



Madrid, 12 March 2010

At the invitation of Professor José Luis Peset, ICHS President, and the *Comité Español de Ciencias Históricas*, the *Bureau restreint* held a meeting at the *Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas* in Madrid on 12 March 2010. The purpose of the meeting was to review ICHS operations between the regular Bureau meetings in Tokyo (September 2009) and Amsterdam (August 2010).

Present: José Luis Peset, President, Laurent Tissot, Treasurer and Jean-Claude Robert, Secretary General.

Agenda:

1. Opening Statements
2. ICHS Operations
3. Treasurer's Financial Report
4. Program Subcommittee
5. 2010 Congress
6. ICHS-UNESCO Relations
7. Miscellaneous

1. Opening Statements

The President opened the meeting by welcoming members to the *Consejo Superior's* new facilities in Madrid, and announced that the Spanish National Committee was assuming the accommodation expenses of *Bureau restreint* members. After thanking the Treasurer and the Secretary General for their work, he reviewed the three main points of the meeting, which were to prepare the Amsterdam Congress, examine the ICHS's finances, and hear the report of the subcommittee on the Congress program. He also spoke about the contacts now underway with certain National Committees, especially Mexico and Portugal.

2. ICHS Operations

a) *Bulletin, Vol. 35 (2009) and Web page*

Bulletin, Vol. 35 (2009) was printed in 600 copies and mailed out to members in mid-December using surface service as a cost-cutting measure. At 197 pages, it is longer than the previous edition because it includes the detailed program of the Amsterdam Congress as it stood on 30 October 2009. The Website was updated in early January and early March. Traffic statistics still indicate an average of about 900 hits per month from over 70 different countries. Although the actual readership numbers for the *Bulletin* are unknown, the Secretary General said that the Website probably reaches more people than the *Bulletin* does.

The discussion turned to the future of the *Bulletin*. The statistics presented by the Secretary General show a steady increase in production costs since 2001, from an



average of \$32 CDN per page to \$56 CDN in 2009. The Treasurer reported that revenues from subscriptions have plunged from CHF 5,818 in 2007 to CHF 456 in 2009. It appears that the comprehensive publication of the *Bulletin* on the ICHS Website has made the print version redundant. Further development of the Website would improve the online experience and make it more efficient and interactive. The possibility of dispensing with the print version of the *Bulletin* had been raised during the Bureau meeting in Tokyo, but the decision was postponed until the General Assembly in Amsterdam. However, in view of the general feedback, changes in costs and revenues and production constraints, the *Bureau restreint* decided to cancel the print version immediately in order to devote the ICHS's resources to the development of the Website.

b) Meetings

The next Bureau meeting will be held in Amsterdam on Saturday, 21 August at noon. To save time, lunch will be served on site, courtesy of the Netherlands National Committee. Two General Assemblies will be held during the Congress, on Sunday, 22 August and Thursday, 26 August. The first convocation will be sent out to ICHS members as soon as possible. The new Bureau members will be elected in Amsterdam during the meeting of the 26th. They should hold a short meeting immediately afterward, as is customary.

The Chinese National Committee has formally announced its desire to host the 2015 ICHS Congress. So far, no potential hosts have come forward to organize the 2012 inter-congress General Assembly. The Secretary General will work at finding candidates for this event.

c) Members

The Secretary General has started to contact inactive members. Two inactive National Committees have already indicated that they intend to become active in 2010. All members who do not regularly respond to the Secretary General's information requests will be contacted in writing regarding their intentions, and those who do not respond will be removed from the list.

The International Students of History Association (ISHA), founded in 1990, had contacted the ICHS Bureau on the occasion of the Madrid Congress, but there has been no follow-up since then. Now it has expressed an interest in attending the Amsterdam Congress and renewing relations with the Bureau. A meeting has been scheduled during the Congress to explore collaboration possibilities. The *Bureau restreint* is pleased with this development and with the prospect of meeting with the ISHA Board in this regard. The ISHA's Web page is <http://www.isha-international.org>.

In addition, there are various projects underway to make progress on relations with the Muslim world.

3. Treasurer's Financial Report

The Treasurer presented the profit and loss accounts for 2009 and the balance sheet dated 31 December 2009. The account shows revenues of CHF 38,334.24 and expenditures of CHF 35,185.13, resulting in a positive balance of CHF 3,149.11, due



primarily to the rebound in the market. The balance sheet assets are CHF 105,897.78, an increase compared to 2008. The Treasurer gave each member of the *Bureau restreint* a copy of the accounts and the balance sheet as prepared by GO Fiduc in Neuchâtel.

4. Subcommittee on the Congress Program

The subcommittee charged with reviewing the procedure for developing the Congress program and examining the roles of the National Committees and the Commissions is now preparing its final report before submitting it to ICHS members before the Amsterdam General Assembly. A preliminary version was submitted to subcommittee members in early March for discussion purposes.

The report is based on the answers provided to the questionnaire distributed to ICHS members in 2007. The subcommittee discussed the structure of the ICHS's membership and some of the topics that the General Assembly should have on the agenda. The first topic, the organization of a generalist Congress every five years, has traditionally been the centerpiece of the ICHS's mission. International cooperative initiatives and congresses were rather rare in 1926 and even in 1950, but the proliferation of universities after the 1960s has led to an increase in professional historians around the world, a fundamental change that has produced scores of bilateral and multilateral cooperation initiatives and congresses. These numerous international meetings have become specialized in order to meet the needs of the various fields of historical knowledge. Is it still relevant to hold a generalist Congress, as the ICHS does?

The second issue concerns ICHS members' role in organizing the program, and how the program is structured. The subcommittee feels that members should play a larger and more direct role, in two ways: first, by holding more joint sessions, and second, by having each International Affiliated Organizations (IAO) define the theme of a session in the general program. It will be necessary, however, to reduce the number of sessions dedicated to the IAOs or at least reduce expectations that IAO sessions will be held in chronological sequence. For reasons of balance, the program will be more flexible and less dichotomous. Lastly, the subcommittee wondered whether it might be appropriate to create a new type of session that discusses the work of ICHS members.

The *Bureau restreint* feels that the report will lead to an enlightened discussion during the General Assembly. The report will be sent to ICHS members as soon as it is completed.

5. 2010 Congress

Work on the Amsterdam Congress is progressing well. Recruitment for all sessions is complete. For the time being, the only setback has been the cancellation of joint session No. 7, « *Les petits pays comme modèles d'innovation politique* — Small Countries as Models for Innovative Politics ». The Netherlands National Committee has proposed an alternative session.

The first General Assembly will be held on 22 August at 10 a.m. in the *Agnietenkapel* (Oudezijds Voorburgwal 231), on the campus of the University of Amsterdam. The agenda will focus primarily on topics related to the ICHS constitution, such as:



1. Secretary General's report on the 2005-2010 quinquennium
2. Treasurer's financial report
3. Report of the committee for nominations to the Bureau
4. Report of the subcommittee on the Congress program
5. Admission of new members
6. Vote on the venue for the next Congress.

The second General Assembly will be held on 26 August at 4 p.m. in the *Koningszaal* of the *De Bazel* building, Amsterdam Municipal Archives (Vijzelstraat 32). This location is at walking distance from the campus.

6. ICHS-UNESCO Relations

ICPHS

The ICPHS continues to publish the *Diogenes* journal. The most recent issue, Vol. 225 — 2009, is devoted to the theme of "New Perspectives in Gender Studies". Abstracts of the different issues are posted at <http://www.unesco.org/cipsh/fre/diogene.htm>. Also, the International Union for Prehistoric and Protohistoric Sciences (IUPPS), also a member of the ICPHS, is inviting delegates to attend a session of its 2011 Congress on the theme of "The Intellectual and Spiritual Expressions of Non-literate Peoples". ICHS members interested in this theme are asked to contact the Secretary General as soon as possible.

7. Miscellaneous

As there were no further items, the President thanked the members of the *Bureau restreint* and adjourned the meeting.