



SOCIETY OF ACTUARIES

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## Chairperson's Corner

By *Carlos Arocha*

**A**s I write this, we are entering the holiday season around the world, in so many different ways across cultures. We will also be entering a new calendar year. At the SOA, the year already started on October 28, 2014 at the SOA 2014 Annual Meeting & Exhibit in Orlando, with the passing of the presidential gavel to Errol Cramer, who now serves as the President of the Society of Actuaries. The ceremony was preceded by the keynote speech from former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, who delivered one of the most inspiring addresses, encouraging actuaries to acquaint themselves with the current international affairs, and praising the meeting's theme: Together we progress!

Errol's presidential address alluded to the fact that "... there may be quicker and easier choices than the SOA pathway to becoming an actuary, but the SOA designation is known for its rigor and selectivity and recognized worldwide as a highly credentialed qualification." We are, in fact, the largest actuarial organization globally, with about 40 percent of the fully-qualified actuaries of the International Actuarial Association. We also reckon that "... we currently have 37,000 candidates in our education system, and that more than 20 percent of these candidates reside outside North America."

We have a number of ongoing initiatives, but the one that I want to highlight here is research. We recently partnered with the Product Development, Smaller Insurance Co., and Marketing & Distribution sections to support research in the product development process. We are also requesting other proposals for research initiatives, which we believe should be driven by our membership. Ideal topics are targeted towards our international constituents, while also being informative for the U.S./Canadian membership. Please submit your research ideas to myself ([ca@arochaandassociates.ch](mailto:ca@arochaandassociates.ch)), Wendy Liang ([Wendy\\_Liang@swissre.com](mailto:Wendy_Liang@swissre.com)), and Martha Sikaras ([msikaras@soa.org](mailto:msikaras@soa.org)).

For this new SOA year, the International Section continues its efforts of reaching out to this growing membership, not only the newly credentialed actuaries, but also the established members of the profession who reside outside the United States and Canada. Our mission is to encourage and to facilitate the professional development of our members and affiliates who are involved in international insurance, pensions, or Social Security programs, or who are interested in international areas of practice, through activities such as meetings, seminars, research studies, and the exchange of information.

It is my pleasure to introduce the 2014–2015 International Section Council. In particular I'd like to welcome Graydon, Awa and Athena as new council members:

- Carlos Arocha—Chairperson
- Wendy Liang—Vice Chairperson
- Graydon Bennett—Secretary
- Awa Agui—Treasurer
- Anna Dyck
- Lindsay Neu
- Warren Rodericks
- Rong Rong
- Athena Tsouderou

Our council is diversified and global as four members are based in Europe, and another one in Canada. We look forward to embracing the new year with excitement and remember, "together we progress." □