



## Minutes of the First General Assembly of the International Commission on Occupational Health

**28 April 2024**  
**Marrakesh - 34<sup>th</sup> International Congress**

**Time:** Sunday, 28 April 2024 14:00 – 16:00

**Venue:** Palais des Congrès - Marrakesh - Morocco

### 1. Opening by the President

Prof. Seong-Kyu Kang, ICOH President, opened the First General Assembly welcoming all the participants.

### 2. Approval of the minutes of the ICOH General Assembly held in Melbourne-Rome global digital Congress 2022

The minutes of the ICOH2022 General Assembly were made accessible to the ICOH members through the ICOH website.

#### **Decision:**

- The ICOH General Assembly unanimously approved the minutes of the Melbourne-Rome global digital Congress

### 3. President's Report

*(Reference: ICOH Report 2022-2023, pp.15 - 25)*

Prof. Seong-Kyu Kang reflected on the unique nature of the 2022-2023 tenure, which marked an exceptional period in ICOH's history by spanning two years instead of the usual three. Despite the significant challenges posed by the global COVID-19 pandemic, ICOH successfully organized a digital Congress, exemplifying resilience and adaptability. The President emphasized the strong commitment and efforts of the ICOH Secretariat in Rome, which played a pivotal role in ensuring the continuity of the Congress since its inception in 1906 by delivering a high-quality digital Congress in 2022.

The President reviewed the activities conducted during the 2022-2023 tenure and outlined ICOH's strategic priorities in addressing global responsibilities for workers' health. Key themes for this period included occupational cancer, basic occupational health services (OHS), and the expansion of occupational health services to all. To achieve these objectives, the President urged National Secretaries (NSs) to prioritize initiatives aimed at enhancing OHS within their respective countries.

One of the tenure's significant milestones was the adoption of the *ICOH Statement on Protecting the Occupational Safety and Health of Migrant Workers*, which was approved by the Board on May 29, 2022, and subsequently published on the ICOH website.



The President highlighted the continued strengthening of ICOH's relationships with international organizations, including the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Labour Organization (ILO). These collaborations have progressed through enhanced connections and joint engagements. At the 75th World Health Assembly, held from May 22–28, 2022, at WHO Headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, ICOH submitted a statement under Agenda Item 15, "Human Resources for Health."

Furthermore, ICOH actively participated in the *World Congress on Health and Safety at Work*, jointly organized by the ILO, the International Social Security Association (ISSA), and Australia in November 2023 in Sydney. Additionally, ICOH has been formally invited to attend the ILO General Session scheduled for June 2024.

ICOH also engaged with the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA) during its meeting in November 2022 and participated in the official inauguration ceremony of the "Nouveau Centre," the new headquarters of WHO's International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), in May 2023. In parallel, ICOH has maintained close collaboration and mutual cooperation with sister organizations, including the International Occupational Hygiene Association (IOHA) and the International Ergonomics Association (IEA). The President confirmed ICOH's planned participation at the EXPO 2025 in Osaka, Japan, on July 16–19, 2025, and announced the dates for the ICOH 2027 Congress, which will take place on February 14–19, 2027, in Mumbai, India.

Finally, Professor Kang expressed his heartfelt gratitude to the Secretary-General and the ICOH Secretariat for their dedicated and coordinated efforts. These contributions have made it possible to organize the ICOH 2024 Congress in Marrakesh, marking a return to in-person events.

#### **Decision:**

- The President's Report was approved.

## **4. Report of ICOH Scientific Committees**

*(Reference: ICOH Report 2022-2023, pp. 36-48)*

Ms. Claudina Nogueira, ICOH Vice President responsible for the Scientific Committees (SCs), provided an overview of the key activities and achievements of the SCs during the triennium.

Currently, there are 38 Scientific Committees within ICOH, varying in activity levels, all of which provide critical scientific support and contribute to advancing the health and safety of workers worldwide. By February 2024, 30 SCs had submitted their Final Triennial Reports for the reporting period of March 2023 to January 2024. Eight SCs, however, did not meet the deadline for submitting their reports. Many SCs actively collaborated with one another, producing high-quality scientific outputs and organizing various academic and professional events, including conferences, symposia, training courses, seminars, and webinars. Additionally, numerous SCs have established or strengthened partnerships with non-ICOH organizations at the international, regional, and national levels.

Ms. Nogueira highlighted the significant contributions of the SCs to the ICOH2024 Congress. These included:

- Recommending keynote speakers for plenary and semi-plenary sessions, which resulted in one opening keynote, 10 plenary keynotes, and 32 semi-plenary presentations.
- Organizing most of the Special Sessions (featuring invited speakers and not subject to peer review), although some Special Sessions were proposed by external, non-ICOH organizations.
- Peer reviewing abstracts submitted for Free Paper Sessions, covering oral and poster presentations.

These concerted efforts culminated in a robust scientific program for ICOH2024, comprising a total of 350 scientific content hours. The program featured 150 Special and Free Paper Sessions, and 12 e-Posters sessions across 51 occupational health and safety topics.

In her final remarks, Ms. Nogueira acknowledged the ongoing perseverance of the SCs and their members that have shown remarkable resilience preserving and continuing their efforts in research, advocacy, advisory roles, and service delivery to make valuable contributions to global occupational health.

In conclusion, the ICOH President expressed gratitude to Ms. Nogueira for her dedicated leadership and extensive efforts to coordinate ICOH SCs during her mandate (2018-2024) and in developing the comprehensive scientific program for the ICOH2024 Congress.



**Decision:**

- The Report on ICOH SCs was unanimously approved.

## **5. Report of ICOH National/Area Secretaries**

*(Reference: ICOH Report 2022-2023, pp. 51-56)*

Dr. Martin Hogan, ICOH Vice President in charge of the National/Area Secretaries (NSs), informed the General Assembly of the activities carried out by the NSs during the term 2022-2023.

Firstly, Dr. Hogan reminded the ICOH members about the role and duties of the NSs. The rules and process for appointing a NS were also illustrated. During the triennium, 56 NSs were officially appointed. Dr. Hogan also remarked the importance of using the communication tools offered by ICOH, such as the Newsletter and NS Virtual Office, as an aid to the activities of the NSs.

Regional Meetings of ICOH NSs were held in most of the countries. In 2021, the Vice President held online meetings for the NSs in each region to discuss the ICOH2024 Congress and election of NSs for the 2022–2024 triennium. These were successful meetings for communication between the VP and the NSs.

Finally, Dr. Hogan thanked the NSs representatives for their invaluable work and presented samples of that work that summarize the entire work that is going on in the different regions.

**Decision:**

- The Report of the ICOH National/Area Secretaries was unanimously approved.

## **6. Report of the Secretary General**

*(Reference: ICOH Report 2022-2023, pp. 28-35)*

The ICOH Secretary General, Dr. Diana Gagliardi, firstly thanked the Past Secretary General Prof. Sergio Iavicoli for his brilliant and efficient work conducted, for almost 20 years, with admirable dedication and commitment. Subsequently, Dr. Gagliardi explained her objective to bring some innovation and modernization for what concern the general management of the ICOH organization, with a glance at the sustainability and impact on efficiency, finances and environment. To this end, during the Mid-Term meeting, held in Angers, France, in May 2023, a new Working Group on Modernization of ICOH Processes and Practices was established, to support the Secretary General and the ICOH Secretariat in modernizing the organization also by providing new tools to facilitate collaboration among the Secretariat and Scientific Committees / National Secretaries and to improve the visibility of ICOH across the large number of scientific events that are organized during a triennium.

Moreover, she reported all the activities of the Secretariat General and gave an overview of the membership campaign that started in March 2022 after the ICOH2022 global digital Congress. The overall figures, indicating a total number of 1807 ICOH members in good standing at the end of the triennium, showed slightly lower numbers at the end of the period compared to the previous term, which covered a much longer time window (almost 4 full years). Dr. Gagliardi showed the leading countries in ICOH membership and highlighted the best results achieved in India, Morocco, USA, Italy, Japan, and others. She also remarked that Asia is the best-represented region (31%), followed by Europe (24%) and Africa (21%). For what concern gender distribution, the Secretary General remarked that female representation has remained stable during the term (40%) in line with the previous triennium.

The renewed support of Sustaining and Affiliate Members was another important result: particular thanks were due to KOSHA for its continuous support with the Newsletter publication and to INAIL for providing resources and facilities which ensure the continued activities of the ICOH Secretariat General. Furthermore, Dr. Gagliardi stressed the commitment in reducing the carbon footprint by moving from plastic membership cards to a Digital Membership Certificate to be downloaded from the ICOH website in the member's private area once the membership fee payment has been completed.



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Finally, the ICOH Secretary General reported on the ICOH accountings: the ICOH finances for the tenure 2024-2027 were balanced and Auditors expressed their assessment as follows: *“In our opinion, the financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Commission as of November 30, 2023, and of the result of its operations and its cash flows for the financial period then ended, in accordance with the International Financial Reporting Standards as adopted by the European Union.”*

After the presentation of her report, the ICOH Secretary General presented to the General Assembly the triennial fees for the tenure 2024-2026 with the proposal of confirming the fees as they were in the previous term, as per the following prospectus:

Triennial membership fees – Individual Membership			
Countries with	GDP<5,000 USD	5,000<GDP<15,000 USD	GDP>15,000 USD
Active member	45.00 CHF	72.00 CHF	345.00 CHF
Young <34	30.00 CHF	45.00 CHF	72.00 CHF
Retired	30.00 CHF	60.00 CHF	90.00 CHF
Triennial membership fees – Sustaining Membership			
Countries with	GDP<5,000 USD	5,000<GDP<15,000 USD	GDP>15,000 USD
Sustaining membership fee	800.00 CHF	2500.00 CHF	5000.00 CHF
Triennial membership fees – Affiliate Membership			
Affiliate Membership with 200 or more members	660.00 CHF		
Affiliate Membership with less than 200 members	440.00 CHF		

**Decisions:**

- The Report of the Secretary General was unanimously approved;
- The fees for the triennium 2024-2026 were unanimously approved.

## 7. Report of the Editor in Chief of the ICOH Newsletter

Professor Won-Jun Choi, the Editor-in-Chief of the ICOH Newsletter highlighted the aim of the newsletters, published three times a year. The purpose of the ICOH Newsletter is to promote communication and mutual understanding among ICOH members, covering topics related to ICOH activities and ICOH members' research. It is available in electronic format, distributed via email and posted on the ICOH website. It typically consists of a Message from the President, News from the Secretary General, a message from the Editor, Reports from Scientific Committees and National/Area Secretaries, Members' activities and a French version of the articles from the President, the Secretary General, and Editor-in-Chief.



## 8. Auditor and Vice Auditor election

In execution of the ICOH Constitution Article 4, Section 1, the ICOH General Assembly is responsible for the approval of one Auditor and one Vice Auditor. Dr. Diana Gagliardi asked for a quotation among the top four leading auditors' companies in the world ranking. Two quotations were submitted to the ICOH Secretariat by BDO and Ernst & Young (EY). Based on costs calculation and in consideration of the full accomplishment of the international standards required, the Secretary General submitted to the Board the proposal to elect BDO as Auditor and EY as Vice Auditor for the triennium 2024-2026. The Board agreed with the proposal, to be presented to the General Assembly for final approval.

Thus, Dr. Diana Gagliardi proposed the appointment of the two following firms:

Auditor: BDO Italia

Vice Auditor: EY

### **Decisions:**

- The General Assembly approved the proposal for the appointment of the Auditor and Vice Auditor.

## 9. Venue for the ICOH2030 Congress

Prof. Seong-Kyu Kang informed the General Assembly about the two candidacies for hosting the ICOH2030 Congress: Medellin (Colombia), and Rome (Italy). He reported that the meetings with ICOH Officers (one for each bidding committee) were held to check the solidity of each candidacy, according to ICOH Bye-Law 7, Section 2.

Then he gave the floor to the representatives of the two bidding committees, who presented their bids to the ICOH General Assembly, in alphabetical order of country name.

Then, Dr. Gagliardi took the floor to remind of the bidding process set by the ICOH regulations. According to ICOH Bye-Law 7, Section 2, the Board decided to admit the candidacies of Medellin (Colombia), and Rome (Italy) to the voting procedures, because they both met the minimum requirements established by the ICOH Guidelines on Congress Organization. According to ICOH Constitution Article 6, Section 1, ICOH Bye-Law 7, Section 3 and the ICOH Guidelines on Congress Organization, the Board decided to recommend Rome (Italy) as the venue for ICOH2030 Congress.

Finally, Dr. Gagliardi explained the voting procedure: ICOH members in good standing attending the ICOH2024 Congress would be eligible to vote at the ICOH stand's voting booth inside the Congress Exhibit from April 29, at 10:30 a.m. to May 2 at 11:00 a.m.

Dr. Gagliardi informed the audience that the results of the elections would be announced during the Second General Assembly on May 3, 2024.

## 11. Honorary Members

President Kang announced to the General Assembly the proposal for Honorary Members approved by the Board:

Prof. Toshiaki Higashi - Japan

*The General Assembly approved the proposal.*

Prof. Bonnie Rogers - USA

*The General Assembly approved the proposal.*

### **Decisions:**

- The General Assembly approved the proposal.



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## 12. Other issues

No other issue was discussed.

Dr. Gagliardi took the opportunity to inform the audience that the results of the elections of ICOH Officers and Board members for 2024-2027 would be announced to the Second General Assembly on May 3, 2024, and posted on the ICOH booth at the ICOH2024 Congress.

## Closing

The ICOH President Prof. Kang thanked the ICOH members attending the General Assembly and closed the meeting.