

# INTERNATIONAL ASTRONOMICAL UNION

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING EC88

Tuesday 11 May 2010, 09:00 hr - Thursday 13 May 2010, 12:00 hr

Space Telescope Science Institute  
Lyman Spitzer Boardroom (4<sup>th</sup> floor)  
Baltimore, Maryland, USA

### Draft Minutes

*Present:*

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

1. **Welcome**

The participants were welcomed by STScI Director, Matt Mountain and by the President of the IAU, Robert Williams, who opened the meeting.

2. **Agenda**

The agenda was approved.

3. **Executive Committee Meetings**

3.1. The Minutes of EC87 were approved.

3.2. The Minutes of OM-2010 were noted, with further discussion of Item 8 (future funding of the Minor Planet Center MPC and the Central Bureau of Astronomical Telegrams CBAT requested by KAVDH. See Item 9 of these Minutes.

3.3. Action Items OM-2010

All the action items have been completed, except

**AI-OM10-2:** There has been no action from Dennis Crabtree, C55, despite reminders. GS to continue to follow up

**AI-OM10-4:** The creation of standardised homepages for Commissions and Divisions is still tbd. GS and VR to follow up with ESO team.

Regarding **AI-OM10 -21** on recording the number of women participating at IAU Symposia: After consultation with the WiA EC-WG, it has been decided to record only numbers, not names. The AGS, assisted by MH, will be responsible for seeing that records are kept and the results are reported to the EC.

**AI- EC88-1a** on MH and MR: to draft instructions for the AGS to give the organisers of IAU symposia. In future, LOCs/SOCs should record and report the number of female members of the LOC and SOC, as well as the number of female speakers, participants and grant awardees.

**AI- EC88-1b** on TM: to compile and report the statistics on female participation in conjunction with the symposia Post Meeting reports on the IAU web site.

3.4 Special Nominating Committee

BW has requested the SNC to submit suggestions for the post of AGS 2012-2015 / GS 2015-2018. KAVDH stressed the importance of early action. IFC considers a physical presence of ~3 days per month at the Paris Secretariat to be sufficient for normal business, while a knowledge of French is desirable but not essential.

**AI- EC88-2** on IFC: to make observations to the Special Nominating Committee concerning the requirements of the GS position.

**4. Secretariat Report**

4.1. Personnel

VR and IFC reported on the very satisfactory situation at the Paris Secretariat.

4.2. Data base and web site

ESO personnel works part-time for the IAU. This arrangement works well and is cost-effective. A number of improvements are planned. IFC aims to install an FTP site so that documents can be uploaded onto the web server and accessed by the EC members. The system should be in place in time for EC89. The creation of a "members only" zone on the IAU website was briefly considered and rejected.

4.2.1 Possible improvements to web site

**AI-EC88-3a** on TM: to identify discrepancies and suggest how a single currency might be used throughout the website.

**AI-EC88-3b** on TM: to clarify and harmonise the instructions for publications, including the referencing system, following planned discussions with CUP.

**AI-EC88-4** on TM: to liaise with Lars Lindberg Christensen and C55 to formulate a new section for the webpage "Rules and Guidelines for IAU Scientific Meetings" in support of public outreach during Symposia.

4.3. Contract with ESO.

Lars Christensen has been reappointed as Press Officer of IAU to general acclaim.

**5. Strategic Development Plan**

5.1 Selection of host of the OAD

The Executive Committee voted unanimously in favour of the proposal of the SAAO. Reserve and second reserve proposals were also identified following a secret ballot.

5.2 Approval of draft MOU

The draft MOU was approved with minor modifications to Sections X, XI and XVIII. It is now subject to iteration with SAAO. The aim is to sign in July.

5.3 Selection process for OAD Director

The process outlined was agreed, subject to the agreement of the SAAO. The following were suggested as members of a Search Committee for candidates to fill the position of OAD Director: Michèle Gerbaldi, Kaz Sekiguchi, Rick Fienberg.

**6. IAU Educational Programs of Division XII / Commission 46**

6.1 Reports from ISYA 2009, WWDA and TAD

The reports were presented and discussed.

- 6.2 Proposed C46 PG Programs & DOC Approvals  
The programs were presented and discussed. The involvement of new members was welcomed. GM noted the positive results of WWDA in Mongolia.
- 6.3 Proposed budget for Comm. 46 plus Strategic Plan  
The budget was approved.
- 6.4 Approval of Budget/Business Plan for OAD  
This item for information was seen by the Finance Sub-Committee before the OAD advertisement was displayed. It will be updated once the OAD Director has been appointed.

## 7. National Membership of the IAU

- 7.1 Status of payments of dues by National Members  
Problem cases were discussed. In general, relations are best where there is a functioning NCA. IFC presented the case for terminations in accordance with the Statutes, and there was a general consensus that the IAU should enforce the rules as set out therein.

## 8. Financial matters

- 8.1 Status of dealings with LCL and previous auditors  
The Crédit Lyonnais has offered to settle out of court for EUR 150 000. The EC is pleased with this result, and the offer has been accepted. This information remains confidential until further notice. The details of the agreement are currently being finalised by the lawyers.
- 8.2 Accounts 2009 and auditors report  
VR presented an overview of the IAU accounts for 2009. This summary has been approved by the auditors and will be included in the auditor's report. The balance is very positive for a General Assembly year, with thanks due to former GS Karel A van der Hucht for his efforts to increase the contributions of National Members.
- 8.3 Increased contribution to IUCAF  
The EC recognised the importance of IUCAF while voicing concerns about the lack of financial transparency and accountability.

**AI-EC88-5** on IFC: to inform IUCAF that the IAU will pay a 5K EUR contribution for 2010 on condition that IUCAF submits annual budgets and accounts as of 2010, as well as a long-term business plan. (DONE)

## 9. Future of Central Bureau for Astronomical Telegrams (CBAT)

CBAT has recently moved from the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory to the Dept. of Earth and Planetary Sciences at Harvard University. As the update from Dan Green illustrates, the situation is dynamic.

Bob Hanisch, vice-president of C5 (Documentation and Astronomical Data) and chair of the C5 WG on "Virtual Observatories, Data Centers and Networks, was invited to contribute his views on the future role of CBAT within the context of related services.

DECISION: The IAU will continue to pay EUR 3200 per year pending further developments, but will require submission of a business plan and budget. Any demand for increased support must be well justified.

**AI-EC88-6a** on IFC: to ask Comm. 5 and Comm. 6 to give EC, no later than July 31, 2010, their perspective on evolution and complementarity of handling data and emission of notifications of information on transient and time variable events. (DONE)

**AI- EC88-6b** on IFC:

- To write to CBAT and put it as positively as possible that we are reviewing the activity. Repeat request for a business plan and long term vision, to be submitted by 3 September.
- To ask Div XII, with Commissions 5 and 6, copies to Div V and Div IV, to establish a task group to investigate a long-term solution for the handling and dissemination of information on transient and time variable events.
- The Task Group should prepare a proposal for EC89. (ALL DONE)

The related topic of IAU of sponsorship of the Minor Planet Center was discussed at length. Despite the recent NASA funding commitment, it was agreed that IAU involvement remained important.

**AI- EC88-7** on IFC: to clarify the position of IAU funding for the MPC, it being recognised that the IAU fully intends to continue to fund and sponsor the MPC. (DONE)

**10. International Year of Astronomy 2009**

## 10.1. Legacy activities.

CJC presented the outline of a proposal for IYA2009 legacy activities.

**AI- EC88-8a** on CJC: to revise the proposal and define a charter for the IYA Legacy Public Outreach Coordinator activity, and to clarify its functions, without duplicating those of the OAD but including the domain of C55.

**AI- EC88-8b** on RW, CJC, NK, IFC: to approach contributing institutions to IYA to explore possibilities for coordinating and financing the Public Outreach Coordinator activities. CJC to send a revised proposal.

## 10.2 IYA Financial statements

Another 77K in donations are anticipated, without counting any contribution from the IAU. These funds could be used to front-load the Legacy activities.

## 10.3 Links with Amateur Astronomers (new WG under C55)

Links with Amateurs would be central to IYA Legacy activities. There having been no reaction from Dennis Crabtree and C55, other possibilities should be explored, also in conjunction with the international Decadal Survey of Amateur Astronomy and Astrophysics. Such activities might be overseen by the IAU Press Officer.

**11. Partnership with the Peter Gruber Foundation and NASL**

## 11.1 PGF Cosmology Prize. IAU Advisory Board members 2011

The term of Professor Andre Linde expires at the end of December 2010. The EC proposes to ask Rashid Sunyaev to take his place. This year's winner has been selected and will be announced in June. The ceremony will take place in Chicago in October 2010.

**AI- EC88-9** on RW: to contact Ron Ekers, PPGF Prize Advisory Board, regarding Andre Linde and Rashid Sunyaev and return to the EC with a recommendation. DONE

## 11.2 PGF Fellowship Program. 2010 Fellow selection

The EC discussed ways of rendering the PGFF Program more attractive and effective. IFC will advertise this summer to raise awareness of the advanced deadline. KAVDH recalled that the original concept offered \$ 150K per triennium, leaving the IAU at liberty to decide upon the distribution.

**AI- EC88-10a** on RW: to discuss informally with Patricia Gruber possible options for changes to the PPGF Fellowship, including the possibility of establishing a fellowship for a graduate student from a developing country.

**AI- EC88-10b** on IFC: to rephrase 2011 PPGFF call for applications to make clear that the fellowship can be accepted in conjunction with other grants and prizes and that the funds need not be spent within one year. (DONE)

- 11.3 2010 Kavli Astronomy Prize Ceremony  
The Prize Ceremony is scheduled for the first week of September. RW and KAVDH will attend.

## 12. IAU General Assemblies

- 12.1. IAU XXVII General Assembly in Rio de Janeiro 2009 - follow-up of Resolutions  
The EC noted the response of Comm. 50 and the lack of response from Comm. 55, for which there is an outstanding action AI-OM01-2.
- 12.2. IAU XXVIII GA in Beijing, 2012 – status report on preparations.  
The LOC has selected MCI as PCO. This experienced, international firm gave a convincing presentation at the meeting with IAU representatives in October 2009.  
The new Beijing conference centre is extremely well equipped and will have hosted several larger conferences before the IAU GA. There would appear to be little risk of an internet overload and breakdown as occurred in Rio.  
The Abstract Book will be distributed on USB sticks (or equivalent) only and will be available for downloading from the GA website. Programme updates will be displayed on electronic notice boards as well as communicated by email. There will be no pigeon holes; rather, each participant will be requested to provide an email address. The OC will work on the implementation of electronic security badges, which would also keep track of the number of persons attending any particular session.
- 12.3. IAU XXIX General Assembly in Hawai'i 2015. Approval of MoA

Kevin Marvel joined the EC Meeting to sign the MoA. He reported that preparations were well on track. The AAS is aiming for an attendance of over 4000. The registration fee can be kept low, since there will be a very large exhibition hall. A special section will be set up on the website for people with visa questions and problems.

**AI- EC88-11** on VR: to provide Kevin with the attendance numbers back to the GA in Baltimore.

- 12.4 Electronic and E-Voting

There was a clear consensus that e-voting is more inclusive, democratic and modern and should be implemented. However, there must be some mechanism in place to ensure that people make informed decisions.

**AI- EC88-12** on RW, IFC, KAVDH: to formulate a specific proposal and draw up a draft procedure for introducing electronic / e-voting and circulate for e-mail discussion prior to EC89.

## 13. IAU Divisions, Commissions, Working Groups

- 13.1 Current situation  
13.2 EC Working Groups

**AI- EC88-13** on VR: investigate those WGs that did not submit to the Reports on Astronomy

- 13.2.1 EC WG on Future Large Scale Facilities  
The perceived role of the IAU is to provide a forum, increase accessibility of information and help to form a science-driven picture of what is required, but it cannot be expected to give priorities or make recommendations on specific projects.

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It should produce a short report and is expected to organise a Special Session at the 2012 General Assembly.

It was agreed that the composition of the WG would be decided in consultation with its Chair.

The EC heard a report on discussions with COSPAR about reciprocal membership and participation in long term 'road map' studies, and decided that the COSPAR timescale was much shorter than the IAU and that the two initiatives should proceed independently. The respective Chairs would be free to decide on any cooperation and exchange of information.

**AI- EC88-14a** on IFC: to write to COSPAR presenting the IAU position on the FLSF-WG (DONE) and

**AI-EC88-14b** on RW: to contact Garth Illingworth re remit and composition of WG and then to suggest names of possible members of WG to EC for selection and approval, as soon as possible.

#### 13.2.1 Operating budget for ECWG FLSF

**DECISION:** The EC authorised IFC to organise meetings at the expense of IAU.

#### 13.2.3 Report from 'Women in Astronomy'

The paper submitted by CC was considered most helpful.

It will appear in the next Information Bulletin. Another version of the paper, authored by CC with Helen Walker, had appeared in the RAS journal "A & G".

#### 13.2 Proposed changes

The changes proposed by Division I require changes to the Statutes and Bye-Laws and so should be prepared for discussion at EC89, where all the Division presidents will be present. Following discussion at EC89, a decision on submitting a Resolution to the GA would have to be taken.

**AI- EC88-15** on IFC: to report back to Div I regarding proposed changes and suggest steps to be taken. (DONE)

#### 13.3 Future Divisional Structure

While opinions varied as to the efficacy of the Division structure, all agreed that a review of the historical structure was timely and specific proposals should be brought to and discussed at EC89.

**AI- EC88-16** on TM: to chair EC Task Group composed of MH, GS, RW to propose revisions to the divisional structure of the IAU for discussion/decision at EC89. Advice and comments should be sought from NK and IFC. The first draft for discussion by Officers to discuss in January 2011.

### 14. Status of IAU Scientific Meetings – items for information

#### 14.1. Meetings in 2009. Post Meeting Reports

#### 14.2. Meetings in 2010

##### 14.2.1. IAU Symposia

##### 14.2.2. Regional IAU Meeting, LARIM 2010, Mexico

#### 14.3. Meetings in 2011

##### 14.3.1. IAU Symposia in 2011

The AGS explained the process adopted to arrive at the list of 9 symposia recommended for IAU support.

**DECISION:** The EC approved the proposed list of Symposia for 2011.

- 14.3.2 Regional IAU Meeting, APRIM 2011, Thailand
- 14.3.3 Regional IAU Meeting, MEARIM 2011, Cape Town

14.4. Co-sponsoring of scientific meetings

**DECISION:** The EC approved sponsorship of the following meetings

- Journées 2010 “Systèmes de référence spatio-temporels”  
20-22 September 2010, Observatoire de Paris, Paris, France  
(no financial support involved)
- Joint GGOS / IAU Workshop: Observing and Understanding Earth Rotation  
25-28 October, 2010, Shanghai, China  
(no financial support involved)
- 38<sup>th</sup> COSPAR Scientific Assembly, 18-25 July, 2010, Bremen, Germany  
(supported with EUR 5000)

**15. Status of IAU Publications - items for information**

15.1. Proceedings of Symposia 2009

Re Symposium 260: If there are no positive developments within the next few weeks, the EC agrees the proposal of the GS to publish a notice in IB106 and on website to the effect that the manuscript has been postponed due to the failure of the Editor to deliver the manuscript to CUP on time.

15.2. IAU Editorial Board 2009 - 2012

15.3. Proceedings of Regional IAU Meetings 2008-09

15.4. Highlights of Astronomy Vol 15            In the final stages of editing.

15.5. Transactions of the IAU XXVIIB            This volume has now appeared.

15.6. IAU Information Bulletin IB106

The issue will highlight the achievements of IYA2009, the IYA Legacy activities and the selection of the OAD

15.7. CUP Financial Statement 2008 and publications costs for 2011

**16. News from international organizations with representation of the IAU**

8.1 ICSU Unions Meeting April 2010

The EC noted the report from the GS, who attended the meeting. Criticism of ICSU was expressed, but at the same time, some improvements in the direction of ICSU and in its interactions with the Unions were noted.

The IAU has a meaningful role to play in the organisation and at the ICSU GA.

18.2 IAU relationship with ICSU

18.3 COPUOS and NEOs

The IAU representative to COPUOS KAVDH presented his paper on NEOs and argued that the IAU should interface more actively with COPUOS and should be more pro-active in studies and risk assessment connected to NEOs.

**AI-EC88-17:** on KAvdH: to contact possible members of a new EC WG on hazards of NEO, draw up draft ToR and membership, discuss with Div III and others as appropriate, and return to the EC with proposal for approval by correspondence as soon as possible. To be presented for decision at EC89.

**17. EC89: 2011, 24-26 May. Prague, Czech Republic**

EC89 will start on Tuesday, 24 May 2011 and run for three days. The meeting will be hosted by IAU Vice-President Jan Palouš at the Czech Academy of Sciences. JP will propose two or three hotels nearby. Two meeting rooms are required: a large room with a capacity of 30 people and a smaller room for the Division presidents (12 people). The hosts will invite all the participants to one dinner. It may be possible to arrange one social event in connection with the "Prague Spring" musical festival.

**18. EC90: 2012, Paris, April/May**

IFC proposed a one-and-a-half to two day meeting in Paris in April for small EC meeting with Gang Zhao attending on behalf of the Chinese LOC.

**19. Any other business**

**20. List of action items**

See Agenda Item 3.2

The meeting ended at 12 noon on Thursday, 13 May.

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