

# Minutes General Assembly FESTMIH

September 9, 2009 - Verona, Italy

## Present

Pierre Ambroise-Thomas (PAT) (France), Zeno Bisoffi (ZB) (Italy, President), Martin Boeree (MB) (Netherlands, Vice-President), Gerd Burchard (GB) (Germany), Bruno Gryseels (BG) (Belgium), Josep Maria Jansa (JMJ) (Spain), Thomas Junghanss (TJ) (Germany, Secretary), Esther Jurgens (EJ) (Netherlands), Gunnar Kvåle (GK) (Norway, Observer), Christian Lengeler (CL) (Switzerland), Pascal Magnussen (PM) (Denmark), Albert Mantingh (AM) (Netherlands), Gerri McHugh (GMH) (UK), Silvana Rigobon (SR) (Italy, minutes), Frantisek Stejskal (FS) (Czech Republic), Erling Svensen (ES) (Norway), Patrick Van Der Stuyft (PvdS) (Belgium, Treasurer), Hans Wendte (HW) (Netherlands), Christopher Whitty (CW) (UK).

## Absent:

representatives from the Austrian, Finnish, Portuguese, Swedish, and Slovak Societies.

## Agenda

1. Summarizing the Verona conference and drawing conclusions for future developments
2. Briefing on Barcelona 2011
3. Setting the agenda for the assembly meeting in Heidelberg in mid-February 2010
4. Report of the Treasurer
5. Any other business

### 1. Summarizing the Verona conference and drawing conclusions for future developments (ZB)

The President welcomes all participants to the meeting.

He offers a rough estimate on the economic balance of the VI ECTMIH: there doesn't seem to be any financial loss, but no profit either. The final balance will be worked out with the PCO.

The speakers did not pay registration fee: this implied lower income, but this policy should be maintained.

On the positive side, the attendance at the congress has been quite good and regular: there was a very big offer of sessions (maybe too many parallel ones). Many national societies and external networks proposed parallel sessions and this created some excess in terms of offer.

The programme of the Congress was well balanced. The collaboration with the EC was strengthened and more can be done in the future, in this direction. It would be important to invite Ana Nieto and other EC representatives to our next meeting in Heidelberg in February 2010. She was very proactive for this Congress.

This congress also aimed at looking at Migration Medicine with a broader view (see Corachan speech, today): we should focus more on Migration Medicine, in the future.

On the negative side, the acoustics in some of the rooms of Gran Guardia Palace were a major problem. MB pointed out that FESTMIH is establishing a tradition, and ECTMIH is becoming an appointment where you meet professionals of Tropical Medicine and you can have important discussions.

PvdS suggests to find a way to make it more attractive to the English public, for the future.

CW underlines the fact that this year the ECTMIH was a bit too close to the American meeting, and many people had to choose whether to present their paper here or in the States: many would eventually still choose the States.

TJ points out that this congress has been a huge step forward, especially in terms of the quality of the sessions. The presence of parallel sessions were much appreciated by the delegates and by the public in general. There was a feeling of a new style of conference. This congress will have a major impact on Tropical Medicine, in Europe: it made a change, it gave room for intellectual debate.

TJ notices that the informal way of communicating of ZB and SR, in organizational terms, was a special feature of this congress.

EJ asks if it is possible to have statistics of participants from underdeveloped countries.

### 2. Briefing on Barcelona 2011 (JMJ)

JMJ announces that there is a slide presentation and a video about the VII ECTMIH hosted in Barcelona, that will be presented to the public of the Verona Congress.

JMJ informs that the Spanish organizers are working on the scientific committee.

JMJ presents the idea to ask the American society to participate organizing a meeting, to build a bridge between FESTMIH and the ASTMH.

JMJ also asks if it is pertinent to maintain the Mediterranean congress within the ECTMIH and adds that it would be important to reinforce the presence of Maghreb at the congress.

JMJ explains that CRESIB will be in charge of the organization of ECTMIH Barcelona and adds that one person from the CRESIB team is already working full time for the congress. Some costs have already been generated and the Spanish organizers are discussing who is covering them (CRESIB or SEMTSI). Maybe in February, in Heidelberg, a preliminary programme for 2011 will be available.

ZB points out that the two public evenings organized in Verona were very successful, and it was particularly appreciated sharing some subjects of more general interest to the city: Barcelona could do something similar.

TJ notices that a regional flavour gives added value to a congress: in the case of Spain, Maghreb would be an important asset.

### **3. Setting the agenda for the assembly meeting in Heidelberg in mid-February 2010**

The President suggests to set a suitable date for the next General Assembly in Heidelberg, where the elective assembly will take place.

MB confirms that formally a General Assembly has to take place every two years, for the election of the Board.

#### **3. Report of the Treasurer (PvdS)**

The Treasurer informs that there is a balance between expenses and income. The secretarial support will have to be deducted from the expenses: in fact there is sufficient money to accommodate this voice for 2008 and 2009, but for the future some action has to be taken in this sense.

ZB hopes the secretarial support will be maintained in the future and suggests to increase the FESTMIH membership fee: he confirms that the Italian Society (SIMET) has accepted to pay €3 per member.

#### **4. Any other business**

GMH will be the official representative of RSTMIH and will meet with CW next month to see who could be the scientific representative for UK.

ZB welcomes the Czech delegate, underlining that it is really nice to have re-established contacts with the Czech Society.

ZB observes that it is not clear if the Swedish society is still active, and apparently there is no Portuguese society of Tropical Medicine any more (i.e. one was especially constituted for the Lisbon Congress).

ZB introduces BG, President of TropMedEurope, who will represent Belgium at the Presidents' dinner.

BG explains that the Belgian society does not exist anymore. Now there is a platform (Be-cause Health), an active, direct counterpart of the Ministry (some legal and financial aspects involved).

Although BG's mandate has long passed, he is formerly still Chair of TropMedEurope: he suggests to find ways of strengthening the collaboration between FESTMIH and TropMedEurope. The budget of TropMedEurope has never been spent. This should be discussed at Heidelberg.