

History of ASSISi

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ABSTRACT: International events on the Anti-Seismic (AS) systems began in 1989. The first was mainly devoted to seismic isolation (SI) of nuclear plants and took place in San Francisco (USA), as a Post-Conference Seminar of the Structural Mechanics and Reactor Technology (SMiRT) Conference of Los Angeles. The second seminar was held in Nara (Japan) in 1991 and the third in Capri (Italy) in 1993. There, it was formally decided to extend the topics of the seminars to the civil structures and to deal with AS systems different from SI too. Afterwards, Post-SMiRT Conference Seminars on the AS systems took place in Santiago (Chile) in 1995, Taormina (Italy) in 1997 and Cheju (South Korea) in 1999. The following seminar, held in Assisi (Italy) in 2001, was the first to be organized as an independent event. There, it was decided to found a new association, with the acronym of ASSISi, which was then formally founded in Bologna (Italy) in 2002. The 2003 “World Seminar” was held in Yerevan (Armenia). Later, “World Conferences” took place in Kobe (Japan) in 2005, Istanbul (Turkey) in 2007, Guanzhou (P.R. China) in 2009, Sochi (Russian Federation) in 2011, Sendai (Japan) in 2013 and (prior to this Conference) San Diego (USA) in 2015. At San Diego it was decided to close the existing association in Italy and to re-found a new one in the USA, with the same name, but updated statutes. This paper provides some details on the history of ASSISi, its objectives, main features and main achievements.

1 INTRODUCTION

International events on the development and application of the Anti-Seismic (AS) systems, in particular of the seismic isolation (SI) and energy dissipation (ED) ones, started in 1989. The first was mainly devoted to SI of nuclear plants and took place in August of the same year in San Francisco (California, USA), as a Post-Conference Seminar of the Structural Mechanics and Reactor Technology (SMiRT) Conference of Los Angeles (Chang *et al.* 1989, Chang *et al.* guest co-eds. 1991). It had been proposed by the ASSISi Founding Member Prof. James Kelly (University of Berkeley, California, USA) and was organized by three representatives of three countries: Dr. Yao Wen Chang of Argonne National Laboratory for the USA, Dr. Takashi Kuroda of Shimizu Corporation for Japan and Dr. Alessandro Martelli, at that time at ENEA, for Italy.

Based on the success of this seminar, which was attended by many participants from several countries, it was decided to go on organizing analogous Post-SMiRT Conference Seminars, every two years (in August, e.g., in the same month of the main conferences), in order to promote the use of the AS techniques worldwide and to enhance international collaboration. Thus:

- the second seminar was held in Nara (Japan) in 1991 (after the Tokyo SMiRT Conference, with Mrs. Françoise Gantenbein of the French Commissariat à l’Energie Atomique, CEA, as fourth co-organizer);

- the third seminar took place in the Capri Island (Italy) in 1993, after the Paris SMiRT Conference, with the first author of this paper as main organizer (Kuroda *et al.* 1991, Martelli & Forni 1994).

In Capri the decision was at last formalized to extend the topics of the seminars to the civil structures and to deal with AS systems different from SI too, by also involving other scientists as co-organizers.

After the first three first events, Post-SMiRT Conference Seminars on the AS systems took place in:

- Santiago (Chile) in 1995 (Saragoni & Martelli eds. 1995, Martelli 1995);
- Taormina (Sicily, again in Italy) in 1997 (Martelli & Forni eds. 1998);
- Cheju Island (South Korea) in 1999 (Koh & Martelli 1999).

The subsequent event took place in Assisi (in Italy, for the third time) in 2001 (Martelli *et al.* eds. 2002). This was the first seminar that was organized (by the first author of this paper and others) as an event independent: in spite of this and, especially, the occurrence of the Twin Towers attack less than one month before, the seminar was even more successful than the previous ones; thus, the participants decided that it was time to found a new independent association.

The acronym of such an association was decided to be *ASSISi*, in memory of the town where the Seminar was held and due to the fact that this town is symbol of peace and international collaboration (which is needed to save human lives). Only later the full name (Anti-Seismic Systems International Society) was assessed, to be consistent with the acronym, based on a suggestion of the Founding Member Prof. James Kelly.

2 PRESIDENTS OF *ASSISi* AND EVENTS ORGANIZED BY THE ASSOCIATION

ASSISi was formally founded in Bologna (Italy) in November 2002 (Trogu 2002). Dr. Alessandro Martelli was its Founding President; according to the statutes (Sect. 6), he was followed, as President, by Dr. Keith Fuller of the United Kingdom (UK) in 2007, Prof. Fu Lin Zhou of the Peoples' Republic (P.R.) of China in 2011 and Prof. Gianmario Benzoni of the United States of America (USA) in 2015.

After 2001, the 2003 "World Seminar", namely the first of *ASSISi*, was held in Yerevan (Armenia). It was organized by Prof. Mikayel Melkumyan (Melkumyan ed. 2003, Martelli 2003, Martelli & Forni 2003), who also later organized a workshop with the patronage of *ASSISi* (Melkumyan 2006).

At Yerevan, in 2003, it was decided to call the subsequent events as "World Conferences". Prior to this 15th Conference, the latter took place in:

- Kobe (Japan) in 2005 (Fujita ed. 2005, Martelli & Forni 2005);
- Istanbul (Turkey) in 2007 (Erdik ed. 2007, Martelli & Forni 2007);
- Guanzhou (P.R. China) in 2009 (Zhou ed. 2009, Martelli 2009);
- Sochi (Russian Federation) in 2011 (Eisenberg & Smirnov eds. 2011, Martelli 2011);
- Sendai (Japan) in 2013 (Saito ed. 2013, Martelli 2013), connected with the 20th Anniversary International Symposium of the Japan Society of Seismic Isolation (JSSI);
- San Diego (California, USA) in 2015 (Benzoni ed. 2015, Martelli 2015b).

At San Diego it was decided to close the existing association in Italy and to found a new one in the USA, with the same name, but updated Statutes. This was done at the end of 2015.

3 FOUNDING AND ORDINARY MEMBERS OF *ASSISi*

As partly previously mentioned, *ASSISi* was formally founded in Budrio (Bologna), in front of a notary (according to the Italian law), on November 21, 2002, by the first author of this papers (legal representative) and by Drs. Giordano-Bruno Arato, Renzo Medeot and Alberto Dusi, based on the agreements reached at the conclusion of the 2011 seminar in Assisi (Trogu 2002). Thus, it became active at the beginning of 2003.

Based on the same agreements and later contacts, several further experts, from different countries, had joined the aforementioned four Italian experts as Founding Members (FMs). Those who can be con-

sidered as still active, in addition to three of the four initial founders (only Dr. Arato became a Honorary Founding Member, HFM, after his retirement) are Profs./Drs.:

- Vyacheslav S. Beliaev (Russian Federation);
- Gianmario Benzoni (USA);
- Kuo Chun Chang (Taiwan);
- Massimo Forni (Italy);
- Keith Neville Fuller (UK);
- Ronald Frank Kulak (USA);
- Gorge Manos (Greece);
- Joaquin Marti (Spain);
- Rick Ricciuti (Canada);
- Paul Berwick Summers (USA);
- Akira Wada (Japan);
- Bong Yoo (South Korea);
- Fu Lin Zhou (P.R. China);
- Mansour Ziyaeifar (Iran).

Those who (according to the statutes) later became HFMs (which means that they are exempted from the payment of their annual dues, but have no voting right and cannot be voted as President or Members of the Executive Committee) are now (in addition to Dr. Arato), Profs./Drs:

- Stavros Anagnostopolous (Greece);
- Jao Azevedo (Portugal);
- Ulugbek Begaliev (Kyrgyz Republic);
- Philippe Bisch (France);
- Giuseppe Bonacina (Italy);
- Shell Cherry (USA)
- Howard H. Chung (USA);
- Michael C Contantinou. (USA);
- Mauro Dolce (Italy);
- Luis Dorfmann (Austria);
- Luis Esteva Maraboto (Mexico);
- Ondrej Fischer (Czech Republic, retired);
- Matej Fischinger (Slovenia);
- Takafumi Fujita (Japan, retired);
- Mihail Garevski (Macedonia);
- Gaetano Germani (Turkey);
- Hamid Ghasemi (USA);
- Kazuhiko Kawashima (Japan);
- James M. Kelly (USA, retired);
- Hyun-Moo Koh (South Korea);
- Hari Shankar Kushwaha (India);
- Mikayel Melkumyan (Armenia);
- Javier Molina (European Union);
- Maria Ofelia Moroni (Chile, retired);
- Simin Naaseh (USA);
- Frederick Carl Nelson (USA);
- Giuliano F. Panza (Italy);
- Vito Renda (European Union, retired);
- Sonia E. Ruiz Gomez (Mexico);
- Victor Rutenberg (Israel);
- Tito Sanò (Italy, retired);
- Rodolfo Saragoni Huerta (Chile);
- Mauricio Sarrazin (Chile);
- Pierre Sollogoub (France).

Prof. Vladimir Smirnov (Russian Federation), unfortunately, passed away in 2015. Only two FMs resigned in the past years.

In any case, several Ordinary Members (Individual, OIMs, and Corporate, OCMs) joined *ASSISi* after its foundation: the overall number of members who were active (i.e., who had paid their annual dues and, thus, had voting right) was 84 at the end of 2015.

4 OBJECTIVES AND SOME FEATURES OF *ASSISi*

According to the statutes of the previously established Society (Trogu 2002), which remain largely unchanged in the new one, *ASSISi* is a non-profit association. As mentioned, the acronym *ASSISi* symbolizes Assisi, the Italian city where the decision was made to found the Society on October 5, 2001, during the Closing Panel of the «7th International Seminar on Seismic Isolation, Passive Energy Dissipation and Active Control of Seismic Vibrations of Structures» (Martelli *et al.* 2002). As Assisi is internationally known as the city of Saint Francis, it carries a meaning of “Peace and International Cooperation”. Having *ASSISi* as the acronym for the Society reaffirms the founders’ willingness to take a clear symbolic position against terrorism and their desire through concerted activities to build a better and safer world through international cooperation and collaboration.

The head office of the Society was established at the Bologna Research Center of ENEA (Italian Agency for New Technology, Energy and the Environment). On the basis of the decision, or with the approval, of the Executive Committee (EC), Territorial Sections of the Society were and may be formed (e.g., the Italian GLIS Territorial Section was formed by the new *ASSISi* association in 2016).

The object of the Society was (and shall remain) the pursuit of the following purposes (Trogu 2002):

- to promote international cooperation among scientists and engineers of all seismic and non-seismic countries, without any distinction related to political or religious issues;
- to advance the research front in the field of the development of techniques for the control of seismic vibrations (e.g. base and floor SI, ED, hydraulic coupling by means of shock transmitter units, coupling by means of shape memory alloy devices, semi-active and hybrid control techniques, etc.) and of innovative strengthening methods, applicable to all kinds of structures (bridges and viaducts; strategic, public and ordinary apartment buildings; industrial plants and components; cultural heritage, including single masterpieces), both to be constructed or protected or to be seismically rehabilitated or improved;
- to contribute to and to support all related research and educational activities;
- to play an active role in organizing the research and educational activities in the world in the field of the aforesaid techniques;
- to play an active role in all aspects of development and application of such techniques;
- in particular, to promote the development of international Design Guidelines and Testing Procedures for structures provided with the aforesaid techniques;
- to provide information on the aforesaid techniques to National and International Institutions, designers, officials charged to approve designs of structures and the general public of all seismic countries;
- to promote the application of the aforesaid techniques to all kinds of structures in all seismic countries;
- to draw to the attention of the decision-makers in construction policy the need for a further implementation of the aforesaid techniques.

In 2002 it was planned (Trogu 2002) that the Society shall accomplish its purposes by:

- holding or co-organizing regular conferences, regional seminars and workshops, to be chaired or co-chaired by the ASSISi President or another expert delegated by him;
- co-organizing the World Seminars on seismic vibration control techniques, to be held *every two years*, under the chairmanship of a Member of ASSISi from the hosting country and co-chairmanship of the ASSISi President, starting from the 9th ASSISi World Seminar (these Seminars shall be numbered consecutively starting from the 8th event and, starting from the 9th, their names shall include the wording “ASSISi” as specified above);
- exchanging information, data and expertise from established data banks;
- establishing and extending technical co-operation and joint projects among members;
- providing and introducing new publications, research reports, and a technical journal in the field of development and application of control techniques of seismic vibrations and innovative seismic strengthening methods for structures;
- maintaining a web page with updated information for members and non-members;
- cooperating with national or international associations and societies with which the Society is affiliated, or which are affiliated with the Society;
- more generally, cooperating, through continuous contacts, with other international, regional and national associations and societies dealing with building technologies, seismic engineering, seismology and control of structures’ vibrations, in particular for the joint organization of conferences, seminars and workshops on modern AS systems and for information and training, in order to create synergies towards the development and application of the aforesaid techniques and not unnecessarily to duplicate efforts and events;
- exploiting the general media (including newspapers, magazines and television) and producing films on seismic vibration control techniques, specifically targeted towards informing Institutions, public officials, designers or public opinion;
- raising funds for research and for improving the services provided by the Society.

With regard to regional events that involved ASSISi, it is worthwhile citing, in addition to that, already mentioned, organized by Melkumyan (2006):

- the 2015 annual seminar of the Italian GLIS association, which was held in Avezzano (L’Aquila) with the patronage (among others) of ASSISi and the participation, as invited speakers, of three

renowned foreign *ASSISI* members, namely Prof. Gianmario Benzoni for the USA, Dr. Taiki Saito for Japan and Prof. Fu Lin Zhou for the P.R. China (Clemente ed. 2015, Martelli 2015a);

- the 2016 annual seminar of the Italian GLIS association, which was held in Bologna with the patronage (among others) of *ASSISI* and the participation, as invited speaker, for closing remarks, of Prof. Gianmario Benzoni, as *ASSISI* President (Martelli ed. 2017).

5 GOVERNING BODIES OF ASSISI

As mentioned, the Associates are broken down into: (a) Founding Members (FMs); (b) Ordinary Members (OMs); (c) Honorary Members (HMs). The FMs and HMs are individuals. In addition, either individuals or public or private bodies – such as associations, research institutes, universities, companies, industries, government agencies and the like – who/which are considered by the Society as contributing to the advancement and achievement of the Society's objects in their respective country may participate (and are participating) in the Society as Ordinary Corporate Members (OCMs).

Members may organize Seminars or Workshops for the education of young and local engineers and scientists and/or public officials and the general public.

The governing bodies of the Society were: (a) the Foundation Committee (FC); (b) the General Assembly (GA); (c) the Executive Committee (EC); (d) the Officers; (e) the Board of Auditors; (f) the Board of Arbitrators. The first four bodies will be kept in the new association too.

The EC consists of:

- 5 members, from different countries, of which at least 2 are located in 2 different continents, each differing from that of the President; the members shall be elected from among active *ASSISI* Members on the occasion of the GA of the Society held in conjunction with the World Seminar (in the first four elections following foundation of the Society, at least 2 of these 5 members had to be voted from among FMs who were from two continents different from that of the President);
- the Chairman of the World Conference during which the General Assembly takes place;
- the Chairman of the next World Conference, who shall be an active member of *ASSISI* and shall be appointed by the National Society or Association organizing this Seminar and the next world meeting of the GA;
- ex-officio members (Officers);
- any Coordinators of the Territorial Sections who may be co-opted, with or without voting rights, by the above-stated Members of the Executive Committee.

The Officers are, in addition to the President, the Past-President, up to 3 Vice-Presidents, the Secretary-General and the Treasurer of the Society, who are appointed by the President. The Chairman of the next World Conference shall not be eligible as President of the Society. The President of the Society shall be elected by the GA and shall remain in office until the second GA following his election; he shall not be eligible for immediate re-appointment to the same post. The President and the Vice-President(s) shall all be from different continents; the latter, as well as the Secretary General and the Treasurer, are eligible for re-appointment without any limit.

6 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES THAT FOLLOWED THE FOUNDATION OF ASSISI

The Presidents and ECs Members (including the Secretary General and Treasurer) who followed the foundation of the association are reported below.

- The 1st and 2nd ECs (from 2001 to 2005) were formed by Alessandro Martelli (Italy, President and Chairman of the 2001 Seminar), Stavros A. Anagnostopoulos (Greece), Gianmario Benzoni (USA, Secretary General), Howard H. Chung (USA), Mauro Dolce (Italy), Takafumi Fujita (Japan, Chairman of the 2005 Seminar), Keith N. G. Fuller (UK), Joaquin Marti, (Spain), Mikayel Melkumyan (Armenia, Chairman of the 2003 Seminar) and Sonia E. Ruiz Gomez (Mexico).
- The 3rd EC (from 2005 to 2007) was formed by Alessandro Martelli (Italy, President), Gianmario Benzoni (USA, Vice-President), Mauro Dolce (Italy), Mustafa Erdik (Turkey, Chairman of the

2007 Conference), Massimo Forni (Italy, Secretary General), Keith N.G. Fuller (UK), Takafumi Fujita (Japan, Vice-President and Chairman of the 2005 Conference), Mikayel Melkumyan (Armenia, Treasurer) and Fu Lin Zhou (P.R. China).

- The 4th EC (from 2007 to 2009) was formed by Keith N.G. Fuller (UK, President), Alessandro Martelli (Italy, Past President, Vice-President and Treasurer), Gianmario Benzoni (USA, Vice-President), Alberto Dusi (Italy), Mustafa Erdik (Turkey, Chairman of the 2007 Conference), Massimo Forni (Italy, Secretary General), Takafumi Fujita (Japan, Vice-President), Hyun Moo Koh (South Korea), William Robinson (New Zealand, Vice-President) and Fu Lin Zhou (P.R. China, Chairman of the 2009 Conference).
- The 5th EC (from 2009 to 2011) was formed by Keith N.G. Fuller (UK, President), Alessandro Martelli (Italy, Past President, Vice-President and Treasurer), Gianmario Benzoni (USA, Vice-President), Jacob Eisenberg (Russian Federation), Vladimir Smirnov (Russian Federation, Chairman of the 2011 Conference), Mustafa Erdik (Turkey), Massimo Forni (Italy, Secretary General), Renzo Medeot (Italy), Taiki Saito (Japan), Fu Lin Zhou (P.R. China, Chairman of the 2009 Conference), William Robinson (New Zealand, Vice-President).
- The 6th EC (from 2011 to 2013) was formed by Fu Lin Zhou (P.R. China, President), Keith N.G. Fuller (UK, Past President), Gianmario Benzoni (USA, Vice-President), Mustafa Erdik (Turkey), Massimo Forni (Italy, Secretary General), Alessandro Martelli (Italy, Vice-President and Treasurer), Mikayel Melkumyan (Armenia), Taiki Saito (Japan, Chairman of the 2013 Conference) and Vladimir Smirnov (Russian Federation, Vice-President and Chairman of the 2011 Conference).
- The 7th EC (from 2013 to 2015) was formed by Fu Lin Zhou (P.R. China, President), Keith N.G. Fuller (UK, Past President), Hamid Ahmadi (UK), Gianmario Benzoni (USA, Vice-President and Chairman of the 2015 Conference), Massimo Forni (Italy, Secretary General), Alessandro Martelli (Italy, Vice-President and Treasurer), Taiki Saito (Japan, Chairman of the 2013 Conference), Vladimir Smirnov (Russian Federation, Vice-President) and David Whittaker (New Zealand).
- The 8th EC (from 2015 to 2017) is formed by Gianmario Benzoni (USA, President and Chairman of the 2015 Conference), Fu Lin Zhou (P.R. China, Past President), Hamid Ahmadi (UK), Massimo Forni (Italy, Secretary General), Alessandro Martelli (Italy, Vice-President and Treasurer), Mineo Takayama (Japan), Ping Tan (P.R. China, Vice-President), Vladimir Smirnov (Russian Federation) and David Whittaker (New Zealand, Chairman of the 2017 Conference). It is noted that, after his death in 2015, Vladimir Smirnov was replaced by Mustafa Erdik (Turkey).

7 FOUNDATION COMMITTEE AND ITS COORDINATORS

The FC is composed of the Founding Members (FM), who were the experts present at the Foundation Meeting of *ASSISI* and those whose names have also been listed in Sect. 3. The FM elect their Coordinator, who is re-electable without limits of any kind. The FC had a fundamental direct role in the management of the Society in its first years of activity. Afterwards, it kept the function of Advisory Committee to the EC and supervision over the Society's management. Coordinators of the FC was Prof. James M. Kelly (USA) to the 2013 Sendai Conference, where he was replaced by Dr. Renzo Medeot (Italy). Finally, Prof. Akira Wada was elected as new Coordinator at the 2015 San Diego Conference.

8 CONCLUSIONS

This paper summarized the history of *ASSISI*, its main objectives, features and achievement, by also recalling the bi-annual international events on the development and application of the Anti-Seismic (AS) systems, in particular of the seismic isolation (SI) and energy dissipation (ED) ones, that had taken place before the foundation of the association at the end of 2002 and which led to such a foundation.

It was reminded that such first events began in San Francisco (California, USA) in 1989. It was also

mentioned that subsequent events were held in several countries: Nara (Japan) in 1991, Capri (Italy) in 1993, Santiago (Chile) in 1995, Taormina (Italy) in 1997, Cheju (South Korea) in 1999 and, finally, Assisi (Italy) in 2001.

It was stressed that the latter was the first seminar that was organized independently from SMiRT Conferences and that the foundation of ASSISi was decided at this seminar.

Remarks were also reported on the ASSISi events (now called Conferences), which took place in Yerevan (Armenia) in 2013, Kobe (Japan) in 2005, Istanbul (Turkey) in 2007, Guanzhou (P.R. China) in 2009, Sochi (Russian Federation) in 2011, Sendai (Japan) in 2013 and San Diego (USA) in 2015.

Finally, it was mentioned that, at San Diego, it was decided to close the existing association in Italy and to found a new one in the USA, with the same name, but updated statutes. This was done at the end of 2015 and the new association, founded by Prof. Gianmario Benzoni (USA), is already active.

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