



International Commission on Occupational Health - ICOH
Commission Internationale de la Santé au Travail - CIST
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05, 2004

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Minutes of the 2nd General Assembly of the International Commission on Occupational Health 1st September, 2000 held at the Padang Room, Raffles Convention Centre, Singapore

The Second General Assembly in conjunction with the ICOH 2000 Congress in Singapore was held as an adjoining part of the Closing Ceremony of the ICOH 2000 Congress.

1. The newly elected President of ICOH, Professor Bengt Knave, opened the 2nd General Assembly by presenting to the Chairman of the Organisers, Professor Jerry Jeyaratnam, his and all other participants' appreciation of a successfully arranged Congress.

Professor Knave thanked also the Secretary-General of the next ICOH Congress in Brazil 2003, Dr. Ruddy Facci, and his team for the preparations presented. The expectations of the Brazilian Congress are high.

2. Presidential Address

The ICOH President emphasised in his presidential address the importance of the 35 Scientific Committees' activities. The scientific committees (SCs) remain the "backbone of ICOH" comprising a wide range of scientific expertise. There are continuous work within all the SCs to adapt the structures and the activities of the committees to the changes in society and worklife worldwide. Separately or in joint efforts, the SCs are expected during the present ICOH triennium, 2000-2002, to present "position papers" or "consensus documents" on topics within their respective fields. Two papers are under development, one on "Stress and working hours", jointly by the SC on Work Organisation and Psychosocial Factors and the SC on Shiftwork, as well as one on "Vision and Work" by the SC on Vision and Work. The President welcomes ideas of topics for position papers from all other SCs.

The President presented the Five-year Programme Strategy for ICOH. Together with the four ICOH Officers - the President, the two Vice-Presidents and the Secretary-General - all the Board members will be involved in various Task Groups and Networks. The incentive to this development has been a need for increased transparency within ICOH and active promotion of ICOH as the international expert organisation on occupational health and safety issues.

A decreasing membership and accusations by a group of people that ICOH "is industry driven" are also reasons for using all possible resources to strengthen the position of ICOH worldwide. The President underlined the value of being an organisation including both practitioners and scientists.

The Task Groups and Networks are:

Finance Committee (incl. Auditor's statement)

Transparency Group (incl. Regular reports)

Code of Ethics

Newsletter distribution

Asbestos Matters

Membership: Fees and benefits (incl. Differential fees)

Tobacco policy for the workplace

Cooperation:

IEA

IOHA

ISSA

ILO

Chair person (bold)

Frank Rose, David Wegman, Annette Jørgensen, Kee Seng Chia

Sverre Langård, Pier Bertazzi, Alain Cantineau and SC representatives (B.Fowler and R.Rylander)

Jean-François Caillard, William Murray Coombs, Gustav Schaecke, Peter Westerholm

Linnea Lillienberg, Frank Rose, Tee Guidotti, Tar Ching Aw

Pier Bertazzi, Jeffery T. Spickett, Tee Guidotti, Ruddy Facci

Sverre Langård, Thirumalai Rajgopal, William Murray Coombs, Ruddy Facci, Kee Seng Chia

Ruddy Facci, Jean-François Caillard and SC representative

Barbara McPhee, Kazutaka Kogi

Linnea Lillienberg

Jean-François Caillard, Gustav Schaecke

Malcolm Harrington

WHO**Homepage and Website****Regional activities****National Secretaries****Member recruitment****Change of Constitution and By-laws****Language matters****Bengt Knave**, Tee Guidotti**Malcolm Harrington**, Tar Ching Aw**Ruddy Facci**, Kaj Elgstrand, Thirumalai Rajgopal, Jeffery T. Spickett, Alain Cantineau**Ruddy Facci** - Start up activities**Ruddy Facci** - National secretaries and SC representatives**Malcom Harrington**, Simon Folkard, Peter Westerholm**Annette Jörgensen**, Louis Patry, Janine Fanchette, Kazutaka Kogi, Ruddy Facci**Networks - responsible persons**

Working team

Network Education & Training - Richard Ennals

Louis Patry, William Murray Coombs, Toshiteru Okubu, Stuart Whitaker

Network on Information and Communication Technology - Max Lum

Tar Ching Aw, Gustav Schaecke, Pier Bertazzi

Network on Women, Work & Health - Elisabeth Lagerlöf

Janine Fanchette, Annette Jörgensen, Kazutaka Kogi, Tee Guidotti

All the Task Groups and Networks shall report to the President by the end of November 2000. Three groups, Finance, Transparency and Code of Ethics, are expected to present final reports on their tasks within three months. The rest of the task groups and networks are asked to present progress reports in the same period of time. The reports will be published on the ICOH homepage at the end of the year.

Regarding the activities of the "Asbestos Matters" Task Group the President declared that the decision taken by the former ICOH Officers and Board to endorse the Collegium Ramazzini's call for a ban of asbestos worldwide, was unanimously supported by the ICOH Board.

The President presented the tasks of the new Vice Presidents - Prof. Malcolm Harrington, as Senior Vice President, and Dr. Ruddy Facci - and of the Secretary General - Prof. Kee Seng Chia. Prof. Harrington is overall responsible for the activities of the ICOH scientific committees including co-ordination of position papers. He will also be leading the work on the ICOH homepage. Professor Chia is in charge of the ICOH administration and financial matters. Dr. Facci is managing the member recruitment campaign and will reactivate the ICOH national secretaries as resources in this work.

The President ended his address by commending the activities for the ICOH Congress 2003 in Brazil and the ICOH Centennial Congress 2006 in Milan, Italy. He mentioned also that there are already interests from four different countries in organising the 2009 ICOH Congress, the venue of which will be decided by the General Assembly in Iguassu Falls, Brazil in February 2003.

The President concluded that the prognosis for ICOH is good, and invited the members to comment on the five-year programme strategy for ICOH.

3. Comments to the Programme Strategy by ICOH members

The invitation to comments was answered by

Julietta Rodriguez de Villamil, Colombia

"As Spanish is the next largest language in the world it was proposed that Spanish should be one of the official ICOH languages. It was considered very important for the promotion of ICOH and its next Congress in Brazil 2003."

The President explained that the ICOH Officers had anticipated this proposal and taken it to heart. The Group for Language Matters, led by the Board Member, Annette Jörgensen, will analyse the matter and deliver a progress report by the end of November 2000. The Group for Language Matters consists, apart from Ms. Jörgensen from Sweden, of Janine Fanchette - France, Louis Patry - Canada and Kazutaka Kogi - Japan.

T.H. Lam, HongKong

"Very encouraging that ICOH take actions in the question of tobacco use, especially in relation to the Triennial Congresses."

Philip Landrigan, USA

"I commend ICOH for joining the Collegium Ramazzini's call for ban of asbestos and welcome further co-operation."

Julie George, USA

"A proposal was presented at the General Assembly of the ICOH Congress in Stockholm 1996 to urge the United Nations to declare an Occupational Health Day. What happened to the proposal, and would it not be a suitable initiative to add such a proposal to the message to the UN Millennium Summit from ICOH of today?"

The President answered that there has been no practical result of the earlier proposal. A new Task group could be

established to take this matter into its work agenda.

Charles Roos, South Africa

"A proposal for an ICOH Board Task Group on HIV/Aids was given. It is a topic that has not been covered during the Singapore Congress."

The President explained that this topic is of great concern to ICOH, and is actually already part of a joint project between ICOH and the South African Ministry of Health, Dept. of Occupational and Environmental Health.

4. Closing of the ICOH 2nd General Assembly 2000.

With a promise to return with the results of the Programme Strategy at the General Assembly in Iguassu Falls, Brazil 20003 the President declared the Second General Assembly of the ICOH Congress 2000 closed.

2000-12-18

Gunborg Jungeteg

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