San Francisco, California, USA – Hugh R. Taylor, AC, MD, succeeded Bruce E. Spivey, MD, MS, MEd, as President of the International Council of Ophthalmology (ICO) on April 7, 2014. The official transition of power occurred at the end of the 2014 World Ophthalmology Congress (WOC) of the ICO in Tokyo, Japan, April 2-6.

“It has been an honor and privilege to help the ICO grow and strengthen. In January 2013, the ICO Board of Trustees elected my friend and colleague, Dr. Hugh Taylor, as the next ICO President, and I am pleased to leave the ICO in such capable hands,” said Dr. Spivey.

Dr. Taylor is well positioned to further the ICO’s commitment to build a world alliance for sight. He is internationally recognized for his leadership in trachoma and other initiatives to limit avoidable vision loss. Dr. Taylor’s early experience reviewing Pakistan’s eye care services on behalf of the World Health Organization led him to take up the challenge of convincing health bureaucrats and governments to take vision loss seriously and demonstrating why—with limited and competing health dollars—eye care must be made a global priority.

“Dr. Spivey’s leadership as ICO President has served as an excellent example, and I will continue to steer the ICO in the same direction: broadening and improving ophthalmic education and access to quality eye care around the globe,” said Dr. Taylor. “I especially look forward to working with the ICO Member societies—which represent more than 200,000 ophthalmologists around the world. Through this partnership, the ICO will continue to grow and strengthen as an organization, improving access to the highest quality eye care in order to preserve and restore vision for the people of the world.”

Prior to becoming ICO President, Dr. Taylor served as the ICO Treasurer, and he is the past ICO Director for Advocacy. Dr. Taylor has also held numerous other leadership positions, such as Vice President for the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness and for the Asia Pacific Academy of Ophthalmology.

Dr. Taylor founded the Centre for Eye Research Australia, and he is currently leading the Indigenous Eye Health Unit at the University of Melbourne, Australia. In recognition of his service and contributions to the field, Dr. Taylor has received many prestigious honors, including being appointed Companion of the Order of Australia and receiving a Lifetime Achievement Award from the American Academy of Ophthalmology.

“The ICO is comprised of 130 national and multinational ophthalmologic Member societies, and having the ICO President located in Australia will help us strengthen our work in that region of the world,” said William Felch, ICO Chief Executive Officer. “While we will sincerely miss working with Bruce, everyone at the ICO looks forward to working more closely with Hugh in his new leadership capacity.”
During Dr. Spivey’s 20 years as both ICO Secretary General and President, the ICO has expanded and improved its education, eye care, and leadership resources and programs, and its membership has grown along with the ICO’s commitment to work collaboratively with other leaders in eye care.

“I have been working with Bruce at the ICO for the past 21 years, and it has been a great honor,” said Dr. Jean-Jacques De Laey, outgoing ICO Vice President. “Bruce is a fantastic leader, and he certainly transformed the ICO. He became an excellent friend to whom we all owe a great debt of gratitude.”

Dr. Spivey was honored for his service to ophthalmology during the WOC in Tokyo, including at the President’s Dinner on April 1, the WOC2014 Opening Ceremony, and the ICO General Assembly. The ICO Board of Trustees voted to establish the Bruce Spivey Ophthalmic Education Award to recognize “an ophthalmologist, who through innovation, development or application has significantly advanced ophthalmic education in a manner that enhances eye care and preservation of vision.” The Award will be presented for the first time at the 2016 World Ophthalmology Congress, February 5–9, 2016, in Guadalajara, Mexico.

“While I will miss the daily global collaborations with so many people worldwide, as well as the superb ICO staff, Officers, and Board, I will remain involved as a Board member of the ICO,” said Dr. Spivey.

“Though we are sad that we will not be working with Bruce on a day-to-day basis as ICO President, we are grateful that he will stay closely connected with the ICO,” said Dr. El-Maghraby, outgoing ICO Vice President.

About the International Council of Ophthalmology:
The International Council of Ophthalmology (ICO) represents and serves over 130 national and subspecialty Member societies from around the globe. It works to enhance ophthalmic education and improve access to the highest quality eye care in order to preserve and restore vision for the people of the world. For more information, see www.icoph.org.

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