



CISH
Preliminary General Assembly

MINUTES

April 24, 2026

Time: 1.30–3.30 pm CET

Online meeting

Present: Joanna Wojdon (Committee of Historical Sciences of the Polish Academy of Sciences), Antoon De Baets (ICHTH), Andrea Nanetti (Internal Commission for Computational Technologies and History), Radhika Seshan (Indian Association for Global Historical Sciences), Marcos Leitão de Almeida (ANPUH), Michala Jandák Lônčíková (Slovak National Committee of Historians), Antia Wiersma (Dutch National Committee), Pierantonio Piatti (Pontifical Committee for Historical Sciences), Jaime Yaffé (Uruguayan Association of Historians), Elina Ziehm (Students of History Association), Constantin Göschler (German National Committee), Ioan Bolovan (Romanian National Committee), Maria de Fátima Reis (Portuguese Academy of History), Peter Gray (Irish Committee of Historical Sciences), Shinji Asada (Japanese National Committee), Seiichiro Yoshizawa (Japanese National Committee), Paul Dostert (Section historique de l'Institut grand-ducal, Luxembourg), Shmel Feiner (Historical Society of Israel), Tséla Rubel (Study of Jewish History (IAHSSJH)), Olwen Purdue (International Federation for Public History), Roy Weintraub (International Society for History Didactics), Radmilla Svarickova Slabakova (Czech National Committee), Mauro Moretti (International Commission for the History of Universities), Gordan Ravačić (The Croatian National Committee for Historical Sciences), Tyson Retz (ICHTH), Norbert Fabian (VHD), Marjaana Niemi (Finnish National Committee), Stefan Amirell (Swedish Historical Association), Carlos Sanz (International Commission of History of International Relations), Joao Vieira Borges (Commission on Military History), Gonzalo F. Carrasco (Spanish National Committee), Beatriz Brigoni (ASAIH), Peter J. Aschenbrenner (International Commission for the History of Representative and Parliamentary Institutions), Mauro Moretti (International Commission for the History of Universities), Sacha Zala (CISH), Catherine Horel (CISH), Edoardo Tortarolo (CISH), Joel Harrington (CISH), Matthias Middell (CISH), Flavio Eichmann (CISH), Marc Aberle (CISH, minutes)

I. Call to Order and Approval of the Agenda (Horel)

Catherine Horel, the CISH-President greets the participants. This first General Assembly serves as preparation for the General Assembly to be held in Leipzig in August. The Assembly approves the agenda.

II. Discussion of a New Constitution for CISH (Zala)

Sacha Zala presents the new Constitution to be adopted in Leipzig.

- The main objective of the new Constitution is to provide CISH with greater clarity and transparency.
- The position of Executive Director is designed to facilitate the professionalisation of CISH. The Executive Director will not hold a decision-making role on the Board, serving only in an advisory capacity. Potential conflicts of interest are thereby avoided.
- The introduction of individual membership reflects the Board's intention to offer people in countries without a national committee a means of joining CISH, and to prevent their isolation. Individual members are not eligible to vote at the General Assembly but would be better integrated into CISH's networks by receiving its newsletter, being informed of its activities, and being able to participate in the World Congress.
- A quorum for important decisions was not incorporated into the Constitution because, with the digital organisation of the GA, amendments can be made on a year-to-year basis.
- The expansion of the Board, defined as CISH's political body, aims to make it more inclusive and geographically diverse. The Board will henceforth decide on the venue of the next Congress, to ensure the feasibility of planned Congresses. CISH does not wish to assume potential financial shortfalls on the part of an organising committee and is not in a position to become involved in financial matters relative to the organization of the Congress.
- This new attribution also aims to expedite the selection process. The GA will express a decision and refer the matter to the Board, which will determine the most suitable arrangement for the association.
- The former "Bureau restraint", which was mentioned on the website but not in the statutes, will now be formalised as a Presidium of four representatives, with the Executive Director serving in an advisory role only.
- Terms of office are addressed in the additional provisions. By staggering terms, the organisation aims to gain stability by avoiding a complete turnover of the Board while maintaining its effectiveness.

Zala opens the discussion. The following comments and suggestions are made by the participants:

- Paul Dostert highlights that CISH's framework is based on national committees, yet some countries are experiencing internal conflicts or do not have a functioning national committee. The Board is aware of this issue but has decided to retain this structure pragmatically, while remaining open to the diversity of real-world situations.
- Antoon De Baets notes that this draft provides a solid basis. He proposes the following amendments, all of which are adopted by the Preliminary General Assembly:

- Art. 2 2c: to **respect, protect and promote** universal human rights, to defend academic freedom in historical research, communication, and education, and to oppose the **abuse of history**
 - Art. 2 2 a: to promote **the advancement of the historical sciences**
 - Art. 2 2 b: to develop and uphold professional **and academic** standards in the historical sciences
- The following amendment to Art. 11.3b is also suggested: the President **can** be awarded the title of Honorary President.
- Antia Wiersma expresses her concern that, in theory, a Board member could serve for up to 15 years and that this may be too long. Zala explains that the introduction of the three terms is a new restriction and that under the current Statutes, there is no limit on the number of consecutive terms a Board member may serve. In any case, Board renewal has historically been governed primarily by the mandatory retirement age of 70. The proposed three-term limit therefore introduces a new restriction, while the statutory age limit is expected to remain, in many cases, the principal factor determining the maximum duration of Board service. He further notes that the Constitution should not penalise the Committee if a Congress can be organised sooner than the usual five-year interval, which is one of the principal objectives of the constitutional revision. Expressing the limit in terms rather than in years reflects the principle that each Board should remain fully responsible for the preparation and organisation of the next Congress. A limit expressed in years could require changes in the composition of the Board during this process, disrupting continuity and creating unnecessary governance difficulties at a crucial stage of the Committee's activities.

A definitive version of the constitution will be put to a vote at the GA in Leipzig.

III. Presentation of the Nomination Committee's proposal for the new Board

CH: The Nomination Committee (NC) was formed by the GA in Tokyo in 2024. It received 14 applications for 11 free seats; no applications from Africa and South Asia were submitted. Of the current Board members only Matthias Middell, Katalin Szende and Sacha Zala will remain in office.

The NC proposes the following candidates:

- Gabriela Pellegrino Soares — living in Brazil, Brazilian (Support: Brazilian, Colombian and Chilean National Committees)
- Radmila Švaříčková Slabáková — living in the Czech Republic, Czech (Support: Czech National Committee of Historians)
- Anne Conchon — living in France, French (Support: Comité français des sciences

historiques)

- Tyson Retz — living in Norway, Australian and Norwegian (Support: International Committee of the History and Theory of Historiography)
- Mahmood Kooria — living in the UK, Indian (Support: International Consortium for Oceanic History)
- Joanna Wojdon — living in Poland, Polish (Support: International Society for History Didactics and International Federation for Public History)
- Irene Gaddo — living in Italy, Italian (Support: Italian National Committee)
- Tamar Herzig — living in Israel, Israeli (Support: Israel National Committee)
- Miloš Vojnović — living in Serbia, Serbian (Support: Serbian National Committee)
- Kimberly Welch — living in the USA, American (Support: American Historical Association)
- Elina Ziehm — living in Germany, German (Support: International Students of History Association)

IV. First presentation of candidatures for the next World Congress

Shmuel Feiner informs the Assembly of the cancellation of the Jerusalem Congress, considering the turmoil affecting the world, and the Middle East in particular. He expresses his wish, that someday it will be possible to hold the CISH-World Congress in Israel.

The following candidates have expressed their interest in hosting the next World Congress and briefly present their candidatures:

France: Stéphane Frioux

2029 marks the centenary of the *Annales*, one of the most influential journals in the discipline, and Lyon is the birthplace of Marc Bloch, who was killed there by the Gestapo. Hosting the Congress under the banner of Marc Bloch's legacy would carry great symbolic weight. France has not hosted the Congress since Paris in 1950. Lyon has a strong tradition in the humanities and an active local committee, with a wide range of themes and representatives from various institutions. The city is easily accessible, and the Congress would be held in summer 2029.

India: Radhika Seshan

Kolhapur is a historic city with an ancient history and Roman-era heritage. The hosting university, founded in 1962, was established to broaden access to higher education for rural youth. It encompasses numerous research centres, departments, and affiliated colleges. The city has significant pilgrimage sites and well-regarded academic publications in both local and English languages. Given India's climate, a July conference is not feasible, but the accommodation and venue capacity are sufficient to host all panels. This would be the first World Congress held in India.

Brazil: Gabriela Pellegrino

The proposed Congress would take place in São Paulo in early September 2030 (3–6 September), with the support of ANPUH and the University of São Paulo, including its PhD programme in social history. Extensive partnerships with collaborating institutions are planned. The opening lecture would focus on the centenary of the Brazilian Revolution of 1930. The University, founded in 1934, offers large-capacity auditoriums and strong infrastructure in terms of facilities and multimedia equipment.

V. Centennial conference 2026 in Leipzig (Middell)

The Centennial Congress in Leipzig will host 64 panels from 26 to 29 August 2026. Matthias Middell reports that more than 500 speakers and conveners will be present. The organisation has received approximately 200 early-bird registrations.

VI. Varia and Adjournment

Edoardo Tortarolo informs the Assembly of the CISH Prize for History, awarded to Anthony Grafton. As Grafton was unable to attend the Leipzig conference, the award ceremony will be held at a conference in Rome devoted to the history of CISH on 15 October 2026.

Flavio Eichmann presents the new CISH website, which aims to reflect CISH's renewed dynamism. It will go live after the next General Assembly.

President Horel closes the preparatory GA and invites all participants to attend the CISH-Centennial Conference in Leipzig.

The meeting concluded at 4:24 pm.