



OSLO, August 13, 2000

Members in attendance: Jürgen Kocka, President; Eva Österberg and Romila Thapar, Vice Presidents; Jean-Claude Robert, Secretary General; Pierre Ducrey, Treasurer; Gregory Bongard-Levin, Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch, Michael Heyd, Hiroshi Kabayama, Assessor Members; Ivan T. Berend, Counsellor

Member excused: William Foster Jordan, Assessor Member

Agenda:

1. Presentations
2. President's remarks
3. Review of the Oslo Congress
4. Information and further proceedings
5. Other matters

1. Presentations

President Jürgen Kocka opens the meeting and welcomes members of the Bureau. He then asks every member to say a few words of introduction.

2. President's remarks

Jürgen Kocka presents the main objectives of ICHS and underlines the fact that both in terms of time and money, our resources are limited in view of all the projects we would like to do. This situation compels the Bureau to do a more thorough planning of its activities for the present quinquennium. The President evokes three dimensions of the action of ICHS. The first one stems from its nature as an umbrella organisation. ICHS is an organisation of organisations, whose task is to maintain communications between its institutional members, through its annual Bulletin among others, and to defend the freedom of thought and expression of the professional historians. The second task of ICHS is the organisation of the International Congress every five year, in cooperation with the local Organising Committee. The third task of ICHS is to expand the international networking of historians through National Committees and Affiliated International Organisations; of particular concern to us are the areas where the level of organisation is low. This is a difficult but important task. In the past ICHS, tried different approaches, including partnership with Unesco, and the President feels that we should continue in that direction, perhaps by eventually combining a Bureau meeting with a regional colloquium in order to stimulate interest and in the process, help to organise historians in that area. He adds that individual members of the Bureau will have to be more directly involved in this endeavour. The President would like that the next meeting of the Bureau addresses the question of these different tasks of ICHS, and in the meantime, encourages members to reflect further on the matter. The *Bureau restreint* will produce, in time for our next meeting, a working paper outlining different aspects of our action plan for 2001-2005.

The discussion shows a consensus on that point. Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch reminds of the results of the joint venture CISH-Unesco for Africa and informs that she would be ready to pursue in that direction. Suggestions are made to contact other organisations to increase our networking and to adjoin colleagues from areas underrepresented in the Bureau (like Latin America) to stimulate development.



3. Review of the Oslo Congress

The Secretary General reminds the Bureau that the Norwegian Committee will produce a report on the Congress, which will be circulated, and that the Bureau meeting of next year will discuss the last congress. Even Lange, president of the Organising Committee, will be present at this meeting. For the moment, members of the Bureau are invited to share their first comments on the Oslo Congress.

A certain number of achievements are underlined, especially the importance of funding to bring in colleagues from the Third World, the results of the regional meetings organised through the joint venture CISH-Unesco. The problem of no-shows in some sessions was evoked. It was also proposed to set aside a few sessions based on geographical areas in order to permit a better integration in the Congress of historiographically relatively new areas like Africa for instance.

4. Information and further proceedings

4.1 Next meetings: For this quinquennium, meeting places are not yet fixed, the present Secretary General having only been elected on August 10. However, the Bureau meeting for next year will take place August 24 to 26. On the other hand, the Bureau meeting of 2003 will be in Sydney, as it is customary for the Bureau to hold a meeting two years before the Congress in the host city in order to visit the venue. The Secretary General reminds members that Bureau meetings are paid for partially by the host country who provides hotel rooms and a few meals.

4.2 Travel expenses: the Treasurer wishes to remind all members that they must purchase their air tickets using only apex or lower fares.

4.3 Bulletin and information: The Bulletin is costly and time-consuming. The Secretary General would like the Bureau meeting of 2001 to address its future. Should we continue publishing the Bulletin in the same fashion? Should we cease publication? In the meantime he will prepare a regular edition for 2001. He requests the Bureau to support his motion to reduce the number of copies sent to each National Committee from ten to five to reduce costs. Motion supported. The Secretary General wishes to use extensively the Web site of CISH to make it the communication centre of the organisation. We will try to link all National Committees and Affiliated International Organisations on our site.

4.4 Transfer of the Secretariat: all the oldest archives of the organisation were deposited in the Archives Nationales de France in Paris. An inventory will be produced. The transfer of the current files is being done and the Secretariat will be housed at UQAM in Montréal.

4.5 Schedule for the organisation of the Sydney Congress: In January 2001, a circular will be sent to all National Committees and Affiliated International Organisations to ask for proposals for themes and organisers. The deadline will be December 2001. In the meantime the Bureau will have set up a sub-committee to examine these and prepare a final proposal for submission to the Bureau / General Assembly.

To sum up, three steps: 1. Circular in 2001. 2. Selection by sub-committee in early 2002 (Spring). 3. Proposal to the Bureau/General Assembly in August 2002.

4.6 List of Bureau members: As soon as all information will be received, the secretariat will forward a complete list of names and addresses of the current Bureau. New Members



will receive a copy of the last Bulletin (number 25-26) 1999-2000.

4.7 Unesco/CIPSH: The cooperation with Unesco should continue. The Secretary General will pursue this matter in September at the next meeting of CIPSH (Conseil International de la Philosophie et les Sciences Humaines/ International Council for Philosophy and Humanistic Studies - ICPH) of which ICPSH is a constituent member.

4.8 Agenda for 2001: The two important points for next Bureau meeting will be the review of the Oslo Congress and the action plan for 2001-2005.

5. Other matter

Romila Thapar introduces two questions. One concerns a request from colleagues from India for a session or an Internal Commission on Mountain Peoples. The second is related to the withholding from publication of some finished volumes of a series of historical documents relating to contemporary India under the title *Towards Freedom*, which seems to indicate some form of censorship. Romila Thapar will send the necessary documents to the Secretary General who will contact the India National Committee for further information and action.