

# INTERNATIONAL ASTRONOMICAL UNION

## 87th EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

14 August 2009

### DRAFT MINUTES

(V1.0, 15 August 2009)

#### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Robert Williams	President
Norio Kaifu	President-Elect
Ian F. Corbett	General Secretary
Thierry Montmerle	Assistant General Secretary
Matthew Colless	Vice-President
Martha P. Haynes	Vice-President
George K. Miley	Vice-President
Jan Palous	Vice-President
Marta Rovira	Vice-President
Giancarlo Setti	Vice-President
Catherine J. Cesarsky	Adviser
Karel A. van der Hucht	Adviser

#### FINANCE SUB-COMMITTEE

Paul G. Murdin (from Item 10)	past Chair
Birgitta Nordstrom	Chair

#### IAU XXVII GENERAL ASSEMBLY NOC (Item 6)

Daniela Lazzaro	Co-Chair
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#### SPECIAL ACTIVITIES AT GA XXVII (Item 6)

Edward Guinan	Young Astronomers
Sarah Madison	Women in Astronomy

#### DIVISION PRESIDENTS (Items 1 -9 and 13)

Dennis McCarthy	Division I
Valentin Martinez Pillet	Division II
Karen Meech	Division III
Christopher Corbally	Division IV
Edward Guinan (in place of DP)	Division V
You-Hua Chu	Division VI
Rosemary Wyse (in place of DP)	Division VII
Elaine Sadler	Division VII
Andreas Quirrenbach	Division IX
Russell Taylor	Division X
Joao Braga (in place of DP)	Division XI
Françoise Genova	Division XII

## **GUESTS:**

**President of the Chinese Astronomical Society:** Professor Gang Zhao for Item 9

**Director of ICSU Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean:** Professor Alice Rangel de Paiva Abreu for Items 10 and 11.

## **EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT**

Vivien A. Reuter

### **1. Welcome by President**

The President, Robert Williams, welcomed the members of the Executive Committee and the Division Presidents and outlined the duties and responsibilities of the Committee.

### **2. Approval of Agenda**

The agenda was approved.

### **3. Introduction of EC members.**

The new members of the EC were introduced and invited to check the information on their addresses and contact details. They were reminded to review their roles and responsibilities as set out in the IAU Statutes, Bye-Laws, and Working Rules, available via the IAU web site.

### **4. Introduction of Division Presidents.**

The new Division Presidents, or their representatives, were introduced and invited to review their role and responsibilities as set out in the Statutes, Bye-Laws and Working Rules of the Union.

### **5. Minutes of EC86.**

The Executive Committee took note of the draft minutes of EC86 provided by the past General Secretary. The Committee thanked the PGS for producing the minutes so quickly.

### **6. Preliminary Report on GA XXVII**

6.1 Daniela Lazzaro, co-Chair of the NOC, presented her preliminary report.

In total there were 2434 attendees and 113 no-shows. The breakdowns are: 796 IAU members, 790 non-members, 526 students, 83 guests. 667 attendees were female and there were 414 Brazilian attendees. Attendees came from a total of 76 countries. There were 758 posters in the first week and 1057 in the second, a total of 1815.

The Conference Centre had proved conveniently located, open and spacious. However, some rooms were too small, there had been various problems in the first few days, including queues and congestion, and the internet connection has been inadequate and unreliable throughout.

The budget showed a slight profit on a total expenditure of around 1.87 MBRL.

Daniela would chair a meeting of the EC General Assemblies WG that afternoon.

EC members and DPs said that the GA had been seen as very successful and the Plenary Review talks were particularly appreciated. Complaints centred on rooms smaller than required, overlapping scientific sessions and talks, poor communication of programme changes. These will all have to be addressed in planning the Beijing GA.

## 6.2 Report on Symposia by Vice-Presidents

Martha Haynes reported on discussions with the organisers of IAUS 263 and 265. In summary, they felt the symposia had been successful in meeting their objectives, that attendance had been good, and that perhaps they had attracted a broader range of attendees than a classic symposium, so that there had been benefit in holding them within the GA. IAUS 263 suggested that a dedicated space for each symposium posters, where people could gather and continue discussions, would add cohesion.

Giancarlo Setti reported on IAUS 262 and 267. Their comments were very similar to those above. IAUS 263 started with a good gender and region balance of speakers, disturbed by withdrawals and no-shows. Over 400 people attended 262, about 200 attended 267, but the room assigned to them was too large.

George Miley reported on IAUS 266, but had not been able to get feedback from IAUS 264. As with the others, the scientific programme had been successful and there were no major problems to report.

The EC thanked the V-Ps for these reports and noted that Post Meeting Reports from all these symposia should be available in September.

## 6.3 (a) Sarah Madison reported on 'Women in Astronomy'

A business meeting had been held before the 'Women in Astronomy' lunch, in which a major topic was the follow-up of actions from the Prague GA. The working group's recommendations to improve visibility of women in IAU-sponsored meetings included making changes to the Rules and Guidelines for IAU Scientific Meetings, and the suggestion that Post Meeting reports should ask for statistics on gender distribution of speakers, session chairs, etc.

The working group website has been updated and 8 members of the Organising Committee have rotated off. The new co-Chairs are Sarah Madison and Francesca Primas.

Two projects are on-going. Mary Contizas from Greece is looking to see if the impact of the current economic situation on postdocs is having more effect on women. The survey will be available later in year. A future survey on international statistics on women in astronomy will be carried out by a new Working Group.

The Women in Astronomy lunch meeting was attended by ~200 people, many of whom were young and some 20% of the total was male. A one day Special Session on Women in Astronomy may be proposed for the next GA. The Executive Committee noted the report.

### 6.3 (b) Edward Guinan reported on events for Young Astronomers

The lunch was oversubscribed but was seen as very successful. About 38% of attendees were female.

The Young Astronomers Consulting Service was less successful than at Prague: 25 people used the service.

The next ISYA will be in Trinidad (December 2009) and Armenia (2010). The next TAD will be in Cape Town and discussions are on-going with other possible venues.

The NASL supported Education lunch was a mixed success and the format will require review for the future.

## 7. Impressions of GA-XXVII

Members of the EC discussed successes and problems with the GA, and made suggestions for the Beijing GA. EC members and DPs said that the GA had been seen as very successful and the Plenary Review talks were particularly appreciated. Complaints centred on rooms smaller than required, overlapping scientific sessions and talks, poor communication of programme changes. These will all have to be addressed in planning the Beijing GA. In addition, the GA (and Symposia) could be made more woman-friendly.

**AI-EC87-1: EC Members to pass suggestions for improvements to GA organisation to P and GS.**

**Due: asap**

## 8. Follow-up Actions on GA XXVII Resolutions

Implementation of B1 and A1 covered under Item 12. B2 and B3 require no action. The Div I WG on International Celestial Reference Frame should now be dissolved.

There will be suggested changes to the Rules and Guidelines following the 'Women in Astronomy' resolution B4. B5 will be followed up actively by Div XII Comm 50.

**AI-EC87-2: President to contact Malcolm Smith re follow-up to Resolution B5. Due: asap**

**AI-EC87-3: GS to invite Comm. 50 to formulate an action programme for delivery on B5 to EC88. Due: asap**

**AI-EC87-4: P and PP to consult Press Officer on possibility of issuing a Press Release on Resolutions. Due: immediate.**

## 9. Preparations for GA-XXVIII, Beijing.

The EC noted the presentation by Professor Gang Zhao and noted that the President, General Secretary and Executive Assistant would visit Beijing in October. Key elements of the presentation are attached.

## 10. Address by Director of ICSU Latin American and Caribbean Regional Office.

The EC thanked Professor Alice Abreu and noted her presentation (attached to these minutes).

After Professor Abreu had left, the PP noted that the ICSU Regional Offices were being reviewed and that IAU could nominate candidates for appointment to the review committees.

**AI-EC87-5: PP to nominate Thierry Montmerle for the ICSU Latin America and Caribbean Regional Office review. Due: asap**

**11. ICSU booklet “Freedom, Responsibility, and Universality of Science”**

The EC endorsed this important contribution to a better understanding of the role and responsibility of science and scientists.

**AI-EC87-6: GS to write to ICSU, with copy to Bengt Gustafsson, commending the production of the report “Freedom, Responsibility, and Universality of Science”. Due: asap**

**12. Strategic Plan Implementation**

George Miley reviewed the positive reaction to the Strategic Plan at the GA. The EC members discussed its implementation and approaches to potential sponsors and donors, and were encouraged to continue dialogue with those directly involved.

The Announcement of Opportunity for the Global Development Office should await the approval of a costed Implementation Plan.

**AI-EC87-7: George Miley and GS to produce a costed Implementation Plan in consultation with Chair of FSC and Paul Murdin. Due: before end November**

**AI-EC87-8: PP to produce list of achievements of IYA as an aid in fundraising. Due: asap**

**AI-EC87-9: GS to organise consultation of countries which have hosted ISYA and TAD in past, to establish their views as ‘customers’ of the Strategic Plan. Due: asap.**

**13. The International Year of Astronomy 2009**

The PP reviewed recent discussions, highlighting the discussions on ‘legacy’ in Special Session 5 and reviewing the situation with the Cornerstones. There is an overwhelming desire to continue the main projects of IYA. The relationship of the IAU with amateur astronomers, who have been invaluable in the success of IYA, needs further development. We need a new WG under Comm. 55 and Div. XII to interface with amateurs and publicise astronomy. This is being developed. All countries should be invited to participate.

The EC noted the report and endorsed the proposed further actions.

**AI-EC87-10: GS to ask Comm. 55 (copy Div. XII President) that the EC would like a document on relations and cooperation with amateurs. Due: end 2009.**

**14. Continuation of Working Groups**

- (a) The EC reviewed the current EC WGs and decided that
- The WG Large Scale Facilities should continue
  - The WG Publications should terminate.
  - The WG Women in Astronomy should continue, co-chaired by Sarah Madison and Francesca Primas
  - The WG IYA should continue chaired by the PP
  - The WG General Assemblies should continue chaired by Daniela Lazzaro
  - The new WG Naming of Dwarf Planets should be organised by Div. III from WG-PSN and CSBN, and Div. III should appoint a chair.
  - The Advisory Committee on Hazards of Near-Earth Objects should continue chaired by David Morrison

**AI-EC87-11: P to contact possible chairs for the WG Future Large Scale Facilities. Due: asap**

**(b) Continuation Rules for WG**

The EC confirmed that the provisions on the termination of WG set out in the Bye-Laws and Working Rules should be strictly applied.

**AI-EC87-12: GS to remind DPs and Comm.Ps of the rules regarding WG. Due: asap**

## **15. IAU Finances and Budget Projections**

Paul Murdin reported that the FSC made the following recommendations to the EC:

- Resolve the situation with French bank LCL and draw a line under the lost money
- Return to the objectives of the financial reorganisation plan of 2008 by completing the transfer to euros, moving the bank accounts, move and re-invest the reserves, and implement e-banking.
- Plan the financing of the Development Strategic Plan with due attention to financial constraints and fallback positions.
- Re-visit the 'Category of Membership' issue before the next GA.

The presentation is attached to these minutes.

The EC welcomed the recommendations and thanked Paul for his contributions to IAU as Chair of FSC. The EC welcomed Birgitta Nordstrom as the new chair of FSC.

**AI-EC87-13: GS to implement recommendations of FSC. Due: on-going**

## **16. The Peter and Patricia Gruber Foundation**

- (a) The EC agreed on a replacement for Professor J. Peebles to the Advisory Board for the Gruber Cosmology Prize.
- (b) The EC agreed on the composition of the Gruber Fellowship Selection Committee. The GS agreed to review timing of the advertising.

**AI-EC87-14: P to approach nominated replacement, and alternates if necessary, to the Advisory Board and GS to ascertain willingness of members of Fellowship Selection Committee to serve. Due: asap**

**17. IAU Symposia and Regional IAU Meetings planned for 2010 and 2011.**

The EC noted that the information is in Information Bulletin 104.

**18. Officers' Meeting in Paris 25-27 January 2010 confirmed**

**19. EC88 and EC89**

- (a) EC88 provisionally fixed for 10-12 May 2010, Baltimore, USA, subject to confirmation
- (b) EC89 (with DPs) provisionally fixed for 24-26 May 2011 in Prague, Czech Republic.

**20. A.O.B None**

**21. List of actions**

EC87-1	EC Members to pass suggestions for improvements to GA organisation to P and GS.	asap
EC87-2	President to contact Malcolm Smith re follow-up to Resolution B5.	asap
EC87-3	GS to invite Comm. 50 to formulate an action programme for delivery on Resolution B5 to EC88.	End '09
EC87-4	P and PP to consult Press Officer on possibility of issuing a Press Release on Resolutions.	asap
EC87-5	PP to nominate Thierry Montmerle for the ICSU Latin America and Caribbean Regional Office review.	asap
EC87-6	GS to write to ICSU, with copy to Bengt Gustafsson, commending the production of the report "Freedom, Responsibility, and Universality of Science".	asap
EC87-7	George Miley and GS to produce a costed Implementation Plan in consultation with Chair of FSC and Paul Murdin.	End Nov
EC87-8	PP to produce list of achievements of IYA as an aid in fundraising.	asap
EC87-9	GS to organise consultation of countries which have hosted ISYA and TAD in past, to establish their views as 'customers' of the Strategic Plan.	asap
EC87-10	GS to ask Comm. 55 (copy Div. XII President) that the EC would like a document on relations and cooperation with amateurs.	asap
EC87-11	P to contact possible chairs for the WG Future Large Scale Facilities.	asap
EC87-12	GS to remind DPs and Comm.Ps of the rules regarding WG.	asap
EC87-13	GS to implement recommendations of FSC.	On-going
EC87-14	P to approach nominated replacement, and alternates if necessary, the Advisory Board and GS to ascertain willingness of members of Fellowship Selection Committee to serve.	asap

**22. Attachments:**

**Presentation by Gang Zhao**  
**Presentation by Alice Abreu**  
**Presentation by Paul Murdin**