



Minutes

Steering Committee SPP/ICA, Meeting d.d. Oct 31st / Nov 1st, 2007;
Corfu Palace Hotel (Corfu, Greece), Room 612.

Agenda

1. Work program 2007/2008 and XVIth International Congress on Archives
2. SPP- Website
3. SPP enlargement and directory of parliamentary/party/politicians archives
4. Financial issues
5. Other issues

Attendants: Günther Schefbeck (president), Marietta Minotos (vice-president), Reinder van der Heide (secretary), Claus Brüggmann, Włodzimierz Kucner, Mateo Maciá, Béla Pálmányi, Reinhard Schreiner

Absentees: France Bélisle, Michael Schneider

Minutes Reinder van der Heide (secretary)

0. Welcome

The president (Günther Schefbeck / GS) opens the Steering Committee meeting and welcomes the attending SC members. Because the meeting started later than scheduled (23.00 h) – we had to wait for the arrival of our host here at Corfu, Marietta Minotos, whose flight was delayed –, he deems it efficient not to dwell on the internal affairs of the ICA too much. He just refers to the circumstance that the SPP will not be represented at the EB meeting and the CITRA in Québec. France Bélisle, though in Canada, cannot attend the meeting there, and neither can Günther himself or, at this short notice, the secretary.

1. Working program 2007-2008 and XIVth Conference ICA

GS: The main event within the working program of the ICA in general as well as the SPP in particular in the year 2008 will be the XIVth International Congress on Archives from 21 to 27 July 2008. The National Archives of Malaysia (in Kuala Lumpur) has been chosen to be the host of this event which roughly coincides with the 60th anniversary of ICA. The ICA bodies are invited to propose sessions for

the Congress in accordance with a session typology published on the Congress website and a three deadlines schedule , the 1st deadline being Dec 1st 2007.

Already at the SC meeting in April 2007 it was envisaged to organize a workshop on the issue of website archiving within the framework of the Congress since this issue has obtained a lot of interest and attention by other ICA bodies, as well.

According to the session typology a workshop would consist of two to four consecutive sessions, have an interactive format and be designed to teach or refine professional skills. Within the SC there is expressed some doubt about having the necessary capacity available in Kuala Lumpur of having this type of event. Therefore the discussion leads to the concept of organizing a more modest type of event: "work-in-progress", which would only consist of one session and combine up to two presentations with feedback and discussion. The envisaged presentations would be a general introduction on the importance of website-like information, in particular within a political context, and a presentation of the guidelines for website archiving as already presented in the course of the SPP conference in Bonn in November 2007, the proceedings of which should also be ready for being presented in Kuala Lumpur by July 2008. The introductory contribution would be made by Günther Schefbeck, the presentation of the guidelines by Rudolf Schmitz.

[The day after the SC meeting Rudolf Schmitz declared himself ready not only to present the guidelines for website archiving but also to prepare a second session in Kuala Lumpur devoted to practical exercises, the purpose of which would be to show the participants how comparably easy it would be to start with systematic efforts for website archiving. That is why the original concept of submitting a proposal for organising a workshop to the Program Committee of the Congress can be taken up again.]

The proposal to be submitted to the Program Committee of the Congress will in accordance with Rudolf Schmitz be prepared together by the President (GS) and the Secretary (RHvdH) and delivered to the Program Committee by Dec 1st 2007, which would mean that the notice of acceptance should be available by Jan 1st 2008, so that there would be sufficient time for preparation.

Besides preparing a substantial contribution to the program of the Congress, the Section will also have to prepare its annual meeting of the Plenary Assembly that is to take place on the occasion of the Congress in Kuala Lumpur and will in particular serve the purpose of electing the Steering Committee of the Section for the term 2008-2012.

In order to thoroughly prepare this election the SC agrees on sending out a form to the SPP members in February 2008. This form would enumerate the positions to be filled in and describe them in accordance with the provisions of the SPP Regulations (regardless whether they would already be in force by that time or not) and with the practical experience of how much time it would take to perform the tasks associated with these functions. By sending out this form the SPP members would be invited to declare their readiness to stand for election to one of the positions in question. The SPP Steering Committee at its next meeting in Vienna in April 2008 will take notice of the candidatures declared and draw up a list of candidates that will be distributed eight weeks before the meeting of the Plenary Assembly along with the meeting's provisional agenda. The candidates will be urgently invited to attend the Kuala Lumpur meeting in order to give the members present the opportunity to discuss with them their options and preferences for the upcoming term. If however it turns out that a significant number of candidates would indicate that they would not be able to attend the meeting, another solutions would have to be found by the SC at its meeting in April 2008; possibly this solution could be to invite the candidates to present their options and preferences in writing on the SPP website.

2. SPP website

Our SPP webmaster, Claus Brüggmann (CB), reports on his efforts to investigate for the owner of the old SPP domain which seems to be sort of a fake enterprise. He asks Mateo Maciá to do some extra investigation on a possible personal contact. The intention is to buy the domain which then would be linked to the SPP website established, if the costs would not exceed a reasonable amount. The second issue the webmaster mentions is his observation that the SPP questionnaire addressed to its members, which is still open to being completed on the SPP website, in the past months has been used by some obscure enterprises for promotional purposes. That is why he proposes to shut down the questionnaire for the time being, which wouldn't prevent us from reopening it in the future, for ex-

ample after having obtained new members. The third issue CB refers to is the circumstance that he has not yet received all the conference material to be published on the website. He will obtain the contributions to the Bonn as well as the Corfu Conference and publish them as soon as possible.

3. SPP enlargement and directory of Parliamentary/party/politicians archives

GS refers to two projects already discussed about in the course of the last SC meeting, namely the project of establishing a directory of Parliamentary/party/politicians archives as well as the project of conceiving a particular type of cooperation between archives from different countries called 'twinning' or 'jumelage'. Both projects seem to be somewhat connected with future efforts for enlarging membership of the section, in particular with regard to inviting archives and archivists from non-European countries to become members. As to the directory project, GS has drafted a questionnaire, that he will use to address European national Parliaments through the network of the European Centre for Parliamentary Research and Documentation (ECPRD). Beyond that he intends to send the questionnaire to the Secretary General of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and ask him to distribute it to the non-European IPU member Parliaments through the IPU network. Thereby at least the national Parliaments could be reached and asked for providing information on their respective archives. As regards regional parliamentary archives, the archivists of the national Parliaments could be asked to forward the questionnaire to them as well. As to political party and politicians archives, a systematic strategy like the mentioned one cannot be conceived in a similar way. That is why the SC members agree on using their personal and institutional networks to send the questionnaire to as many archives of the mentioned kind as possible and try to trigger a snowball effect by asking their work partners to forward the questionnaire to similar institution known by them. This way a collection of information on parliamentary archives as well as political party and politicians archives should be obtainable that would at least form the basis for a directory of the intended kind.

The next SC meeting in April 2008 will deal with the question how to present the collected information. The basic requirement for a flexible form of presentation would be to enter the information available in a simple sort of database, such as an Access database from which different presentation media could be fed. The basic form for presentation will be an online directory to be published on the SPP website which then would be currently updated. Another form of presentation discussed would be a CD that at reasonable cost could be prepared for and presented at the Kuala Lumpur Congress.

The second project discussed has been proposed by our member from Burkina Faso, Mrs. Nassa Traoré, who has submitted a short draft of possible items to be included in twinning contracts between archives. The basic idea of twinning is about exchange of knowledge and experiences between archives, usually between an archive of a so-called developed and an archive of a so-called developing country. This exchange of information and experiences would besides other options also be pursued by exchange of visits, which of course would lead to expenses that might not be coverable by the institutions themselves and cannot be covered by the SPP or the ICA. That is why for establishing a twinning scheme on a regular basis it would be necessary to obtain extra funding from outside. Since already in the past Béla Pálmányi (BP) has proposed to approach the Budapest-based Soros Foundation with a request for donations within the field in question, the project proposal will be submitted to the mentioned foundation. If the initial reaction would be in favour of such a project, the foundation officers could then be personally approached. In case funding could be obtained, the project could be promoted by a conference, for example in Burkina Faso.

Based on the projects mentioned above, new efforts for enlarging membership of the SPP could be taken. First of all, the institutions entered in the new directory will be informed about the SPP and its objectives by the fact sheets that have been prepared by the secretary (RHvdH). Beyond that, the contacts available through the directory could be used to inform the respective institutions on the on-going SPP activities by a newsletter to be sent out on a regular basis. Within the twinning approach new members, in particular from non-European countries, involved in concrete 'twinning' could be obtained.

4. Financial issues

RHvdH, the secretary as acting treasurer, informs the SC about the present situation of the Section's budget. Since there have not been any expenses for the current year, the amount is still € 5000,-. Ma-

rietta Minotos (MMi) announces to inform the SC members within the next days about what amount from the sectional budget will be required for financing the upcoming conference.

5. Closing

Since it is already 1.00 a.m., no other issues come up. The President thanks the attendant members for their contributions, expresses the hope and expectation of having a rewarding conference in the coming days, and closes the meeting.