



Sydney, 2 July 2005

The Bureau held its last meeting of the 2000-2005 quinquennium at the History Department of the University of New South Wales on the eve of the opening of the 20th International Congress of Historical Sciences, from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Present: Jürgen Kocka, President; Eva Österberg, Vice-President; Jean-Claude Robert, Secretary General; Pierre Ducrey, Treasurer; Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch, Koichi Kabayama, José Luis Peset, and Michael Heyd, Assessor Members; and Ivan T. Berend, Counselor.

Invited guest: Martyn Lyons, President of the Organizing Committee of the 20th Congress (Sydney, 2005).

Excused: Romila Thapar, Vice-President, and Gregory Bongard-Levin and William C. Jordan, Assessor Members.

Ms. Margarita Grebennikov, research assistant at the UNSW, was the note-taker.

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Agenda

1. Opening
2. ICHS Affairs and Secretary General's report (2000-2005)
3. Nominating Committee's report
4. Treasurer's report
5. Review of the agendas for the General Assemblies of July 3 and 7
6. Report on the organization of the Sydney Congress
7. Next Bureau meetings
8. Miscellaneous

1. President's opening remarks

The President welcomed the members of the Bureau, and, on their behalf, thanked the Australian Committee and President Martyn Lyons for their hospitality in Sydney.

The President noted the growth of the ICHS and the progress that has been made to internationalize the Committee during the past five years. Particularly, he noted that it was the first time in its history that the Congress was held in the Southern Hemisphere and that ICHS had organised a series of regional meetings since 2001. In addition, the publication of the English version of K. D. Edrman's book is a significant event. He thanked all the Bureau members for their contribution and emphasized the scope of the work that remains to be done in order for the ICHS to remain relevant in the eyes of historians.



He then gave the floor to Jean-Claude Robert.

2. ICHS affairs and Secretary General's report

In view of the Congress, the Secretary General prepared a report that will be distributed to members of the Bureau and the General Assembly. The report will also be enclosed with the minutes of the General Assembly of July 3. He gave the highlights of the report while emphasizing four points, the efforts to renew the Committee, the work done to rejuvenate it, the state of ICHS communications and its expansion.

On the subject of renewal and rejuvenation, the ICHS has worked towards greater inclusion of young researchers, particularly through the regional symposiums held in conjunction with Bureau meetings and through the program of the Sydney Congress. Moreover, the Congress program this time around included more female colleagues, who accounted for 27% of the communicators. This readjustment must be pursued despite the gains made since Oslo, where female historians accounted for 20% of the communicators. The themes of the Sydney Congress were selected in response to questions that historians had. The fact it was held in the Southern Hemisphere for the first time in the Committee's history shows the ICHS's desire to be present throughout the world and not only in Western Europe and North America.

With 54 National Committees, 28 Affiliated International Organizations and 12 Internal Commissions, the membership of the ICHS is somewhat stable.

During the past five years, the Secretary General's time has been monopolized by two dossiers. The first was the organization of the Sydney Congress, and the second, the work of the Joint UNESCO-ICHS Committee. Formed in 1997, this committee organized two regional meetings before the Oslo Congress. In 2001, it expanded its program, organizing no less than a dozen symposiums and regional meetings in countries where ICHS representation is weak: Central-Eastern Europe, Africa, Southeast Asia, the Arab Muslim world, Latin America, and the Caribbean. Seven sessions were presented during the Sydney Congress, providing significant exposure for historians from these regions.

In terms of the ICHS's communications, the Bulletin has had a facelift with a new cover and a new font. In addition, it has been published annually since 2000. The ICHS website is now updated and will continue to be updated regularly in the future. The Secretary General wishes to use it as a communication tool, as the Internet is more flexible than the printed Bulletin.

Two problematic issues remain. Despite the activities of the Joint Committee, the ICHS is still under-represented in some parts of the world. The Committee's scope of action is hampered by the Secretariat's and the ICHS's limited availability. The Committee's budget does not allow the Secretariat to function full time, and the Secretary General is limited in what he can do because his work is part time and volunteered. There is therefore a serious lack of means within the organization.

The members of the Bureau proposed various ways to remedy the problem, and approved the Secretary General's report.

3. Nominating Committee's report



The Nominating Committee tackled its work in Berlin in August 2004, and pursued its discussions by e-mail until a consensus was reached in the spring of 2005. As discussed during the last General Assembly (Amsterdam 2002), the highlights of the report, i.e. the final proposal for the new Bureau, were posted to all National Committees, Affiliated International Organizations and Internal Commissions. The latter group received the communication despite the fact that it does not have voting rights at the Assembly. Here is a summary of the proposal:

1. The candidacy of José Luis Peset was proposed and approved for the Presidency. Pierre Ducrey and Jean-Claude Robert each agreed to another term, and their candidacies as Treasurer and Secretary General were proposed respectively.
2. Three members of the outgoing Bureau agreed to renew their terms: Michael Heyd, William C. Jordan, and Koichi Kabayama.
3. Five new members were to be elected. The candidacies of Shadid Amin (India), Sorin Antohi (Rumania/Hungary), Michael Bibikov (Russia), Marjatta Hietala (Finland) and Hilda Sabato (Argentina) were accepted.

4. Treasurer's report

Treasurer Pierre Ducrey presented members of the Bureau with the financial report that would later be submitted to the General Assembly of the ICHS. The report covers the 2002, 2003 and 2004 fiscal years. He distributed the following documents to the members of the Bureau: ICHS profit and loss accounts and balance sheets for 2002, 2003 and 2004, six-year comparison chart, and status of membership fees.

The Treasurer highlighted two points: first, the ICHS's savings are dwindling slowly but surely, and second, some members are tardy in paying their fees, leading to problems with the treasury. The members of the Bureau approved the report, emphasizing that the Committee must reinforce the rule about voting rights at the General Assembly devolving exclusively to paying members.

5. Review of the agendas of the General Assemblies of July 3 and 7

The Secretary General clarified some items on the agenda of the first General Assembly.

Admission of new members

The International Commission on the History of Travel and Tourism, created by the General Assembly in Amsterdam in 2002, is seeking a change of status to Affiliated International Organization. Having reviewed the file, the Secretary moved that the Bureau recognize this entity. If the General Assembly were to approve the motion, the new Organization would have voting rights during the second General Assembly.

The motion was carried.

Creation of a new International Commission for the History of the Baltic Sea



A group of colleagues from the coastal Baltic areas want to create an Internal Commission to study the history of the regions bordering the Baltic Sea. The Group submitted its statutes and the composition of its provisional regional office to the Secretary General, who found them to be compliant with the statutes of the ICHS. Consequently, it is proposed that the Bureau requests the General Assembly to create this Commission.

Motion carried.

Selection of venue for the next Congress

The Secretary General received formal applications for the 2010 Congress from the cities of Amsterdam and Paris. As is customary, the delegates from each city will be given about 20 minutes each to present their project to the first General Assembly. The vote will take place during the second General Assembly on July 7.

Future motions

The Secretary General attended a meeting of the Giunta Centrale per gli Studi Storici in Rome on May 31, 2005, where he learned that the Italian National Committee deplored the lack of input of the National Committees and Affiliated International Organizations in the development of the Congress program. While recognizing the time constraints involved, the Italian Committee nevertheless expressed the hope that in the near future, the ICHS would study a better way to take into account the input of National Committees and International Organisations. A motion in this respect would be presented during the second General Assembly. In a different vein, Even Lange, of the Norwegian National Committee, wanted to examine the possibility of broadening the membership categories of the ICHS. The Bureau briefly discussed these issues and agreed to wait until the motions were submitted to the General Assembly.

6. Report on the organization of the Sydney Congress

Professor Martyn Lyons, President of the Australian Organizing Committee, provided the latest practical and statistical data on the Congress: in total there were nearly 1,300 registrations (on June 24), originating from 72 countries. One third of the registrants were from Australia and one third were from Western Europe. The opening session will be held in the spacious Clancy Auditorium. The Premier of the State of New South Wales, the President of the Australian Historical Association and the President of UNESCO's Australian National Commission will give welcome addresses. Their presentations will be followed by presentations by the President of the ICHS and Natalie Davis, who will speak on the topic of "The Globalization of History and its Limits". Eva Österberg has agreed to read the paper prepared by Natalie Davis. The presentations will be commented by Ibrahima Thioub (Senegal) and Norman Etherington (Australia). The closing ceremony will take place in the auditorium of the Sydney Town Hall. Concurrently with the sessions of the Congress, there will be a book expo showcasing a dozen publishers.

7. Next Bureau meetings



As is customary, Bureau meetings were scheduled for the upcoming quinquennium (2005-2010). The first Bureau meeting will take place in Sydney on July 8, at 10 a.m. In 2006, the Bureau will meet in Santiago de Compostela, Spain, at the invitation of the Spanish Committee for the Historical Sciences. The Association of Chinese Historians has expressed a wish to invite the General Assembly and the Bureau to hold their meetings in Beijing in 2007. In 2008, the Bureau will meet in the city selected to host the 2010 Congress. The Japanese National Committee has expressed a wish to invite the Bureau to hold its meeting in Japan in September 2009.

8. Miscellaneous

Historical Abstracts

On the occasion of the Sydney Congress, ABC-CLIO publishers want to mark the 50th anniversary of the launch of the Historical Abstracts series, given that it was during the 10th International Congress of the Historical Sciences (Rome, 1955) that Eric H. Boehm and his spouse, Inge P. Boehm, presented their project to the historians in attendance. The ICHS wants to underscore their contribution to international cooperation among historians and the wider dissemination of historical information. It was proposed that the President of the ICHS award an honorary diploma to Eric H. Boehm during the Congress in recognition of his service.

The motion was carried.

Acknowledgements

The President thanked the members of the Bureau for their work during the 2000-2005 quinquennium, particularly outgoing members Gregory Bongard-Levin, Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch, Eva Österberg, Romila Thapar and Ivan Berend. Lastly, the members of the Bureau praised the work accomplished by President Jürgen Kocka.