



# Minutes of the 1st General Assembly of the International Commission on Occupational Health

**May 31, 2015**  
**Seoul, Republic of Korea**

**Time:** Sunday, 31 May 2015, 14.00 – 16.20

**Venue:** 3F Auditorium, COEX Convention Center, Seoul, Republic of Korea

Dr. Kazutaka Kogi, ICOH President, opened the First General Assembly welcoming all the participants and expressing his thanks to the organizers of the ICOH 2015 Congress for the excellent preparation of the 31<sup>st</sup> International Congress on Occupational Health. Furthermore, he thanked all the Scientific Committees for their contribution in formulating the scientific programme of the Congress.

## 1. Approval of the minutes of the ICOH General Assembly held in Cancun in 2012

The minutes of the ICOH 2012 General Assembly were widely spread among the ICOH members through the ICOH website.

### **Decision:**

- The ICOH General Assembly unanimously approved the minutes of the Cancun Congress.

## 2. President's Report

(Reference: ICOH Triennial Report 2012-2014, pp.10 - 26)

Dr. Kazutaka Kogi reported on the activities carried out in the triennium 2012-2014.

ICOH has carried out activities according to the priorities set at ICOH 2012 and in continuity with the lines set by the Centennial Declaration during ICOH 2006 Congress. In February 2014 the Midterm Meeting was held in Helsinki, Finland to review the work done and discuss the ongoing activities.

Among the major achievements of the Midterm meeting, the ICOH Board adopted on February 10, 2014 the new ICOH Code of Ethics, The ICOH Code of Ethics has been printed in English and French and distributed to the participants of the ICOH 2015 Congress. During this triennium ICOH has been active in all the essential elements of its mission, i.e., research, information, training and reinforcing good practices in the field of occupational safety and health and enjoyed the high contribution of the ICOH Scientific Committees, National/Area Secretaries and the network.

ICOH continued to strengthen organizational arrangements, collaboration with allies, information activities and membership campaign.

ICOH intensively contributed to the WHO Regional Programmes with particular reference to BOHS activities. Dr. Kogi gave prominence to the special efforts put on the ICOH Congress organization as core event of ICOH for reviewing current research and practice and for developing future directions in the field of occupational health and safety worldwide.



Another good result of this Congress was the increase of the participation of members from developing countries thanks to the combined financial support of ICOH budget and the sponsorship from KOSHA, which covered travel and related expenses of 95 members.

Dr. Kogi also remarked the importance of the Policy Forum, which was held for the first time at the ICOH 2015 Congress inviting international organizations, sister organizations and regional representatives to discuss global actions for the future.

Dr. Kogi concluded his report by giving a general overview of the possible strategic priorities to be further pursued for the triennium 2015-2018 and expressed his cordial thanks to the ICOH community for their continuous support and constructive work during the triennium.

**Decision:**

- The President's Report was unanimously approved.

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

(Reference: ICOH Triennial Report 2012-2014, pp. 32-50)

Prof Bonnie Rogers, ICOH Vice President in charge of Scientific Committees, reported on the activities of the tenure 2012-2014.

35 Scientific Committees operated diligently and collaboratively, generating high-quality scientific work and products and organizing at least one conference or meeting during the triennium.

Prof. Rogers also remarked the enormous contributions given by the Scientific Committees to the scientific programme of the Congress based on input from ICOH leaders, National Organizers, International Scientific Committee and other scientific bodies. They also helped in identifying Keynote and Semi-plenary speakers. Furthermore, with their support the Policy Forum, 10 plenary sessions, 33 semi-plenary sessions, 112 special sessions and 88 oral sessions were organized, and 559 posters in total were displayed.

Prof. Rogers indicated possible future goals for the Scientific Committees: increased collaboration with other organizations such as WHO; symposia and special interest group on what are healthy workplaces; delivery of basic occupational health services; facilitation of outputs.

As final comment, Prof. Rogers expressed satisfaction with the work done by ICOH Scientific Committees during the triennium and with their contribution to ICOH goals.

**Decision:**

- The Report on ICOH Scientific Committees was unanimously approved.

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

(Reference: ICOH Triennial Report 2012-2014, pp.51-59)

Ms. Suvi Lehtinen, ICOH Vice President in charge of the National/Area Secretaries (NSs), informed the General Assembly of the NSs triennial activities.

Firstly Ms. Lehtinen recalled the role of the NSs: the 58 National Secretaries appointed during the triennium operated according to the strategic priorities set by ICOH work plan with very positive results.

In order to increase and improve the two-way communication among the ICOH NSs an Information Letter to all ICOH National Secretaries was circulated 3-4 times a year by the ICOH Vice President. ICOH NSs were also encouraged to recruit new members in collaboration with National Associations.

Another important result is the effective use of the NS Virtual Office which provides tools to facilitate NS activities.

At least one regional meeting of ICOH NSs was held in each continent. For the future, it would be good to have at least two regional meetings per triennium in each continent in order to increase exchange of information.

NSs have also contributed to one questionnaire survey on emergency care in the countries, have provided members to the Working Group on Mining and have helped in the evaluation of the posters of the ICOH 2015 Congress.



The results of the survey to ICOH NSs on the status of occupational health services in 2010-2011 were published in the Scandinavian Journal of Work, Environment & Health (published online in 2012, then in hard copy in 2013). A new questionnaire survey on OHS was prepared for the triennium 2012-2014: 42 NSs have replied and 2 more replies are under preparation. Among those, 24 respondents have made major regulatory, programmatic or service system changes since the previous survey.

Then Ms. Lehtinen recalled some other activities conducted by ICOH NSs, reporting that the ICOH Code of Ethics has been integrated into national legislation in Italy and Argentina and used as training material in Tanzania and Ghana. Other important goals have been reached in the dissemination of the Asbestos Statement, in the organization of regional meetings and in the dissemination of information strengthening the network.

Additionally, Ms. Lehtinen remarked the importance of collaboration with the Chairpersons of the ICOH Scientific Committees on national and regional symposia. Finally, Ms. Lehtinen has briefly reported on the funds provided to assist experts from developing and transitory countries to attend the ICOH 2015 Congress.

### Decision:

- The Report of the National Secretary activities was unanimously approved.

## 5. Report by Secretary General

(Reference: ICOH Triennial Report 2012-2014, pp. 27-31)

The ICOH Secretary General Prof. Sergio Iavicoli firstly gave an overview on the membership campaign. The overall figures, indicating a total number of 1921 ICOH members in good standing at the end of the triennium 2012-2014, showed a continuous growth of the membership. Prof. Iavicoli showed the leading countries in ICOH membership and highlighted the best results achieved in Japan, Italy, USA, Brazil, India, Peru, Mexico and others.

Prof. Iavicoli also remarked a more balanced distribution of membership among the continents. In this regard, another important achievement was the growing representation of developing countries: at the end of the triennium 2012-2014, the majority of ICOH members is from developing and transitory countries.

As for the young members, although the number is growing, the average age is still high (54 years). Therefore, the implementation of a strategy aimed at a major involvement of young generations remains a priority item.

Also the renewed support of Sustaining and Affiliate Members was an important result, in fact also the Workplace Health and Safety Institute from Singapore joined ICOH.

In terms of benefits and tools for membership development, Prof. Iavicoli firstly mentioned the publication of the OH Guide *“Creating a healthy and safe workplace. A Guide to Occupational Health and Safety for Entrepreneurs, Owners and Managers of the Enterprises in the Developing World”*, edited by professor Tee Guidotti and sponsored by the Scientific Committee on Occupational Health and Development. The guide was distributed in hard copy to ICOH members at the Congress. An online version is also available and translations in other languages will be forthcoming. Prof. Iavicoli also mentioned the ICOH Code of Ethics, promotional leaflets for ICOH membership, the Ergonomics Guidelines, the ICOH Core Documents which have been printed in a new design, and the ICOH Newsletter.

Another important achievement was the involvement of young members in the Poster Competition at the ICOH 2015 Congress with the kind help of Dr. Marilyn Fingerhut and Dr. Su Wang. Furthermore, a partial fellowship in the amount of 4200 Euros was granted for two ICOH candidates to attend the Master in Occupational Safety and Health at the ILO International Training Centre in Turin. This is an important opportunity for future key leaders with a view of fostering occupational health in developing countries.

Later Prof. Iavicoli presented the material prepared to strengthen the family feelings in order to attract young members: small gifts (pins, pen drives) were distributed at the ICOH booth.

Prof. Iavicoli then reported about the good results of ICOH website: the platform for access to journals with discounted subscription rates was launched; sections dedicated to the ICOH Code of Ethics and OH Guide are also available on ICOH website.

ICOH Secretary General also announced the launching of the new ICOH website layout, which is now more modern in term of readability and more connected to social media. In consideration of the increasing popularity of mobile devices (smartphones and tablets), an ICOH app has been developed and is now



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available for free download for both iOS and Android. The app will provide ICOH members with useful tools such as the possibility to save event dates on their calendar, and will facilitate networking within ICOH members.

Finally the ICOH Secretary General reported on the ICOH accountings: the ICOH finances for the Triennium 2012-2014 were balanced and Auditors expressed their assessment as follows: *“the financial statements of ICOH as of November 30, 2014 comply with the International Financial Reporting Standards as adopted by the European Union; therefore they are clearly stated and give a true and fair view of the financial position and the results of the operations of the International Commission on Occupational Health for the three years period then ended.”*

### **Decisions:**

- The Report of the Secretary General was unanimously approved;
- The Auditors' report was unanimously approved;

After the presentation of his report, the ICOH Secretary-General presented the proposal for the new fee system. The process was first discussed at the Midterm Meeting in Helsinki, Finland in February 2014, when the Board gave a task to the Secretariat General to develop a new fee system. The proposal was then reviewed by the Officers and the Finance Committee, then discussed at the Board Meeting on May 30, 2015. The Board decided to approve the proposal to be brought at the General Assembly, which is in charge of deciding on the fee system according to ICOH Constitution, art. 4, section 1.

The new fee system was developed in order to increase accessibility for developing countries and in consideration of the changes in global economy. The proposal was to extend benefits for retired and young members to all countries, while the previous fee system conceded benefits only to these categories from industrialized countries. The most important innovation is that the countries will be divided into three groups based on their GDP per capita: countries with a GDP below 5000 USD; countries with a GDP between 5000 and 15000 USD; countries with a GDP of 15000 or more. In order to grant more equal accessibility to membership, countries with a GDP below 5000 will enjoy a special, low fee. For the two remaining groups a small increase in the amount of the fee is proposed in consideration of the inflation rates.

For what concerns collective membership fees, the proposal was to confirm the current amounts.

### **Decision:**

- The following new fee system was unanimously approved and will be adopted on experimental basis for the triennium 2015-2017:

<b>Fees triennium 2015-2017 – Individual Membership</b>			
<b>Countries with</b>	<b>GDP&lt;5,000 USD</b>	<b>5,000&lt;GDP&lt;15,000 USD</b>	<b>GDP&gt;15,000 USD</b>
<b>Active member</b>	45.00 CHF	72.00 CHF	345.00 CHF
<b>Young &lt;34</b>	30.00 CHF	45.00 CHF	72.00 CHF
<b>Retired*</b>	30.00 CHF	60.00 CHF	90.00 CHF

\*The Status of retired members will be acknowledged to those who are older than 64 years old and will supply the documentation of their retirement.

<b>Fees triennium 2015-2017 – Collective Membership</b>	
<b>SUS Membership</b>	5,000.00 CHF
<b>Affiliate Membership with 200 or more members</b>	660 CHF
<b>Affiliate Membership with less than 200 members</b>	440 CHF



## 6. ICOH Newsletter

(Reference: ICOH Triennial Report 2012-2014, pp.60-61)

Dr. Seong-Kyu Kang reported on the triennial work carried out as Editor-in-Chief of the ICOH Newsletter. Ten issues in seven copies were published from the 1<sup>st</sup> issue in 2012 (V10N1) to the 1<sup>st</sup> issue in 2015 (V13N1).

The Newsletter achieved its goal of providing information on members and their activities through ICOH communities, such as Scientific Committees' report in international conferences, National Secretaries' reports on domestic and regional activities, introduction of Sustaining members, information on publications and upcoming scientific meetings, welcome to new members, etc. The printed copy was sent by postal mail to all members in good standing and an electronic version was available on ICOH website.

### **Decision:**

- The Report on ICOH Newsletter was unanimously approved.

## 7. Nomination for Auditors and Vice Auditors

In execution of the ICOH Constitution Article 4 ,Section 1, ICOH Secretary General was charged by the Board with the task of proposing to the General Assembly the appointment of two auditing firms. Prof. Iavicoli asked for a quotation among the top 5 leading auditors companies in the world ranking. Three quotations were received by the ICOH Secretariat. Thus, on the basis of costs calculation and in consideration of the full accomplishment of the international standards required, and after consultation with the Finance Committee, Prof. Iavicoli proposed the appointment of the two following firms:

Auditor: Mazars & Guérard Company  
Vice Auditor: KPMG S.p.A.

### **Decision:**

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

## 8. Venue for ICOH Congress in 2021

Representatives of the three hosting countries for the organization of the 33<sup>rd</sup> International Congress on Occupational Health ICOH 2021 – Melbourne (Australia), Hyderabad (India) and Marrakech (Morocco) – made their 10-minute presentations to the ICOH General Assembly in alphabetical order.

Then Prof. Sergio Iavicoli took the floor to remind of the bidding process set by ICOH regulations and explained the voting procedure: the ballot papers were going to be available to ICOH members in good standing attending the Congress from June 1<sup>st</sup> at 9.00 to June 4<sup>th</sup> at 11.00. The results of the elections would be published at the ICOH booth in the exhibition area.

ICOH Secretary General reported on the regulation by which the Board has to recommend one venue as defined in the ICOH Constitution Article 6, Section 1; ICOH Bye-Law 7, section 2 and in the ICOH Guidelines on Congress organization. Accordingly, Prof. Iavicoli announced to the General Assembly that the Board decided to recommend Melbourne (Australia) as the venue for ICOH 2021 Congress.

## 9. Honorary Members



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President Kogi called the attention to the criteria for the honorary members election as defined in the Constitution and asked the ICOH Secretary-General to announce to the General Assembly the proposal approved by the Board:

Prof. Tee Lamont Guidotti – USA

*The General Assembly approved the proposal with the exception of Prof. Tee Lamont Guidotti who abstained from voting.*

Prof. Kee Seng Chia – Singapore

*The General Assembly approved the proposal with the exception of Prof. Kee Seng Chia who abstained from voting.*

Dr. Kogi congratulated Prof. Guidotti and Prof. Chia for the election.

## 10. Other issues

Among the other issues discussed during the meeting, Dr. Shanbhag informed the assembly about the difficulties of some Indian members in receiving the ballot papers. The ICOH President assured that the officers will look into the issue.

## Closing

The ICOH President Dr. Kazutaka Kogi closed the General Assembly thanking all the participants.