In May 2011, the College of Surgeons, Academy of Medicine Malaysia together with the Ministry of Health Malaysia signed an agreement with the International Association of Endocrine Surgeons (IAES) and Breast Surgery International (BSI) to hold five Breast and Endocrine Surgery Courses in Malaysia.

The 5th and final course was held at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital II in Kota Kinabalu Malaysia from 17-18th Nov 17. Professor Omar Youssef, the current President of BSI, and Professor Sarkis Meterissian, the past President of BSI, were the lecturers from BSI while Professor Inne Borel Rinkes and Professor Ming Khoon Yew were the lecturers from IAES. The theme of the course was “Towards Greater Heights”. The organising chairman of this year’s course is Dr Siti Zubaidah binti Sharif, consultant breast surgeon in Queen Elizabeth Hospital II, and the advisor was Dato’ Dr Imi Sairi Ab Hadi, Chief of the Breast and Endocrine Surgery Services in Malaysia. Kota Kinabalu is the capital of the state of Sabah, which occupies the northern part of the island of Borneo, with a population of 3.8 million, and only two consultant breast and endocrine surgeons. A study on breast cancer in Sabah between 2005 and 2006 showed that over 50% of women presented with Stage 3 and 4 breast cancer.

The workshop was opened on 17th Nov 2017 by Dato’ Dr Mohamed Yusof bin Hj Adbul Wahab, National Head of Surgical Services, Ministry of Health Malaysia. 120 surgeons from all parts of Malaysia registered for the conference. Delegates were treated to a spectacular cultural performance by the indigenous races of Sabah at the opening ceremony, after which the breast surgery sessions commenced with a series of 8 lectures from Professor Youssef and Professor Meterissian. In between lectures were case discussions with cases presented by surgeons from different parts of Malaysia. Professor Emeritus Dato’ Cheng-Har Yip, immediate Past President of BSI, gave a review of the MOU between IAEA, BSI, Ministry of Health Malaysia and College of Surgeons Academy of Medicine Malaysia that was signed in 2011 when she was the President of the College of Surgeons Malaysia. Although the MOU covered only 5 courses, it is hoped that further collaboration between the groups can continue in other forms.

The conference dinner was held at a local restaurant on 17th Nov 2017, with an opportunity for everyone to get together.

The next day was the Endocrine Surgery lectures, and this was followed by the closing ceremony by the Director General of Heath, Datuk Noor Hisham bin Abdullah, who is a current Council member of the International Surgical Society and Chair of the Global Surgery Committee in ISS.

Altogether the workshop was very successful, and we would like to thank the surgical trainees from Sabah who provided transport for the visitors as well as being the tour guide.
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