

# Minutes Meeting of the General Assembly FESTMIH September 14<sup>th</sup> 2005

Marseille, Salle de Reunion

## *Present*

Zeno Bisoffi (Italy), Martin Boeree (The Netherlands, President), Marcel Hommel (United Kingdom), Esther Jurgens (The Netherlands, *policy advisor FESTMIH*), Thomas Junghans (Germany), Gunnar Kvale (Norway), Louis Loutan (Switzerland), Pascal Magnussen (Denmark, Secretary), Erich Schmutzhard (Austria), Heli Siikamäki (Finland), Frantisek Stejskal (Czech Republic), Patrick Van der Stuyft (Belgium), Lasse Vestergaard (Denmark)  
*Editors TM&IH*: Henri van Asten (The Netherlands), Sandy Cairncross (United Kingdom), Susanne Groener (United Kingdom)

*Apologies* for absence received from Pierre Ambroise-Thomas (France), Dominique LeRay (Belgium, Treasurer), Michel Pletschette (United Kingdom), Jorge Torgal (Portugal)

## *Agenda*

1. Approval of minutes from GM in Lisbon 2002
2. Report of the President
3. Report of the Secretary
4. Final report by the Treasurer
5. Update on 4<sup>th</sup> Congress Marseille
6. The role of TM/IH in relation to FESTMIH
7. The future of FESTMIH, plans and realities
8. Update from TropMedEurope
9. Update on the Congress 2007 and beyond
10. New Members
11. Election of new Board members
12. Any other business

## *1. Minutes*

The Minutes of Council Meeting in Lisbon (September 2002) approved without comments.

## *2. Report of the President*

Proposed changes to the Board were approved during the Board Meeting in Nijmegen, in June 2004. Martin Boeree became the new President, successor of Marcel Hommel, Pascal Magnussen took over the Secretary position from Pierre Ambroise-Thomas. Other changes to the Board were approved during the GA meeting.

- Patrick van der Stuyft was appointed as Treasurer, successor of Dominique LeRay
- Louis Loutan, steps back as a member but will be delegate to the GA, and continues to be involved in the organisation of the upcoming Congress in Amsterdam in 2007;
- Rudolf Korte also steps back. Thomass Junghans will take his position as a Board member;
- Zeno Bisoffi was asked to consider the position as vice-president. In the weeks after the GA meeting he agreed to accept this position.

The president thanked all leaving members for their time and dedication to the Board and warmly welcomes the new members. He stresses the importance of active involvement of Board members. Special words of gratitude were addressed to Marcel Hommel for his presidency, as well as to all his work with regards to the website and as a driving force behind the organisation of FESTMIH's congresses. Also special thanks was directed to Dominique Le Ray who has proven to be a dedicated former President and Treasurer and devoted Board member for many years.

## *Other issues*

- At the meeting in Nijmegen the Board discussed the preparations for the Marseille Congress; the website as a networking tool ([www.festmih.net](http://www.festmih.net)); future activities of FESTMIH; as well as the relations between FESTMIH and the International Federation and TM/IH.

- The Board meeting in Vienna, earlier in 2005 hosted by the Austrian Society was fruitful in terms of fine-tuning issues such as expanding activities of the Federation. The Board approved the idea to organise Board meetings in close collaboration with National Societies, e.g. during annual meetings of national societies.
- Martin Boeree and Pascal Magnussen put a lot of effort in updating the list of addresses of member societies and contact persons. Please find the updated list attached.
- Evaluation of the Marseille Congress: with more than 1500 participants, a good programme and well organised FESTMIH concludes that it has established its role as co-organiser of European Congresses. Besides the main programme the Congress offers room for networking and platform activities. This aspect will certainly be vital in the Amsterdam Congress. The organising committee stresses the possibility for national societies to use these networking opportunities and platforms to profile themselves.
- Marcel Hommel elaborated on this aspect and underlines that with the congresses being one of the main goals of the Federation, the active involvement of member societies must be promoted. At the Marseille Congress the Dutch Society and the Austrian Society organised a session on the Millennium Development Goals.
- Zeno Bisoffi from the Italian Society mentioned the current discussion within their society on the dilemma of merging with other societies such as the Italian Society of Travel Medicine. This matter was briefly discussed as well as the possibility to join FESTMIH as an individual, instead of through the membership of a national society. The Meeting concluded that FESTMIH is, and will remain, an umbrella organisation for national societies and does not want to compete with them. FESTMIH is an inclusive organisation offering a platform for all a wide variety of organisations in the area of international health (tropical medicine, parasitology, public health, travel medicine etc).
- On the issue of travel medicine versus Tropical Medicine, Louis Loutan mentioned the increasing importance of both because of migration patterns and the spread of infectious diseases throughout the world (Sars, the Asian flu etc). In Switzerland the people involved in more 'classical' tropical medicine are becoming more involved in travel medicine. The link most certainly is there, travel medicine was always set aside, but there is an interest on which we could build and seize the opportunity to link the two. However despite the linkages it is important to focus on the issues of clinical (tropical) medicine in the north and the south.
- The idea was mentioned that FESTMIH could become more active in assisting smaller societies, especially in their starting phase. Also FESTMIH's website could be used more in terms of information sharing and TMIH as a platform for publications. Since the onset of the Federation there have been discussions on activities of the Federation and its role with regard to its members. It is important not to lose momentum between the European Congresses. It was mentioned that there is a need for a stronger secretariat and more participation and active communication between the Board and the member societies. In that sense it is crucial to look at how the national societies are composed and how they can fit in the European federation (role and expectations). National societies will have to feel part of FESTMIH; for this the development of a corporate identity is needed.

### *3. Report of the Secretary*

Pascal Magnussen succeeded Pierre Ambrose-Thomas as the Secretary. His main activity has been to organise the administration: to arrange (electronic) files of all documents and the database of member societies.

### *4. Financial Report*

The Treasurers report 2002 - 2005 (September 2005) was handed out. In the upcoming months an audit will take place. The report was accepted without comments.

### *5. Update on Marseille Congress*

Marcel Hommel commented on the financial aspects. It is unlikely that the Marseille Congress will be as profitable as the previous congresses. Despite the fact that the Conference exceeds the others in terms of participants, the costs are also high (venue and conference organisers). In terms of scientific contents the Marseille Congress is delivering as was expected. The organisers received positive feedback on the contents of the programme and the speakers. The suggestion was made to make use of evaluation forms. Some minor criticism was made on the many mistakes in the Abstract Book (spellings and place of names etc). This will be corrected in the proceedings.

#### 6. *The role of TM&IH in relation to FESTMIH*

This topic will be discussed in a separate meeting between the Board and editors of TM/IH on the 15<sup>th</sup> of September. At the Board meeting in Nijmegen the Board was offered to prepare editorials on a regular basis. Contributions by national societies and abstracts are welcomed. A number of keynotes and the highlights of the Marseille Congress will be published in TM/IH.

#### 7. *The future of the FESTMIH, plans and realities*

At the meeting a position paper (Future Activities of FESTMIH, September 2005) was handed out. The Meeting agreed on the need to expand future activities. The organisation of European Congresses is key activity that remains *core business*, but other ambitions of the Federation will be enhanced. Among others: networking and exchange of information; bridging the gap between national societies (and assistance to new members); increase FESTMIH's role as an advocate for International Health; and it's role as European Platform.

#### 8. *Update from TropMedEurope*

Some informal meetings with TropEd Europe have taken place, a formal meeting is scheduled. With regards to TropMed Europe it was mentioned that they are in the process of formalising the network.

#### 9. *Update on the Congress 2007 and beyond*

- For the Congress in 2011 there are two possible candidates: the Czech Republic and Austria. A decision on the location will be taken within the next year. It was noted that this date coincides with the International Conference on TM in Brasil. The Meeting stressed the importance to be alert not to get into competition with other European or international events in this area.
- Martin Boeree presented a powerpoint presentation on the 5<sup>th</sup> European Congress on Tropical Medicine and International health in Amsterdam: Partnership and Innovation in Global He@lth. A conference organisation has been contracted (KIT): the same organisation that co-organized the Lisbon Congress. There is a possibility to effect an insurance that will cover losses up to 90.000 Euro. In case of profit the split up between FESTMIH and KIT is 50%-50%.

#### 10. *New Members*

Marcel Hommel has been active to try to attract new members, especially in Eastern Europe. Present at the meeting were representatives from the Czech Republic and Finland.

#### 11. *Election of new Board members*

The Board consists of 7 members. GA elects members to the Board and Board divides the roles between the members. New constitution of the Board:

- Martin Boeree, the Netherlands (President)
- Zeno Bisoffi, Italy (Vice-President)
- Pascall Magnussen, Denmark (Secretary)
- Patrick Van der Stuyft, Belgium (Treasurer)
- Pierre Ambroise-Thomas, France (Member)
- Thomas Junghanss, Germany (Member)
- Michel Pletschette, United Kingdom (Member)

All voting members voted in favour of this constitution.

#### 12. *Any other business*

- Heli Siikamäki mentioned that Finland would like to be present at the next GA meeting.
- Louis Loutan mentioned that despite time constraints he enjoyed his membership to the Board. He also handed out the pre-announcement of the Geneva Forum: Towards Global Access to Health, to be held 30 August-1 September 2006.
- Frantisek Stejskal from the Czech Republic mentioned that they are happy to join FESTMIH and wish to be kept informed.