

**INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON ARCHIVES  
SECTION ON ARCHIVES AND HUMAN RIGHTS**

**MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**28 October 2021, 16:00 Paris time, by video conference**

***Present***

Vitor Fonseca (in the chair);

Pam Adama; Blanca Bazaco Palacios; Kate Blalack; Perrine Canavaggio; Gustau Castañer Marquardt; Antonio González Quintana; Bryony Hooper; Deborah Jenkins; Rachel Mihalko; Andreas Nef; Trudy Peterson; Fina Sola; David Sutton; Maria José Vanni

Observer: Gladys Garcia

**1. Apologies**

Apologies had been received from: Jens Boel; Adam Hidestål; Romain Ledauphin; Christine Martinez; Mariana Nazar

**2. Approval of the Agenda**

The agenda was approved, with no amendment

**3. Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising**

The minutes of the GA of 26<sup>th</sup> January 2021, which had been circulated previously, were approved. There were no matters arising

**GOVERNANCE**

**4. Introduction of new committee and welcome from Section Chair**

Vitor welcome everyone, and thanked his predecessor, Antonio, for the high level of activity of the first two years of the section. He hoped that Antonio and the previous Executive Committee members would continue to support the work of the section, which had grown fast and well. Vitor reminded everyone that he was open to suggestions and comments on all aspects of the work of the section. The new committee introduced itself.

**5. Financial update**

Vitor explained that Adam had been promoted to a senior, politically restricted position, and he could no longer continue as treasurer of the section. Adam was congratulated for his success and thanked for his work for the section. In accordance with article 18 of the SAHR constitution, the EC would consider appointing a successor at its next meeting, on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2021.

The financial situation of the section was as follows:

- **Governance budget 2021:** 118.46 Euros remained for the current year

- **Project [PCOM] budget 2021:** two translation projects had been funded by PCOM in the course of the year and had been completed
- **Project [PCOM] budget 2022:** two PCOM projects had been bid for: (a) the translation into Spanish of those parts of the Book on Archives and Human Rights which had not been originally written in Spanish for the Spanish version of the book (b) the translation of the commentary on the universal rights declaration into French. We had received notification that PCOM would make decisions on these submissions on 15 November 2021.

**PROGRAMME**

**6. Vision/Strategic programme for the Section 2021-2024: discussion and approval (3 versions were circulated—ENG ESP FRA)**

Vitor and Trudy introduced the Vision/Strategic programme for 2021/2024, inviting discussion

- There was broad agreement about the shape and structure of the document, which had been divided into three areas: advocacy, education and archives at risk
- There was broad support for the underlying ethos of the document, which had been drawn from the UN sustainable goals
- There was a general feeling that the programme for the next three years should not be restricted to the issues identified in the document, as the field of Human Rights was dynamic, and could change very fast. There needed to be the possibility of introducing new objectives if necessary
- Trudy proposed and Antonio seconded the following motion:  
*“That the document be adopted as a working document of the section, to be amended as necessary”.* This was AGREED by all.
- It was AGREED that the document should be placed on the SAHR web page
- It was AGREED that the document should be sent to: (a) the new Chair of PCOM (b) the President and Secretary General and (c) the ICA Section chairs, to invite collaboration where possible
- Jens and the colleagues who helped with the translations of the documents into French and Spanish were thanked for their work

**7. Update on current programme activities 2021-2022**

	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Update</b>
a	<b><i>Climate Change and Archives at Risk Toolkit</i></b>	<p>Vitor gave an update on the project on Climate Change and Archives at Risk toolkit. A number of meetings had taken place with Claudio and Francisco, which reached the conclusion that the best way forward was to create a toolkit for colleagues across the world to apply to their own archives. The toolkit was now being drafted, to be presented at the April <b><i>First Tuesday Talk</i></b></p> <p>Vitor also reported that Lee Leumas (Expert Group on emergencies) had expressed concern about this initiative, as it had impact on more than Human Rights Archives</p>

b	<p><b><i>Book on Archives and Human Rights</i></b></p>	<p>Updates were given on the three versions of the book, as follows:</p> <p><u>English version:</u> Perrine reported that the English version continued to be promoted. There had been presentations/seminars in Bogota and in Guatemala</p> <p><u>French version:</u> Perrine reported that she had been in contact with La Découverte, a well-known publisher, who, while interested in the idea felt that the fact that the English version was available digitally significantly reduced the commercial viability of the project. She was now contacting other publishers</p> <p><u>Spanish version:</u> Antonio reported that an agreement had been reached with Spanish publishers Trea, but this was dependent on some PCOM funding for the translation into Spanish of those parts of the Book on Archives and Human Rights which had not been originally written in Spanish. The original date for the submission of the Spanish text was 30 November, but since PCOM had delayed its decision making until the 15<sup>th</sup> November, it was unlikely that the text would be ready in time</p>
c	<p><b><i>Directory of Human Rights Archives and of Archives holding Human Rights collections</i></b></p>	<p>Progress had been made with both phases of the directory project:</p> <p><u>Phase 1: ALA directory</u> – joint project with ALA. Further meetings were being planned, with a focus on what data elements were essential</p> <p><u>Phase 2: Truth Commissions</u> – joint project with swisspeace. Meetings had been held every two months. The data elements for this part of the project had been agreed (6-8 elements) and focussed on locating the archives. A letter had been drafted for Antonio, who is chairing this project, to send to relevant contacts</p> <p>A joint meeting of these two working groups was planned, to ensure that the projects were developing in a compatible way</p> <p>Maria Jose and Rachel indicated that they were keen to participate in the joint meeting</p>
d	<p><b><i>Developing teaching materials and online course on Archives and Human Rights</i></b> – including bibliography on archives and human rights</p>	<p>No progress had been made with developing Archives and Human Rights teaching materials</p> <p>Kate asked whether it was possible to see what model we should be working to. Trudy mentioned that the ICA had recently launched its course on Electronic Records, a 9 module course. It was AGREED that the issue would be discussed at the next SAHR EC, in the context of the Electronic Records course written by ICA</p> <p>A question was raised about the cost of the course. The Electronic Records course was costed at US \$185. It had been the original SAHR objective to make the course accessible to all, with no cost barrier</p> <p>[NB: the issue of the bibliography was not discussed at this meeting.]</p>

		<p>However, the possibility of developing a bibliography from the work on the Archive and Human Rights and the COMMA special edition on Human Rights was discussed at the October meeting of the SAHR EC, and this will be rolled into the December EC.]</p>
e	<p>Seminars on Archives and Human Rights – <b>The First Tuesday Talks</b></p>	<p>The programme for the next few months was confirmed as follows:  <i>December 7 2021: Giulia Barrera. Archival evidence and the Condor Cases in Rome's courts. Trudy to introduce.</i></p> <p><i>February 1 2022: Gilles Manceron. France and the archives of the Algerian War. Perrine to introduce.</i></p> <p><i>April 5 2022: Claudio Ogass Bilbao and Francisco Gonzalez Villanueva. Mapping climate change to protect archives. Vitor to introduce.</i></p> <p>Trudy explained that, from January, the lead on the programme would be Perrine, who was taking over from her. Trudy suggested that she and or Perrine would continue to act as the contact with the various speakers</p> <p>Antonio commented that Gilles Manceron had produced excellent work, and that it was important, if possible, to record his talk on the archives of the Algerian War</p> <p>Kate clarified certain aspects of the process of managing the <b>First Tuesday Talks</b>, in particular, the assistance she needed with promoting and marketing the talks. It was agreed that this was to be expanded gradually. For the December talks, it was AGREED that the following would happen, as soon as Kate asked the individuals to go ahead:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Trudy with the Newsletter</li> <li>b. Deb with a circulation to all members</li> <li>c. Andreas with advertising on the SAHR web page (News)</li> <li>d. Gustavo with his archival network</li> <li>e. Kate with the UK archival list-serv</li> <li>f. Perrine with the French archival information network</li> <li>g. Antonio with the Spanish archival information network</li> <li>h. Kate would also ask Giuglia whether she had access to Italian professional networks</li> </ol> <p>Kate was thanked for delivering the last two talks very effectively. It was acknowledged that the administration of the talks was a demanding process</p>
f	<p><b>Businesses and Archives and Human Rights</b></p>	<p>There were three areas to report on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. appointment of ICA representative to UN forum for Business and Human Rights</li> <li>b. the SAHR input on a UN document on due diligence within Corporations</li> <li>c. Rachel's pilot project on archival transparency in archives of the extractive industries</li> </ol> <p>a. <u>UN Forum for Business and Human Rights</u>. The ICA President</p>

		<p>had agreed that SAHR could be the ICA representative on the UN forum for Business and Human Rights. Antonio had done research on what the process for applying for this was: it involved filling in an application form, which was only considered once a year in June, which meant that for 2021, when the forum was being held on 30 November and 1<sup>st</sup> of December, we would have to apply for a one off dispensation.</p> <p>Letters had been sent to the Secretary General to start this process. It would be possible to participate in the meeting on receipt of a special invitation. Vitor will contact David Fricker and Anthea suggesting that a letter prepared by Antonio be sent to Mrs. Bachelet, stating that we would like to participate on that basis for 2021.</p> <p>We would have to develop a longer term strategy for 2022 onwards.</p> <p>b. <u>UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights: Corporations' due diligence based on reliable records management – proposals for better access to business records regarding human rights abuses.</u> Antonio and Blanca had reviewed a UN guidance document on this topic and had proposed amendments to the document, to include the need for due diligence to cover Records Management. It was suggested that this document should be made available on the SAHR web page, with Blanca's amendments</p> <p>c. <u>Pilot project on human rights evidence in the extractive industries.</u> Rachel reported on her research so far. It was difficult to find out where large businesses kept their archives and what provision was being made to access them. Rachel had identified the 7 largest oil &amp; gas companies in the world (based on revenue) and her analysis showed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To apply for access, one had to fill in a generic form from each company's website, not a form dedicated to access to archives</li> <li>• There was a difference between information about historic archives and the RM system used by the companies, about which very little was available</li> <li>• The historic archives of EXXON and Mobil were deposited at UT Austin (Texas). The BP archive was deposited at the University of Warwick: it was very complete but closed for 50 years</li> <li>• The next steps were considered. It was AGREED that Rachel should complete an interim report, describing her research so far and that, as an initial step, the chair of the Section on Business Archives (Alex Bieri) should be approached to discuss the issue. The starting point of the discussion should be about location and access, not human rights</li> </ul>
g	<p><b>Translation work for the section – priorities to be established</b></p>	<p>Trudy expressed her concern about the issue of translation. It was critical to the success of the First Tuesday Talks and also to the dissemination of other written reports.</p>

		Vitor described automatic transcription programmes he had seen in operation in Brazil. Andreas commented that while these were improving, they were at their most advanced when English was one of the concerned languages.
h	<b>Seminars with other ICA sections</b>	<p><u>Archives of Sport and Human Rights</u> Joint seminar with ICA SPO in Girona on 9<sup>th</sup>May 2022. Good progress was reported. Fina gave details of the draft programme</p> <p>Trudy raised the questions of (a) the displacement of people to allow for the construction of stadia for various games, including the Olympic games and (b) the treatment of workers who built the facilities, both of which had important Human Rights dimensions. Fina invited SAHR to identify speakers on the subjects</p> <p>Vitor raised the matter of the SAHR contribution of 250 Euros to the seminar. This would be raised from the SAHR PCOM allocation, but we did not yet know whether the budget would be awarded before 9 May 2022. Fina responded that she understood the dilemma, and that ICA SPO was in the same situation. She would mention the fact to the seminar organisers</p>
i	<b>Preparations for ICA conference and congresses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Rome (September 2022)</u></li> <li>• At the ICA GA two weeks ago, it had been announced that the call for papers would be opened in November and continue until March. The Theme of the conference was 'Bridging the Gap'. The SAHR EC would consider options at its next meeting. One idea which had already been considered favourably by the EC was that of having a session on the International Court of Justice, which had been established 20 years ago, at a meeting in Rome. Deb would be writing to the New Chair of PCOM about several matters, and would mention this as a possibility. Vitor felt that virtually all the work of SAHR was relevant to 'Bridging the Gap', particularly in respect of democracy deficits. Trudy mentioned the work on the Truth Commission as another example to be considered. She also suggested climate change as a possible topic for the conference.</li> <li>• <u>Abu Dhabi (October 2023)</u>. Nothing new to report. Antonio reported on the Abu Dhabi virtual conference (2021), for which Antonio and Blanca had prepared a short 5 minute video contribution on the content of the Book on Archives and Human Rights and the COMMA special edition on archives and human rights.</li> <li>• <u>Barcelona (2025)</u>. The Barcelona Congress was now confirmed for 2025</li> <li>• As a more general point, Maria José commented that it was impossible for ICA members in Latin America to attend conferences so far away, and wondered whether it would be possible for ICA to put the proceedings of these conferences could be recorded and made available on the internet. Deb said that she would ask the Chair of PCOM about this, as the ICA had made the SAHR's <b>First Tuesday Talks</b> available through</li> </ul>

		YouTube.
j	<b>Refresh ICA SAHR pages</b> on ICA website	Andreas had been removing out of date content, and updating the governance pages. The approach had been a step by step one, so improvement will be slow but steady

**8. Networking with other international agencies**

- Archivistes sans Frontieres. Christine was now a natural bridge between SAHR and AsF
- Blue Shield. No report had been received from Lee Leumas, who was the ICA representative on the International Blue Shield Committee.

**9. Any other business**

There was no other business

**10. Dates of next meetings:**

- GA: March 2022 – date to be confirmed
- EC: 2<sup>nd</sup>December 2021