



Minutes of the 1st Board Meeting

February 2, 2011
Milan, Italy

Time: Wednesday, 2 February 2011, 9.00- 17.00

Venue: University of Milan – Hall of Graduation

Participants:

Dr. Kazutaka Kogi (Japan) - ICOH President
Prof. Bonnie Rogers (USA) - ICOH Vice President
Ms. Suvi Lehtinen (Finland) - ICOH Vice President
Dr. Sergio Iavicoli (Italy) - ICOH Secretary General
Prof. Jorma Rantanen (Finland) - ICOH Past President

Prof. Giovanni Costa (Italy) - ICOH Board Member
Dr. Marilyn Fingerhut (USA) - ICOH Board Member
Prof. Michel Guillemin (Switzerland) - ICOH Board Member
Dr. John Harrison (United Kingdom) - ICOH Board Member
Dr. Seong-Kyu Kang (Republic of Korea) - ICOH Board Member
Dr. Norito Kawakami (Japan) - ICOH Board Member
Dr. Timo Leino (Finland) - ICOH Board Member
Dr. Jorge A. Morales (Mexico) - ICOH Board Member
Prof. Antonio Mutti (Italy) - ICOH Board Member
Mrs. Uche Ojomo (Nigeria) - ICOH Board Member
Prof. Mary Ross (South Africa) - ICOH Board Member
Dr. Shrinivas Shanbhag (India) - ICOH Board Member
Dr. Claudio Taboada (Argentina) - ICOH Board Member
Prof. Frank Van Dijk (The Netherlands) - ICOH Board Member
Prof. Sheng Wang (P.R. of China) - ICOH Board Member
Prof. Peter Westerholm (Sweden) - ICOH Board Member

Prof. Paul Schulte (USA) joined the meeting starting from the afternoon.
Prof. Yukinory Kusaka (Japan) – Chair of the WG on Asbestos-related Diseases

Ms. Valeria Boccuni (Italy) - ICOH Staff
Mr. Pierluca Dionisi (Italy) - ICOH Staff
Mr. Carlo Petyx (Italy) - ICOH Staff
Mr. Pasquale Fruscella (Italy) - ICOH Staff

1. Opening

The President of ICOH, Dr. Kazutaka Kogi opened the Board Meeting by welcoming all the participants. Prof. Pier Alberto Bertazzi gave his regards to the attendees on behalf of “Clinica del Lavoro”, which hosted the Milan ICOH Mid-Term, and wished a productive meeting. Firstly, Dr. Kogi invited the two new co-opted Board Members, Mrs. Francisca Uche Ojomo from Nigeria and Dr. Shrinivas Shanbhag from India, to introduce themselves.



They were appointed in order to keep a well balanced geographical distribution among continents.

2. Approval of the minutes of the ICOH Board Meeting of 28th March 2009

Decisions :

The Cape Town minutes were approved.

3. President's report

ICOH President described the sets of priorities for the current triennium that were agreed upon in Cape Town:

1. advancing proactive risk assessment and control at work;
2. extending occupational health services to all workers in all countries;
3. developing action-oriented ICOH toolkits;
4. strengthening ICOH network for worldwide action through SCs, NSs, Board Committees and Task Groups;

Dr. Kogi also focused on the ICOH organizational development, which includes continued strengthening of organizational arrangements, collaboration with allies, information activities and membership campaign. He reported back the achievements of various objectives and tasks. He finally expressed his hope that the President's report and its discussion can be a useful basis for developing the strategic goals by 2012 and beyond and the concrete action plans for achieving these goals.

Prof. Rantanen took the floor and highlighted the importance of encouraging the use of the ICOH Guidelines along with the need for transferring the strategic objectives into practice. Peter Westerholm, in charge of the ICOH Code of Ethics revision, suggested to put into use the Code of Ethics as much as possible. Finally, Prof. Sheng Wang proposed to promote a better cooperation between developing countries and industrialized ones.

Decisions:

President's Report was approved.

4. Report on Scientific Committees

Vice President Bonnie Rogers described the status of the 34 ICOH Scientific Committees, of which Fibres and Education Training in Occupational Health have been not active so far. She reported that 32 Scientific Committees provided the Mid-Term reports. Furthermore, ICOH Vice President pointed out that Scientific Committees have to be more involved in the determination of ICOH 2012 Scientific Committee programme. However, many of them have agreed to participate in oral and/or special sessions. The list of ICOH 2012 Special and Oral Paper Sessions were presented and attached as attachment to the Scientific Committee report. Additionally, Prof. Rogers praised the Scientific Committees for the excellent work done in organizing meetings, conferences, etc.



Decision:

The Report on Scientific Committees was approved.

5. Report on activities of National Secretaries

Vice President in charge of National Secretaries, Ms Suvi Lehtinen, reported on the National Secretaries' appointment status. During the last Officers Meeting held in Rome on September 24 – 25, 2010, the ICOH leadership decided to appoint National Secretaries also for countries with about 1-4 members. This aims at helping the ICOH growth in terms of members and involvement. Ms Lehtinen pointed out that this approach has particularly been appreciated.

After their appointment by the ICOH President, National Secretaries have been requested to complete a Work Plan 2009-2012 and to report back once a year on their activities. Ms Lehtinen has been paying a lot of attention on the improvement of the ICOH communication. To this end, a leaflet for the ICOH promotion was developed and printed out. Finally, a questionnaire survey was sent in order to collect information on the OHS status in the different countries. She reported that 24 replies out of 53 were collected.

Mrs. Ojomo recalled the attention on the possibility of having more than one National Secretary for African countries, since most of them are very wide. Dr. Taboadela proposed to appoint two new National Secretaries: Marina Gareca from Bolivia and Laura Flores from Paraguay. He reminded that these countries have not members and this appointment might help ICOH spread. Dr. Morales proposed to strengthen links to local societies. Timo Leino paved the way to the possibility of allocating part of the International Congress Fee to the National Secretaries. ICOH Secretary General affirmed that according to the contract it is not possible, since organizers shoulder all the financial responsibility on them. In addition to this, he stated that a small budget line for developing countries can be allocated in the budget.

Decisions :

The Report on National Secretaries activities was approved.

6. Reports of the Task Groups

Finance Committee

Frank van Dijk reported on the Finance Committee and highlighted that the financial situation is more positive than it was foreseen at the beginning of the triennium. He also concluded that the new budget line of 50,000 CHF was acceptable and necessary to support the developing countries participation in ICOH 2012.

Furthermore, he also analyzed the issue related to the young membership, which will be extensively discussed during the meeting. Mexican organizers have not requested the loan yet. Dr. Morales clarified that the ICOH interest free loan is needed, but organizers



are willing to use it for concrete activities in order to avoid wasting most of it in taxes payment.

Decision:

The Report of the TG on Finance Committee was approved.

TG on Membership

Dr. Sergio Iavicoli reported on the TG on Membership on the positive results achieved. Secretary General pointed out that several actions were put in place in favor of the young membership both in terms of fee reduction and ICOH promotion in the Post Graduate Schools. However, the number of young members which have joined the association is still limited. He also reminded about the usual slowness in paying the membership fee dues and the aging of the ICOH members. Dr. Iavicoli also reported on the status of the ICOH campaign for the partnership with the scientific journals. Past President Prof. Jorma Rantanen paid the attention to the reduced number of members involved in ICOH at national level in comparison with the OSH professionals involved in the field in each country. He said that ICOH has to make a further effort in this direction.

Decision:

The Report of the TG on Membership was approved.

TG on Information

Suvi Lehtinen reported on the work of TG on Information and on the tasks set at Cape Town. She made clear that information is one of the core activities to work on, with particular reference to the external communication for the ICOH promotion and to the information materials for SCs and NSs. Seong Kyu-Kang in charge of the ICOH Newsletter publication reported on it. Finally, Secretary General gave an overview of the new ICOH website in terms of geographical distribution and the use of the different tools provided to the members. ICOH made an enormous investment on the ICOH website. ICOH Board started the discussion and Dr. Taboadela pointed out that many Spanish members have faced problems with the language. He proposed to translate the newsletter into Spanish at least on the website. Seong Kyu-Kang reminded that this issue was faced also in the past, but there are not financial resources allocated in the current budget. However, he added that resources can be allocated for the future and for the time being can be also made on a voluntary basis.

Decision:

The Report of the TG on Information was approved.



Afternoon

7. Proposal for the constitution of a new WG on OHS and Exposure on Nanomaterials

ICOH President resumed the session. Prof. Paul Schulte made his proposal to establish a new working group on Occupational Health and Safety and Exposure to Nanomaterials.

Firstly, he gave an overview on some health issues related to nanomaterials and to the worker exposure to such risks. Prof. Schulte identified the need for having guidance for risk assessment. He also suggested a possible work plan of the topics ICOH can develop, on the one hand the assessment of the compliance with precautionary guidance across a range of countries and, on the other hand, the guidance for start-up companies.

Dr. Guillemin raised the problem that ICOH might overlap with other organizations in this field. However, ICOH – according to him – can help in developing a medical approach to nanotechnology issues. Dr. Morales supported the idea of setting such a new Working Group. Prof. Schulte made clear that the plan is firstly to develop a Working Group for about one year and secondly to turn it into a Scientific Committee. Dr. Iavicoli took the floor and spelled out the added value of the ICOH position on this: ICOH 's value is to provide a global approach which is different than other organization. Dr. Fingerhut also noticed that WHO is involved in this field by drafting guidance; therefore ICOH has to connect itself to other organizations with the aim at filling gaps rather than being redundant with reference to the existing networks. According to Prof. Rantanen, the added value of ICOH lies in giving public information on the risks and in having its own position on the topic. Dr. Iavicoli clarified that the final decision on the change into SC will be taken during ICOH 2012. Most of the Board Members supported this solution.

Decision:

- The Board approved the new Working Group on OH and Exposure to Nanomaterials;
- Dr. Schulte will report during the next Board meeting on WG development.

8. Working Groups

(See BD5 in Background documents ICOH Board Meeting)

Occupational Infectious Diseases

Mary Ross reported on the Occupational Infectious Diseases Working Group. She paid attention to the aims and to the approach followed along with the activities carried out. A number of focus areas and initiatives were identified and prioritised by the Working Group: health care workers, pandemics, occupational travel medicine and HIV in the workplace. Prof. Ross also focused on the main achievement reached until the Mid-Term Meeting: the draft guideline on clinical best practices with regards to OIA and health care workers, which includes a fact sheet on biological agents. A model workplace policy on HIV has been developed for small to multinational enterprises to be used as a guideline for management of HIV/ AIDS in the workplace. Finally, she reported on the future plans for the rest of the triennium.

Decision:

The Report of the Working Groups on Occupational Infectious Diseases was approved.



Young Workers and Child Labour

Dr. Fingerhut started reporting the main charges for the Working Group. In this view, the WG made recommendations on ICOH actions regarding young workers and child Labour and contributed in collaboration with IEA and IOHA a joint statement to the WHO Executive Board on 22 May 2010 on Child injury prevention, encouraging special attention to reduce hazardous work for young workers. Another important activity was to make contact and serve as a liaison with the IPEC/ILO activities.

Dr. Fingerhut also set an important objective for the future that is the preparation of a practical guide for occupational health services about protecting young workers from work-related injuries and illnesses and adequately dealing with child labour issues. Mrs. Uche Ojomo recommended the importance of tackling the problem of poverty in order to defeat the child labour.

Elimination of Asbestos Related Diseases

Prof. Yukinori Kusaka reported on the WG of the Elimination of Asbestos Related Diseases and explained the goals set. The SC for Respiratory Disorders drafted a recommendation to the Board along with an executive statement. Jorma Rantanen highlighted that an ICOH position on the issue is quickly needed and expected. He proposed to have a paper ready for ICOH 2012 Board and then to publish it. Dr. Morales welcomed this proposal.

Professional Curricula

Prof. Frank van Dijk reported on the activities carried out. He apologized for not having set up a clear program of activities for this Working Group. However, there were a lot of activities to inform the Board about. He described the discussions with WHO and reported on the decision to stop this current platform initiative as there was no visible support from WHO. Prof. Van Dijk expressed the need to discuss the possibilities to continue with a more modest ambition, but still with the same intention to unite global resources and efforts for better education and for better access to quality information/knowledge and tools. BOHS should have special attention to this activity.

Decision:

These reports were accepted with appreciation.

9. ICOH 2012 Update

Based on a specific request of the Monterrey Convention Centre and on the proposal of Jorge Morales, ICOH 2012 Congress President, the first part of the discussion was dedicated to a presentation of a delegation of Monterrey CC with the participation of the honourable Ambassador of the Republic of Mexico to Italy, Jorge Chen Charpentier.

Dr. Kogi gave the floor to the delegation for a brief report on the situation. The Mexican Ambassador reported on the general aspects related to the security situation due to international travel activities. He did not deny the existing situation but at the same time the Ambassador also specified that foreigners are not affected by any unsafe conditions. Then, Mr. Juan Carlos Vargas, on behalf of the Convention Centre, made a presentation and provided some figures on the security in the country. Once the delegation left the room, the President opened the discussion for the Board. Firstly, Dr. Morales, President of the ICOH 2012 Congress, made some brief introduction on the security issues at Monterrey and on the actions taken by the organizing committee in



order to evaluate possible alternative venues. Based on the site visits and on the different negotiations with alternative Congress Centres, he showed the results and the evaluation about the most suitable place for the event. As a consequence, he took into consideration the four cities and reported on the possibility of moving the Congress venue to Queretaro, Mexico City, Guadalajara and Cancun. The criteria set in choosing a new Congress venue were as follows: the security, the Congress facilities and the respect of the budgeted expenses without any increment in terms of costs. According to the evaluation made, the conclusion showed Cancun as the most appropriate place in which the Congress could take place taking into consideration facilities, costs and security. Dr. Iavicoli reported on the actions taken by the Officers in supporting the organizers, including conference calls and face to face meeting with ICOH VP Prof. Bonnie Rogers. He also reminded that a similar decision was made in the past, when the Congress venue was moved from Sao Paulo to Iguassu, following the local organizer request. After a lively discussion, the Board members supported the proposal of ICOH 2012 President to move the Congress to Cancun. The Board recognised the exceptional work done by Dr. Morales and the Mexican National Secretary Dr. Elia Enriquez. They also praised the efforts and the contribution of the Monterrey Municipality and the Nuevo Leon in the preparation of ICOH 2012 Congress. Furthermore, the ICOH President expressed the regret about moving the Congress venue due to the security concerns. Dr. Morales showed the accommodation facilities and the action plan in order to guarantee a good organization and to spread the communication of the new venue to the ICOH members. The President, the Officers and the Secretary General will support Dr. Morales for any need and for the success of the Congress, including the planning of a site visit to Cancun by the end of April.

Decision:

- ICOH Board agreed to move the ICOH 2012 Congress to Cancun;
- The dates and the theme of the Congress will be unchanged.