



Minutes Board Meeting

14 December 2024, 13.30–15.30 CET

Online meeting (<https://unibe-ch.zoom.us/my/sacha.zala>)

Present: Catherine Horel, Edoardo Tortarolo, Sacha Zala, Eliana Dutra, Krzysztof Makowski, Joel Harrington, Gunlög Fur, Nuno Gonçalo Monteiro, Matthias Middell, Flavio Eichmann

Absent: Hirotaka Watanabe

I. **Call to order**

Catherine Horel (CH) welcomes the members of the board to this meeting.

II. **Approval of the agenda**

The agenda is approved.

III. **Approval of the minutes of the meetings of the board**

The minutes are approved.

IV. **Draft minutes of the general assembly in Tokyo**

Edoardo Tortarolo (ET) informs that minutes of the GA in Tokyo are very voluminous and will be sent to the members in due time.

Sacha Zala (SZ) emphasizes that this is the first board meeting after the establishment of the CISH office in Bern. Therefore, he proposes that henceforth Flavio Eichmann (FE) will write the minutes of the board and the general assembly. As a matter of efficiency, the minutes will summarize only the important points of the discussions and clearly record the board's decisions.

The board accepts this proposal.

V. **Report president (Horel)**

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VI. **Report secretary general (Tortarolo)**

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VII. **Report treasurer (Zala)**

1. Tax exemption

SZ informs the board that the tax authorities of the Canton of Bern (Switzerland) granted the CISH an exemption from the payment of taxes for the period of 2024–2028, because it is deemed a non-profit-organization of public interest. This will allow the CISH to apply for fundings with foundations for its projects. Furthermore, software such as the Microsoft Office365 suite can be ordered free of costs. This status is granted by the Swiss Confederation's new subsidies for the CISH. In turn, this means that we must insure the long-term financing by the Swiss Confederation after the present period.

2. Office365 infrastructure:

SZ informs the board that the office will set up a cloud solution for a common platform to share data, calendars, etc. for the board members.

a. Call for documents (minutes, etc.)

SZ asks the board members to send all their files related to CISH to office@cish.org to have a complete set of files of board meetings, general assemblies, etc.

CH and ET will send all their files to the office. In a second moment, the other members of the board will complete the records.

b. CISH email-addresses (forward)

SZ informs the board that a common mail address (board@cish.org) will be set up that includes all board members. Messages to the board should be sent only to this address. Furthermore, board members will get a firstname.lastname@cish.org mail address that will forward messages to a mailbox of their choosing.

c. office@cish.org as sole point of entry for the board

SZ proposes to streamline the procedure of setting up board meetings:

1. The board will set the date for the meeting;
2. The office will ask board members for points in the agenda and to submit relevant material;
3. The office will then send out a formal invitation along with the relevant materials.

The board accepts this procedure.

3. New website

SZ sketches the outline for a new CISH-website. A new professional graphic layout is envisaged. The new website should focus better on the CISH's activities, the congress and the prize. The office will present a detailed concept in the next board meeting.

Matthias Middell (MM) proposes to use only one language (English) and to let translate non-English contents by automated translation services such as DeepL. Furthermore, the dynamic elements of the website could be strengthened by harvesting H-Net lists and producing monthly digests. Finally, the categories of the website should reflect those of the newsletter.

To define a CISH policy on languages, SZ emphasizes that the traditional CISH languages English, French, and Spanish should continue to serve for the communication from members even if this is not contemplated in the Constitution. The board will continue to communicate in English. Further, to underline our historical heritage he proposes to henceforth use primarily the French denomination “Comité International des Sciences Historiques” with its respective abbreviation “CISH” as the top brand in all official communications. To avoid confusion, in the future only English texts (e.g. Constitution, minutes, etc.) will be legally binding.

The board welcomes the office’s proposals and approves the proposition concerning the languages and terms used in official communications by CISH.

4. Concept for social media activities

FE gives a short overview over the presence of the Swiss Association for History on various social media platforms and discusses their possibilities and challenges.

KS proposes to hire a student, for example from the International Students of History Association (ISHA), for an internship. This person should work under close coordination with the office in Bern and the responsible persons for the newsletter in Leipzig to have an integrated CISH communication and possibly overcome discrepancies between the website and the newsletter.

The board welcomes this initiative and mandates the office to work out a short concept for the planned social media activities of the CISH.

5. Outline for a new constitution

SZ outlines the political background of the envisaged new constitution. Some members have voiced their discontent with the current situation in CISH, as they feel that decisions are inadequately communicated, and the organization acts too slowly. Some members are even thinking of leaving the CISH and have started an informal network some months ago. It would therefore be wise to include them in an open, participatory process of formulating a new constitution.

This new constitution should in general be shorter and formulated clearer. In order to professionalize the organization, it would be wise to mandate the president, the vice-presidents and a new figure of a director with the daily

business. At the same time, the board should be bigger and be more inclusive for national organizations. This would ease some of the criticism voiced by our members. Procedural aspects such as voting, elections, etc. should be defined in regulations, not in the constitution.

The board welcomes this initiative and mandates SZ to formulate until the next board meeting a proposal for the timeline until 2026 and the ways, by which the members can be included in this reform.

6. Call for candidatures members of the board

After discussing some formulations the board mandates the office to finalize the document.

VIII. Centennial conference 2026 in Leipzig (Middell)

MM presents the current state of planning for the centennial conference 2026 in Leipzig. A Call for Panels is almost ready and can be sent out before the holiday season.

The board thanks MM for his work and mandates the office to send out the CfP after some formal adaptations.

IX. Other events 2026 (Tortarolo)

ET informs that he is in contact with the Giunta centrale per gli studi storici for the financing of an event planned for spring 2026 in Rome.

Krzysztof Makowski (KM) presents his paper on the call for regional and national activities for the Centennial 2026. This call should be sent out as soon as possible. SZ proposes to communicate all calls in one single mail to all members. The office will then collect the ideas and transmit then to the Centennial Committee already appointed by the board (CH, KM, MM, ET, SZ).

The board agrees on this procedure.

X. Comments and announcements (all)

CH reminds the board that a new laureate for the CISH-prize has to be found.

The office prepares a call. This will be sent by the office along with the other documents mentioned above.

XI. Varia and adjournment (all)

Next board meeting: **8 March 2025, 13.30 (Central European Time)**

For the protocol: FE