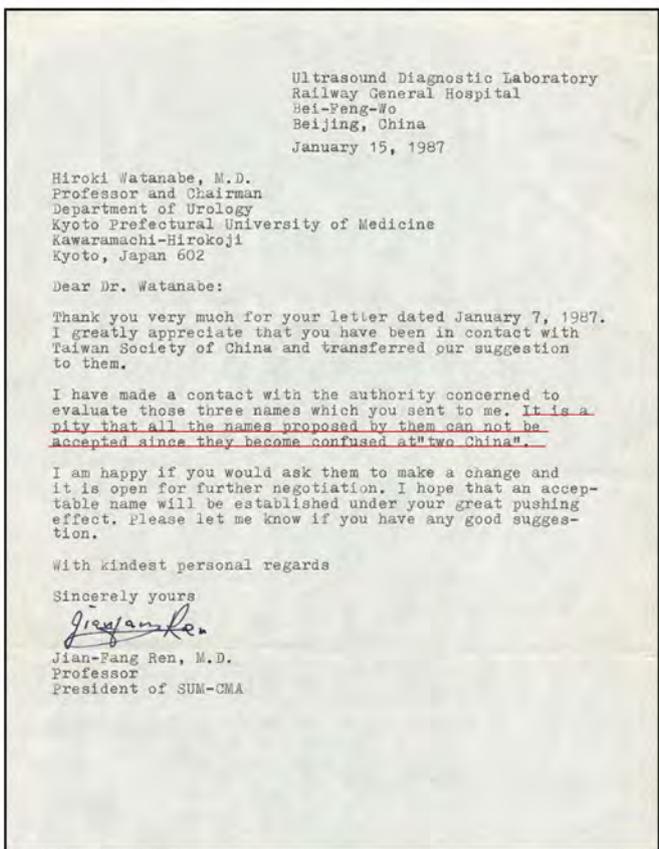
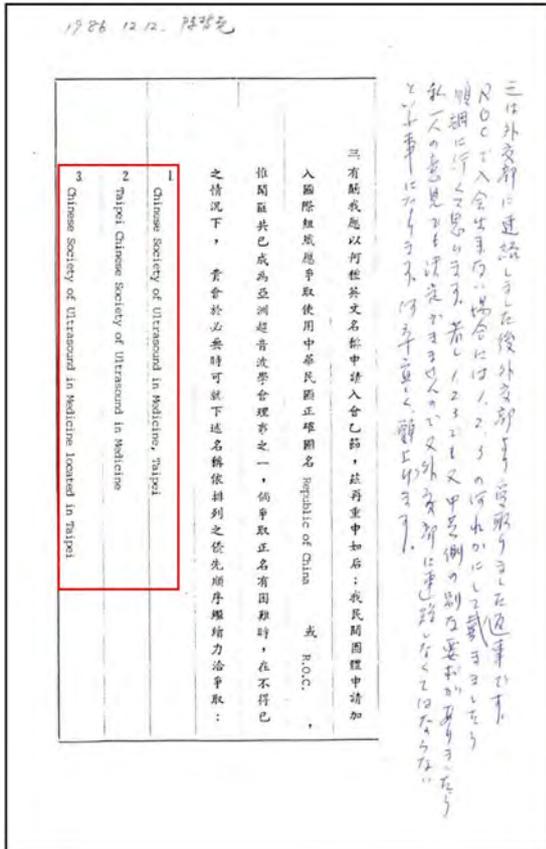


Fig. 6 Three proposed names (inside the square) from the Taiwanese side were not accepted by the Mainland side on January 15, 1987.

Table 3 Affiliations of Taiwan to the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

1922	The government of ROC was affiliated to IOC
1932–1948	Attended Olympic games by the name of ROC
1954	Two Olympic Committees in Mainland and Taiwan
1958	Mainland Committee withdrew from IOC
1960	“RCF” (Republic of China, Formosa)
1976	Taiwan withdrew from IOC
1984	Attended again by the name of “Chinese Taipei”
1989	Both sides agreed to spell in Chinese as “中華台北,” instead of “中國台北”

ROC = Republic of China.

negotiator. Sometimes I felt that the Mainland side was much more flexible than he was.

Professor Chen’s recommendation was surely against the original and basic policy of WFUMB, as well as AFSUMB, that only one society could represent one country. In the WFUMB By-laws, it had been clearly defined that “Not more than one such group or society in a country may become affiliated.” The policy had been applied very strictly, especially in the early stage of WFUMB; therefore, the AFSUMB also followed the principle.

This definition had often made matters difficult for the AFSUMB. We faced the dilemma many times and had to use

our best efforts to solve them on a case-by-case basis (Table 5).

In India, the first society affiliated with the AFSUMB was the Ultrasonic Society of India in New Delhi. The problem surfaced when it was learned that another Indian society called Indian Society of Medical Ultrasound, a countrywide organization with many members and headquartered in Mumbai, had already been formally accepted as a WFUMB-affiliated national body. I was involved in the matter when I served as the secretary of AFSUMB. I subsequently visited both societies in 1990 with a proposal that both parties join to form an organization to be called the Indian Federation for Societies of Ultrasound in Medicine and Biology, which was eventually accepted into the AFSUMB [1,2].

In Pakistan, two different societies (1 based in Karachi and 1 based in Islamabad) bearing the same name, “Ultrasound Society of Pakistan,” requested to be affiliated with AFSUMB almost simultaneously. We had no alternative but to watch and wait. The matter was automatically resolved owing to the inactivity of the Islamabad group nearly 10 years later [1,2].

In the Philippines, the “Ultrasound Society of Philippines,” which first filed an application to join the AFSUMB, was a section of a radiology society, where membership was restricted to radiologists. Another society, the Philippine Society of Ultrasound in Clinical Medicine, included different specialties and thus made the affiliation [1,2].

In a letter from Professor Wagai to me on October 15, 1987, he offered his congratulations on reaching a consensus on the naming issue but was worried about the

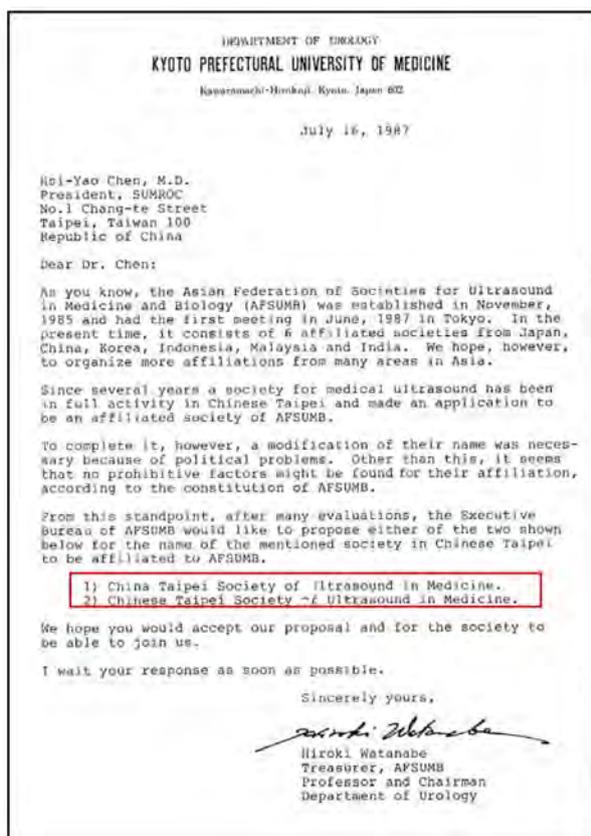
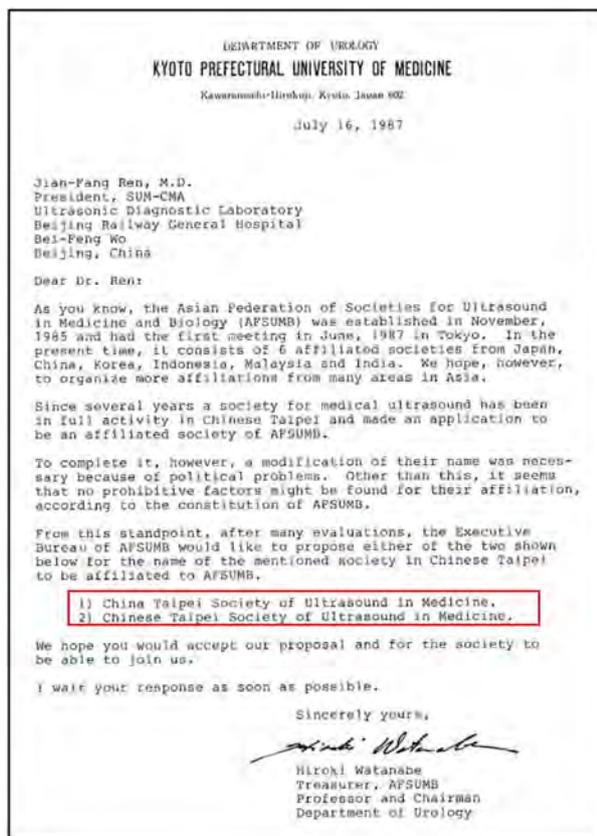


Fig. 7 My letters with the same content to Professor Ren and to Professor Chen on July 16, 1987.

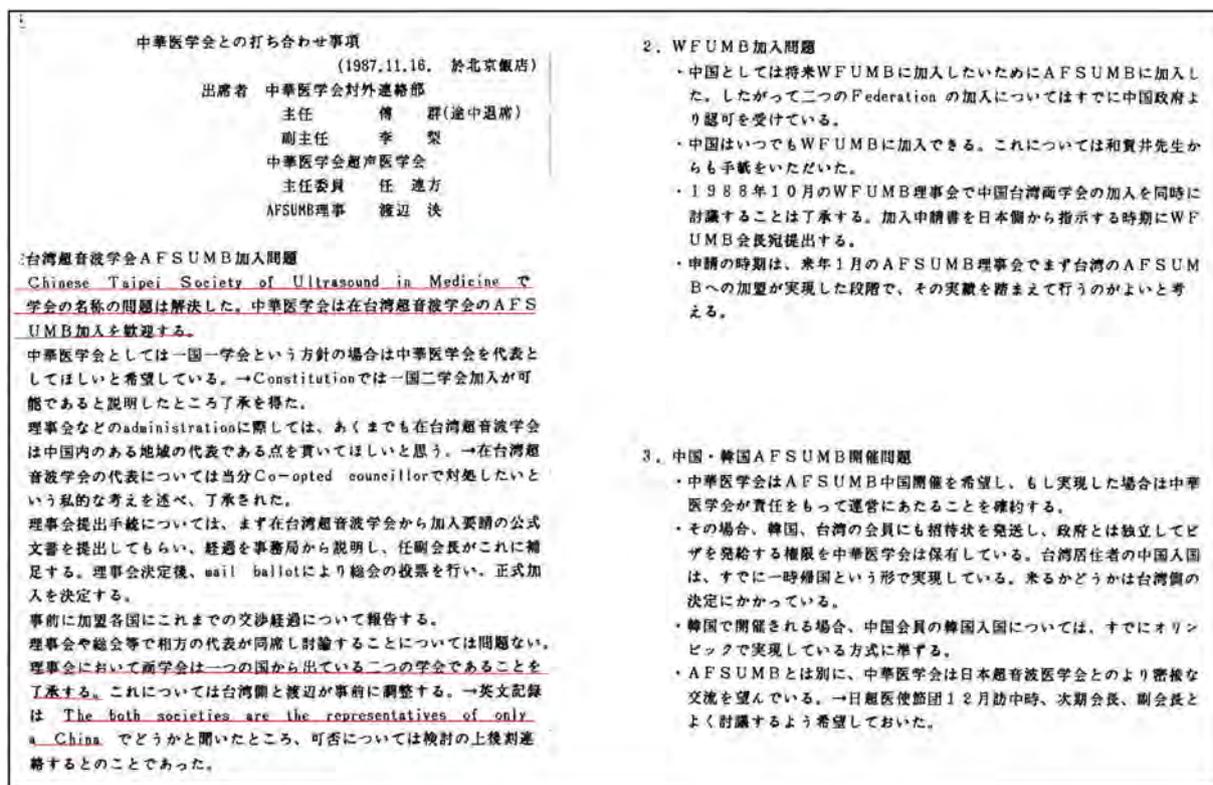


Fig. 8 Minutes from the meeting held on November 16, 1987, in Beijing between the China Medical Association and myself.

conflict stemming from the “One society from one country” policy. For that reason, he proposed that Taiwan would be an associate member and the representative to be an observer, for a while.

To address Professor Wagai’s anxiety, I had already thought about something written into the AFSUMB Constitution that might do the trick, when it was launched in 1985. I was one of the three Constitution Committee members at that time. In the committee meetings, I insisted on inserting two words—“in principle”—into the statement of the “One society from one country” policy originally stipulated in WFUMB By-laws, which we copied for the large part to draw up the AFSUMB Constitution. In

Table 4 False names and a correct name.

Rejected names by Taiwan side
• Society of Ultrasound in Medicine of Taiwan, China
• Society of Ultrasound in Medicine, Taiwan, China
• Taiwan Society of Ultrasound in Medicine of China
• Taiwan Society of Ultrasound in Medicine, China
Rejected names by Mainland side
• Chinese Society of Ultrasound in Medicine, Taipei
• Taipei Chinese Society of Ultrasound in Medicine
• Chinese Society of Ultrasound in Medicine Located in Taipei
↓
Chinese Taipei Society of Ultrasound in Medicine
↓
Taiwan Society of Ultrasound in Medicine

Fig. 9, a rough manuscript of the AFSUMB By-laws, rewritten from the WFUMB original, is shown, with the two words added.

Owing to that trick, the affiliation of CTSUM was carried after a serious discussion, in the AFSUMB Administrative Council Meeting on January 27, 1988, in Bali, under the understanding that this was an outside-of-principle case, in which the basic policy of AFSUMB did not apply.

Relation between AFSUMB and WFUMB

The next step was how to affiliate AFSUMB, which included two societies from one country, to WFUMB.

In my letter on May 6, 1988, I told Professor Chen that the affiliation of CTSUM was carried unanimously via mail ballot of the AFSUMB General Assembly just completed. Then I expressed my concern that the next action was the affiliation of AFSUMB to WFUMB. For this matter, I visited Dr George Kossoff, immediate-past president, WFUMB, in Atlanta, GA, USA, for his opinion. Dr Kossoff told me that it might be very difficult for both CTSUM and Ultrasound in Medicine of Chinese Medical Association to be affiliated to WFUMB simultaneously, because an amendment to the WFUMB Constitution would be obligatory.

Following Dr Kossoff’s advice, I rallied support from WFUMB leaders. Very luckily, WFUMB was also facing an amendment of its constitution at the time, for changing its basis from national units to federations. We successfully inserted the phrase “Normally, and except by resolution of the General Assembly in respect of a particular situation,” before the former statement regarding the definition of

Table 5 Matters arising from duplicate societies from one country in AFSUMB.

Indian matter

Indian Society of Medical Ultrasound (ISMU)—affiliated to WFUMB

Ultrasound Society of India (USI)—affiliated to AFSUMB

→ United to form Indian Federation of Ultrasound in Medicine and Biology (IFUMB)

Pakistan matter

Ultrasound Society of Pakistan, Islamabad (USP)—inactive

Ultrasound Society of Pakistan, Karachi (USP)—affiliated to AFSUMB

Philippines matter

USP (Ultrasound Society of Philippines)—only by radiologists

PCUCM (Philippine Society of Ultrasound in Clinical Medicine) (all specialties)—affiliated to AFSUMB

membership—"Not more than one national or regional organization covering the same geographical area may become affiliated"—in the new WFUMB Constitution (Article 4—Membership, 4.3.2).

In the WFUMB General Assembly that was held on October 19, 1988, in Washington, DC, USA, an amendment to the constitution was carried out unanimously. Our case of "Two representatives of only a China" just corresponded with an abnormal particular situation. Then, the affiliation of AFSUMB to WFUMB was officially accepted in the WFUMB General Assembly held on September 3, 1991, in Copenhagen, Denmark.

The late Dr David Robinson, who served as secretary for WFUMB, wrote to me on November 21, 1991, about the affiliation of AFSUMB to WFUMB (Fig. 10). Dave pointed out that the matter was urgent, that both WFUMB and AFSUMB constitutions allowed duplicate membership under "abnormal" circumstances, and that a ballot had been carried. AFSUMB took up its affiliation to WFUMB on January 1, 1992.

Epilogue

In such a manner, my small battle against politics concluded with a happy ending, for which I thanked the

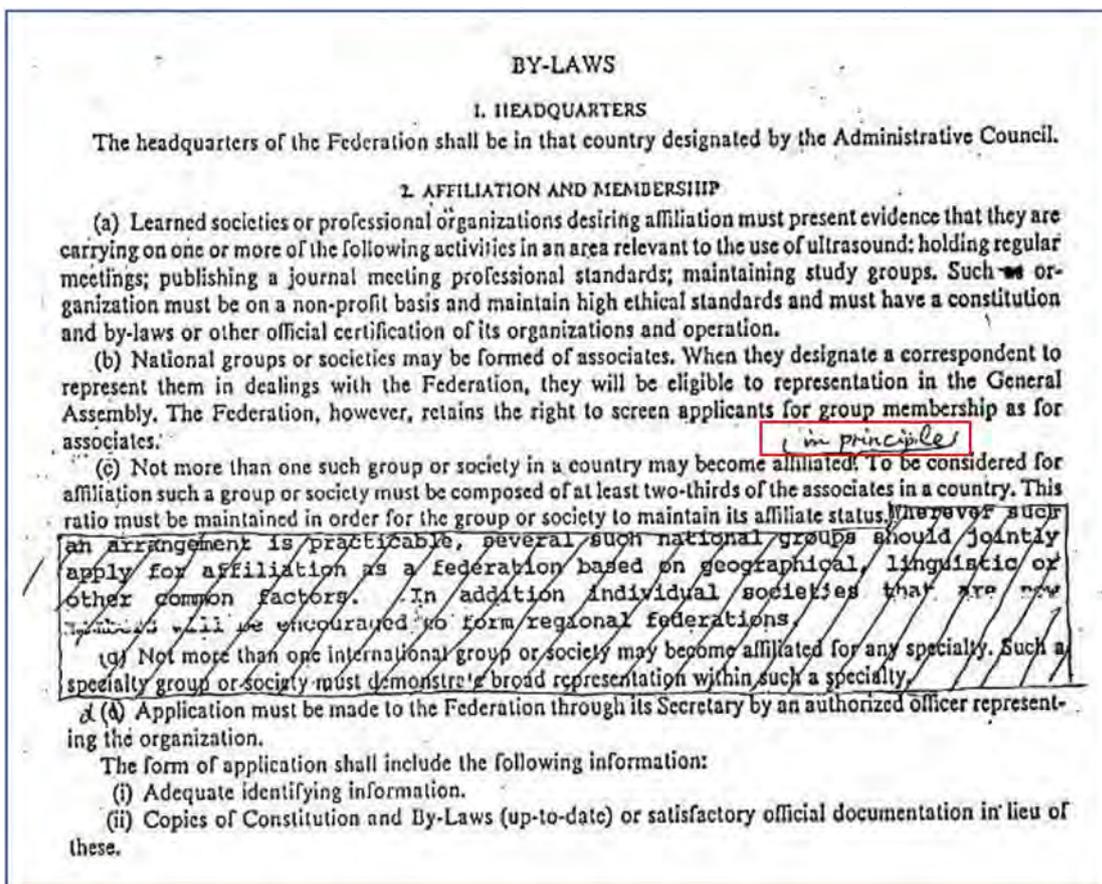


Fig. 9 Rough manuscript of Asian Federation of Societies for Ultrasound in Medicine and Biology (AFSUMB) By-laws rewritten from the original World Federation for Ultrasound in Medicine and Biology (WFUMB) document in 1985.

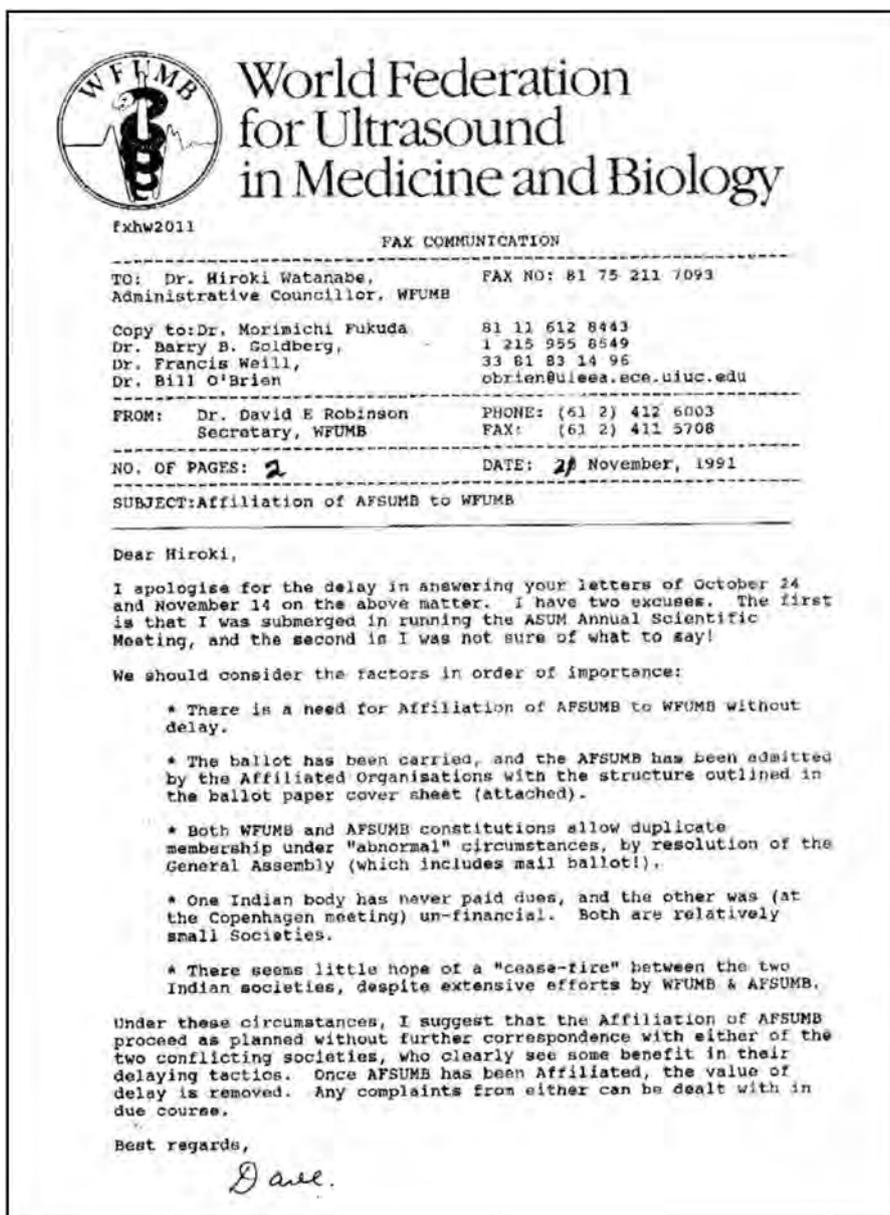


Fig. 10 Dr Robinson's letter to me on November 21, 1991.

warm cooperation and assistance sent through many friends, colleagues, and officers.

The first AFSUMB Congress in China took place in Beijing in August 1995. Unfortunately, Professor Jian-Fang Ren could not attend the Congress; he was in the United States when the "Tian-an-men Gate" incident broke out in April 1989, and never returned to the Mainland thereafter. In spite of his absence, the Congress was organized perfectly by the China Medical Association with thousands of attendees coming from all over the country.

The following AFSUMB Congress was held (and very successfully, too) in October 1998, in Taipei, under the presidency of Professor Chen. In 2017, 2 years from now, the WFUMB Congress is slated to take place in Taipei. Such uninterrupted contributions to medical ultrasound on an

international basis from two societies delegated from China should be highly commended.

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