

General Assembly / Assemblée générale
Girona/Gérone, 14/10/2014

GA 2014-4

Draft minutes of the General Assembly of the International Council on Archives, held at The Square, Brussels, on 23 November 2013.

The meeting started at 16.35.

OPENING

1. Welcome by the President

The President, Martin Berendse, informed the meeting that this was the first General Assembly to be held under the terms of the new Constitution, approved at the AGM in Brisbane in 2012. He particularly welcomed category C members who had voting rights for the first time and Category D members who now had speaking rights. He explained the new weighted voting system: holders of blue voting cards had 4 votes, those with red cards 2 votes and those with yellow cards one vote.

2. Assessment of the quorum

The Secretary General, David Leitch, informed the meeting that the quorum had been met by a very comfortable margin.

3. Adoption of the agenda

A draft agenda had been distributed in advance of the meeting. The President informed the meeting that item 12 on *Ratification of the Internal Regulations* needed to be brought to the top of the agenda, as one of these dealt with the new voting system which would be applied in the case of any votes being required during the meeting

The Internal Regulations were ratified by the General Assembly unanimously

George McKenzie, ICA's constitutional expert, reminded members that internal regulations were a useful tool in the management of ICA as these could be changed more easily than the Constitution. However, all internal regulations had to be finally ratified by the General Assembly. As well as voting procedures, the proposed regulations dealt with the creation of ICA fellowships to note distinguished service to ICA. These would replace the system of Honorary Memberships.

There being no questions or comments, the proposed internal regulations regarding election of officers and on election of fellows were ratified by the General Assembly.

REPORTS

4. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting, 24 August 2012.

These had been distributed in advance of the meeting, and were approved by the General Assembly.

5. Report of the President

The President gave a verbal report. Since the 2012 Annual General Meeting, the institutional reforms required by the adoption of the new Constitution had been conducted and taken on. In particular the President referred to:

- The change from the annual CITRA meeting, a meeting for only a select minority of ICA members, to the first annual conference, which had attracted over 500 delegates from more than 100 countries. He felt this was a new and vital development for the profession and beyond its boundaries.
- The formal installation of the bureau of the Forum of National Archivists (FAN) under the chairmanship of David Fricker from the National Archives of Australia. He offered thanks and congratulations to Mr Fricker and the new bureau members.
- At a time when institutions world-wide were facing budget cuts, ICA has succeeded in attracting more members. The new voting system has extended the right to vote to category C members.
- The first two years of his Presidency had concentrated on institutional reforms. The last two (2012-2014) would involve him more in representing ICA externally, with the help and support of the elected officers and the Secretariat. He mentioned particularly attending the IFLA conference in Singapore (August 2013), and new partnerships such as that with UNESCO to produce a model curriculum for digital preservation.

He ended his report by reminding members that he had now begun his last year of President. The question of fresh elections for officers in 2014 would be dealt with under item 16.

6. Report of the Vice President Programme

Henri Zuber presented a verbal report outlining the changes to PCOM practices since 2012. The programme would now concentrate on 3 major themes: good governance, digital archives and preservation. To reflect on these issues, Expert Groups, comprising the best professionals at international level, were being established. Some groups had already been

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established and Chairs identified for others. A call for projects had been launched and several projects chosen for funding.

He had also been involved in discussions about the UNESCO-ICA partnership, and thanked IRMT for the dynamism they had brought to the project. To date, two pilot modules, aimed at the Caribbean and Africa in particular, had been produced.

He also thanked all members of PCOM for their work over the past year, in moving the changes forward.

He then invited Sarah Tyacke, President of FIDA, to the stage in inform members of recent FIDA activities. She stressed that she was not presenting a report as such, but wished to show how much work had been done since 2010 in helping archivists in low resourced environments help themselves. Over the past three years the fund has helped archivists in 11 countries, from the Solomon Islands, Barbados, Cameroon and Mozambique. FIDA was a small fund, which has been successful due to support offered by member countries and ICA regional branches, especially CARBICA, ESARBICA and PARBICA. Despite its modest resources, FIDA had been successful, but was running out of funds. It would be exhausted by the end of 2014. She has been exploring alternative sources of funding, but asked members to consider making personal donations. There was a tick box on the ICA membership renewal form, and members could contribute in that way. She also planned a 'Bucket fund raising event' on the following day, and further encouraged members to donate.

The President thanked Mrs Tyacke for her work with FIDA.

7. Report of the Secretary General

A summary report had been distributed beforehand. The Secretary observed that on first reading this might seem to lack focus but this was due to the fact that the Secretariat needed to cover a lot of ground. He also expressed his thanks to the host country, France, for the accommodation and subvention which allowed the Secretariat to function.

He mentioned the importance of partnerships such as that with UNESCO, and the need to develop others with ARMA and the World Bank.

Conference planning was going well, as demonstrated by the success of this first conference. He was confident that the 2014 conference in Girona would prove equally successful.

As part of the strategy to improve communications, a monthly e-newsletter had been launched. It was also pleasing to note that usage of the ICA website continued to increase steadily.

He felt that outreach was an important part of his work and that of the Secretariat, and his aim was that this should be less Eurocentric in future. His immediate priorities were to pay more attention to the regional branches, and indeed attending branch meetings was one of the most rewarding aspects of his work. Other priorities were to strengthen frontline communications and marketing. Additional revenue was vital to enable capacity to be raised within the Secretariat to help carry this forward. He saw himself a manager of an extremely successful team which has achieved a great deal in the past year, despite scarce resources. He reminded members that the Secretariat was extremely compact, and multi-tasking the order of the day. In his view, a new plateau of achievement has been reached this year with the delivery of this conference and he believed that even more could be done in the coming years, leading up to the 2016 Congress.

FINANCES

8. Audited 2012 financial report and discharge of the Vice President Finance.

Andreas Kellerhals reported that at the end of the 2012 financial year, the situation was relatively sound and robust. Despite a shortfall in income (€1.2 million) over expenditure (€1.3 million), the overall deficit had been limited due to the success of the Brisbane Congress. He had no particular concerns.

There being no questions or comments, the General Assembly discharged the Vice President Finance.

9. Report on the current financial year.

Andreas Kellerhals reported that the figure to date were relatively encouraging. By the end of October 86% of membership fees had been received, while 88% of projected budget had been spent. The deficit was currently running at €56,000.

While the situation was on the whole satisfactory, he reminded members to abide by their financial obligations and noted that some fees were still outstanding.

There were no questions.

10. Draft budget 2014

The President informed the meeting that this subject had been discussed at the recent meeting of the Executive Board. The proposed figures indicated a further reduction in programme funding. Andreas Kellerhals explained that there were several factors contributing to the budget shortfall. Income from category A members was reduced as compared to previous years, as the reform of membership dues took effect. Some members in arrears had been removed from membership. Even if these members were to rejoin, it was not possible to include any projected income for budget purposes. There was also some concern that category C members would change membership to category D, leading to a further shortfall in income.

While he had no particular concerns over the 2012 and 2013 deficits he felt that overspending could not be allowed to continue. Expenditure would need to be more carefully managed, and he thus proposed to continue the process introduced last year whereby a spending limit of 75% on section and branch budgets was imposed until such times as it was clear that there was sufficient income to cover this.

The President felt that a budget deficit for 2014 was possible in order to ensure that the new directions could be implemented, but that care would need to be taken in future planning.

Jean Philippe Legrois of the Association des Archivistes Français (AAF) informed the meeting that the association had adopted the possibility of members paying an additional subscription to include individual membership of ICA. He asked if other associations had considered this approach.

Fred van Kan, President of SPA, noted that the Dutch association had adopted the idea in principle, but wanted to be clear about what the benefits were. Mr Zuber noted that the major benefit was that individual members had access to the section of the ICA website reserved for members.

The President concluded the discussion by reminding members that the Executive Board would return to this discussion at its meeting in April 2014. He thanked members for their comments.

11. Scale of membership dues 2014

A paper had been distributed in advance, setting out the proposed dues. Sylvie Clair, (Head of Marseilles Municipal Archives), seconded by William Maher (Chair of SUV) asked for a

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formal vote to be taken to approve these. Lydie Padré Baroan underlined the need for transparency.

On the decision of the President, the meeting then proceeded to a formal card vote. The Secretary General announced the results: 286 votes in favour, 0 against with 42 abstentions.

The proposal was therefore carried.

CONSTITUTION

12. Ratification of Internal Regulations

This item was dealt with under item 1 above.

CONFERENCES AND CONGRESS

13. Annual Conference 2014

Joan Boadas gave a brief verbal update of planning for this conference which would take place in Girona from 13-15 October. The conference will also be the 9th European Conference on Archives and the 13th Image and Research seminar and the overall theme is *Archives and Cultural Industries*. The conference languages are English, French, Spanish and Catalan. The call for papers would go out by the end of November and the programme published by 30 April. ICA meetings and meetings of ICA partners will also be held.

14. Annual Conference 2015

A paper outlining the situation on the choice of host country for 2015 had been distributed. The President reminded the General Assembly that under the terms of the Constitution (article 9, section 2) the final choice was a decision for the Executive Board. The paper outlined the situation which was that Mozambique and ESARBICA had submitted a bid. While welcoming this bid, the Executive Board had some concerns over ESARBICA's intention to hold its own Biennial Conference earlier that year in Zimbabwe and would prefer that both conferences were combined. Discussions would continue between ICA and ESARBICA to seek an agreed solution. In response to a question from John M'reria (President of ESARBICA), the President emphasized that the discussion were not over and needed to continue. Ideally, a final decision would be taken at the Executive Board meeting in April 2014.

15. Congress 2016

Mr. Bahk, the President of the National Archives of South Korea, welcomed the opportunity to update members on preparation for the 2016 Congress in Seoul, which would open on 5 September 2016. He looked forward to welcoming everyone to the Congress.

ELECTIONS

16. Information on the next elections

The Secretary General outlined the procedure for the coming elections. A call for candidates would be launched soon. In the event of an uncontested election, results would be announced at the meeting of the Executive Board on 10 April 2014. Results of a contested election will be announced on 11 July. The electoral register will be ready on 25 April. Under the old system, with only categories A and B having voting rights, only 35% of those eligible to vote did so. He hoped that, in the event of contested elections, this percentage would be improved, with category C members now able to vote. Atakilty Assefa Asgedom (Ethiopia), Chairman of the Evaluation Commission, would act as Elections Officer and oversee the work of the secretariat.

17. Any other business

Dominique Taffin (President of CARBICA) asked the General Assembly to thank formally all those involved in the delivery of a very successful conference, including the ICA Secretariat, currently operating on reduced staffing, and the Archives of France for their continued support of the Secretariat and ICA. This was agreed.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 18.10pm