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NEWS ITEMS - FEBRUARY 1989 *****

APOLOGY

Sincere apologies to all members for not having written earlier. It had been hoped to provide a comprehensive package before the end of 1988, but this proved impossible. The rewriting and translation of the Statutes took more time than had been anticipated, as did several other administrative tasks which came in the wake of decisions taken at Barcelona. This brought us to Christmas, and as the Programme Committee for the 1990 Conference in Yugoslavia was due to meet in January it was decided to delay writing until preliminary information about the 1990 Conference could be provided. Some information is still missing, but we can't wait for ever.

THE PACKAGE

To provide a fairly substantial package of material such as this is an economy as far as postal costs are concerned, although it can be overdone. It is to be hoped that there is not too much information to be read and digested.

At the end of the updated membership booklet there is a list of all officers, members of the Executive Board and International Council. Reports on the Barcelona proceedings from both Sections and Working Groups are included, as also is a list of all those papers presented at Barcelona which are held at headquarters and which are available, as indicated, at the cost of reproduction and postage.

A copy of the amended Statutes is enclosed, and Peggy Gray provides as much information as is currently available about the next Conference and General Assembly, which will be held in Bled, Yugoslavia, in August 1990.

Last, but by no means least, a letter from Olof Hulten, the treasurer of the Association, and an accompanying invoice should serve to remind members of their obligations. Olof would welcome an immediate and comprehensive response.

THE BARCELONA CONFERENCE AND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

This was generally regarded as an outstanding success at every level, from the quality of the meetings to the high standard of the accommodation. Manuel Pares i Maicas, his colleagues and all those others who provided support in various ways are to be warmly congratulated. The Association is indeed indebted to them.

There were 609 participants from 46 different countries. All eight Sections met, as did 32 Working Groups. There were 71 meetings in all, 40 Working Group sessions and 31 Section sessions. More than 250 papers were presented, and these were published in 22 books containing more than 4,000 pages. Conference papers are available from Leicester.

From the Office of the President:
Professor James D. Halloran

It is no criticism of our hosts on earlier occasions when we say, as we seem to do every two years, that "it is the best so far". We also tend to say "it will be a hard act to follow". But follow it, and follow it successfully, our hosts invariably do, and initial indications are that Bled in 1990 will be no exception.

THE 1990 CONFERENCE AND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

This will be held in Bled, Yugoslavia, from 26th to 31st August 1990 with the theme DEVELOPMENTS IN COMMUNICATIONS AND DEMOCRACY.

The Programme Committee (Halloran, Hamelink, Szecska, Mowlana, Hutin, Splichal, Martelanc, Vreg and Gray) met in Bled and Ljubljana in January and the outcome of their deliberations is summarized by Peggy Gray in other papers in this package. Only one point needs to be emphasized here, and that has to do with the proposed departure from the longstanding practice of charging all conference participants just one single, all-inclusive fee. In response to suggestions from members, and reacting to the accommodation situation in Bled, it was decided to have three different inclusive fees based on type of accommodation, namely: **Category A Hotel, Category B Hotel and Private House/Pension**. All three types of accommodation are extremely good.

A call for papers for a book dedicated to the conference provided by Slavko Splichal is enclosed.

CHANGES IN STATUTES

A copy of the Statutes, as amended at the Barcelona Conference, is enclosed. Amongst other things, the changes have resulted in the reduction of the number of Vice-Presidents (currently two) and the creation of the new post of President Elect. In future, the President will be elected for a four year period, and his mandate will not be immediately renewable. This qualification applies only to the President. Other members of the Executive Board and all members of the International Council may be immediately re-elected on the expiry of the four year period.

The Executive Board, the International Council and, to a somewhat lesser degree, the General Assembly, spent a great deal of time in Barcelona (and earlier) discussing Statute changes and related matters. It is to be hoped that the outcome will be fruitful and to the lasting benefit of the Association.

The President is indebted to his fellow officers and to Francois-Xavier Hutin and David Goldberg for their invaluable assistance in this work.

BARCELONA ELECTIONS

Congratulations to Cees Hamelink on his election to the new post of President Elect. Cees will take over the Presidency in August 1990 at the Bled Assembly and, in all probability, headquarters will be transferred to The Hague around that time. His election address is enclosed.

Congratulations also to all of those who, at Barcelona, were elected to the Executive Board and to the International Council (full list included in the membership booklet), particularly to those who have joined us for the first time.

Democratic participation was the hallmark of the voting procedures at the Barcelona Assembly but, as with most aspects of democracy, there was a price to pay. The voting lasted so long that there was not the time to deal with several other important items on the agenda.

Robin Cheesman and his colleagues on the Nomination Committee are to be thanked for all the work and time they gave to preparing for these elections. If, at the end of the protracted voting procedures, the geo-political representativeness and balance recommended in the Statutes with regard to the composition of the International Council was not immediately obvious, this certainly cannot be attributed to the Nomination Committee - perhaps an additional price to pay for democracy.

SOME OTHER DECISIONS TAKEN AT BARCELONA

It was decided that:

- (a) Spanish should be regarded as an official language of the Association.
- (b) Subject to the necessary assurances being given, the 1992 Conference would be held in Brazil.
- (c) The possibility of holding future conferences in Canada, Japan and Turkey would be explored. Representatives from those countries would provide relevant information in due course.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH UNESCO

As so often in the past, financial support from UNESCO made it possible for some of our members from the Third World to be with us in Barcelona who otherwise would not have been able to make it. UNESCO continued to support selected Section activities, and the President thanked Alan Hancock for his help and cooperation. The President also "welcomed back to the fold" Breda Pavlic in her new capacity as UNESCO observer. Breda informed the Assembly that UNESCO was keen to promote pluralism in language, and that the Organisation might be able to assist in meeting translation and interpretation costs at the Bled conference.

SECTIONS

Some weeks ago the President wrote to all Heads of Sections to remind them that in the course of the deliberations about changes in the Association's Statutes and related procedural matters it was decided that all Sections in the Association should be subject to periodic review so that it could be ascertained if the statutory clauses governing the establishment and operation of Sections were being met.

On the recommendation of the International Council, the General Assembly at its New Delhi meeting agreed that the establishment, operation and dissolution of Sections should be governed as follows.

All Sections should:

- (a) have policies, programmes and activities relating to an identifiable field of study;

- (b) have global perspectives in terms of membership/ attendance and field of study;
- (c) have regular meetings on at least a biennial basis;
- (d) have a minimum number (20) of IAMCR members actively involved in the Section's activities;
- (e) ensure effective communication between members;
- (f) report to the General Assembly at each meeting of the Assembly;
- (g) have a Head who would be responsible for overall direction, coordination and liaison with the Council.

Although it was not the intention of the Council or Assembly to impose a straitjacket of rules and regulations, the President suggested that it would be most helpful if Heads of Sections could address the abovementioned points when preparing the report which he requested.

It was further suggested that the report might cover the past four years - longer if so wished - as well as indicating plans for the future. Obviously it would be more comprehensive than the reports which are normally presented to the General Assembly, and special attention should be given to "activities" between General Assemblies. This was a formal request to Heads of Sections, but there is no reason why the dialogue should be confined to exchanges between Headquarters and Section Heads.

ALL MEMBERS, FROM ANY SECTION OR NONE, SHOULD FEEL FREE TO COMMENT ON THIS MATTER TO THE PRESIDENT. THE PRESIDENT WOULD VERY MUCH LIKE TO HEAR FROM ANYONE WITH SECTION EXPERIENCE.

All reports and comments will be discussed at the next meeting of the International Council in August 1989. The Council would also like to use the same opportunity to discuss the possibility of the formation of new Sections. So, would any member who wishes to propose the formation of a new Section write to the President as soon as possible.

The criteria listed above re. current Sections would apply, so it is anticipated that most proposals would come from well-established working groups. But this is not a binding condition.

Hamid Mowlana has recommended that Colleen Roach and Eileen Mahoney should act as joint heads of the International Communication Section in a temporary capacity until the Bled meeting in 1990.

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL

Thanks to the hospitality of Tamas Szecsko, the next meeting of the International Council will be held in Budapest on 14-16 August 1989. Please let the President know of any business you would like to be on the agenda.

PUBLICATIONS

The "occasional papers" had been well received but, as things stood, it was clear that regular production over a period would not be economically viable, although a truly "occasional paper" might still be produced in the future. Up to this point the venture had been subsidized by Tamas Szecsco and his institute. The President thanked Tamas and Cees Hamelink for their work on this project.

A sub-committee had been working on the possibility of producing a regular news letter for the Association. This matter was still under consideration, particularly with regard to finance and the editorial function. Cees Hamelink agreed to explore the possibilities of cooperating with Gazette, which had been closely associated with the Association some years ago.

LINKS WITH OTHER ASSOCIATIONS

Congratulations to Wolfgang Donsbach on organizing a successful WAPOR/IAMCR session in Barcelona. We are pleased to hear of the new plans for development of the Asociacion Latinoamericana de Investigadores de la Comunicacion, and look forward to fruitful cooperation with the Association, as we also do with the Catholic Media Council, the African Council on Communication Education, and the Union for Democratic Communication in the USA, whose members were very active at the Barcelona Conference. We are grateful to all these bodies for keeping us in touch with their work.

There will be a joint ICA/IAMCR session at the ICA meeting in San Francisco from 25-29 May. Hamid Mowlana is organizing this session, and we look forward to it being the success that the last one was in Montreal a couple of years ago. The 1990 ICA Conference will be held in Dublin from 24-29 June, when further cooperation is contemplated.

AEJMC and IOJ continue to work closely with our Professional Education Section. The former holds its convention in Washington DC from 10-13 August.

Ramona Rush, Professor of Communications at the University of Kentucky, USA, wishes to explore the possibility of a three-cornered venture - ICA/AEJMC/IAMCR - which would focus on a Study of the History, Development and Future of International Communication, and lead to a publication. The International Council will discuss this at its next meeting, but those members requiring further information should write direct to Ramona at the above address.

It is with deep regret that we have to report the deaths of ANNETTE SUFFERT, who was a member of the International Council for several years, and one of our younger active members, TARUNA TANWAR, who contributed to the success of the Conference in India.

POSTSCRIPT

At the Barcelona Assembly the President, in reviewing the affairs of the Association since he took office in 1972, felt confident in reporting tremendous progress over the years. In 1972 the Association had consisted of a handful of people, and there was a balance of S.Fr. 4,000 in hand, whereas in July 1988 there were 1850 members from 60 different countries, and a balance in hand of S.Fr. 81,000. Moreover, the Barcelona Conference

was bigger and better attended than any previous conference. IAMCR was clearly the only genuine international association in the communication field. In these terms the condition of the Association was very healthy indeed.

The President, however, warned against complacency (there were other ways of evaluating progress), as he also warned against those who appeared to seek change for the sake of change without giving due thought to the implications of what they proposed, or without even being consistent from meeting to meeting in what they proposed. Most of us would accept that we need not expect consistency between attitudes and declared intentions on the one hand, and behaviour or concrete manifestations of intentions on the other. Over the years this has been demonstrated quite clearly in research, as it also has in the deliberations of the International Council - high on proposals and promises - low on delivery.

The Association was entering on a period of change which would soon see a new President, new headquarters, and possibly new officers. As one speaker remarked, "IAMCR is a dynamic, coherent and growing organization which requires new ways of governing".

This is a good point to make, providing that the Association is willing and able to see it through to a logical conclusion. The system that has served us well in the past need not be appropriate for the future, and we must recognize this and be prepared to face-up to its implications. But at Barcelona, in changing the Statutes in the way we did, it is by no means clear that the implications of the changes have been fully appreciated.

What stems from the Barcelona decisions does not really represent "a new way of governing" - what it does represent is a perpetuation of the old ways in restricted and limited circumstances. This may give us not the best, but the worst of both worlds. When Cees Hamelink takes over from Jim Halloran in August 1990, he will have no choice (at least not in the immediate future) but to support the Association from his Institute in The Hague, as Halloran has done at Leicester for the past 16 years. Hamelink is fully aware of this, and what it entails, as he made clear in his election address at Barcelona. He also made clear that he was willing to take it on, and we must be grateful for this. Hamid Mowlana, the other candidate for the President Elect post, expressed a similar willingness and ability. But how many other members have institutional backing that would facilitate such a situation - the support required is quite substantial - for now it looks as though we may have to change the administrative headquarters as well as the Presidency every four years. Is this really an acceptable new way of governing?

That the President should be changed every four years need be no bad thing itself, but when this was proposed in the past it was understood that this would only be a possibility if the Association had permanent administrative headquarters separate from the Presidency. This is by no means an unusual situation in related associations, but it requires adequate funding and, as yet, no one who has canvassed this and other similar ideas has been able to tell us where the money will come from. There is no simple answer, but members should give careful thought to these considerations before the Bled meeting. After that it might be too late.