

Draft minutes of IAMCR International Council meeting American University in Cairo, 23 July, 2006. 9:30 am – 2:30 pm.

Present: Gita Bamezai, Marjan de Bruin, Andrew Calabrese, Tania Cantrell, Dipak De, Wolfgang Donsbach (ICA – invited), Hopeton Dunn, Divina Frau-Meigs, Cees Hamelink, Beate Josephi, Ullamaija Kivikuru, Friedrich Krotz, Keval Kumar, Rico Lie, Manuel Perés i Maicas, Robin Mansell, Virginia Nightingale, Kaarle Nordenstreng, Claudia Padovani, Chris Paterson, Ole Prehn, Peter Putnis, Marc Raboy, John Sinclair, Sujatha Sosale, Helena Sousa, Annabelle Sreberny, Elena Vartanova, Jürgen Wilke.

1. Welcome

The president welcomed all present and conveyed apologies for those who had not been able to take part. She especially welcomed Wolfgang Donsbach, who had been invited as representative for the International Communication Association.

2. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was approved.

3. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising

The minutes were approved, and matters arising were covered by the items in the agenda.

4. President's report and update

In her report, the president stressed the many initiatives taken during the year 2005-06. One was the scholarly review and the new categorisation of sections and working groups, another the removal and re-design of the web site and the membership database. This can be considered the first of several developmental stages, the next being the full implementation of the membership database and the accounting system. We have also changed the fee structure more realistically capturing the low-income segment of countries. Various institutions and organisations had been contacted in order to intensify collaboration and improve relations. Finally she mentioned that on-line negotiations in the International Council now had found a form where the council can work between the annual meetings.

The report was accepted.

5. Publications Committee report

The report was presented by vice-president Annabelle Sreberny on behalf of herself and Thomas Tuft. Regarding the Newsletter it was stated that revenue and costs are not equal, and that IAMCR will have to cover some of the costs that are at the moment absorbed by SOAS. The Newsletter, now published twice a year, has a good quality, and the editor (Annabelle Sreberny) is willing to hand over this responsibility to somebody else or to recruit guest editors.

Until now 107 issues of the three Sage journals offered have been distributed. As the numbers are expected to grow, we will have to discuss how to handle the managerial and financial challenges before they become problems.

The status of the book series with Hampton Press was included, and it showed a substantial number of unresolved or pending manuscripts. Plans were revealed to negotiate with Blackwells on a series of handbooks, and with CLASCO on a possible book series in Spanish and Portuguese. Also the possibility of establishing an online-journal was discussed, but it was decided to await experiences from ongoing projects.

The report was accepted.

6. Report from vice-president Divina Frau-Meigs

Divina Frau-Meigs reported on her numerous liaison activities with international organisations of various kinds – especially those relating to UNESCO, human rights, and other activities. She suggested that IAMCR needs to target key organisations more effectively in the future in order to get formal observer status, and that we need to solicit and enrol committed volunteers who are well placed in terms of interests and geographical location to do this work. She also said that she would continue to support the new IAMCR Task Force on Media and Communication Policy Issues.

7. Treasurer's report and budget committee issues

The report was presented by the president in the absence of César Bolano by the President. She mentioned the approval a new fee structure and a new categorisation of rich and less well-off countries and approval of a one year discount for new members attending the conferences.

On the financial side she mentioned that during 2005 revenues had been far less than expected. This was due to various problems with changing the treasurer's office from Canada to Brazil and the fact that there was no functional database. These problems have now been solved and financially, IAMCR is now back on track with estimated revenues of \$ 46,000 for 2006, and an accumulated surplus of \$ 57,000.

One major expense has been auditing, but after some investigations the status is that neither in the United Kingdom nor in France is there a demand for professional auditing of non-profit organisations with annual revenues below US\$500,000 such as IAMCR. She had therefore asked Dipak Di to go through the accounts. He had found no real anomalies, but he suggested the accounting should be improved.

The following discussion focused on long term financial planning and a new package of tasks for the treasurer after the recent changes. It was proposed to set up a budget committee of three members to work out an investment plan. Finally it was accepted to establish an auditing committee of two members from outside the International Council.

8. Scholarly Review Committee

The report was presented by Kaarle Nordenstreng. The new classification scheme for grouping sections and working groups was approved. The president continued by presenting the suggestion that all sections and working groups be invited to submit a report to the International Council (The Scholarly Review Committee). This generated a general discussion on various aspects of the work in sections and working groups. The president concluded by suggesting to ask the Publications Committee to consider the question of the status of conference papers; to ask the Scholarly Review

Committee to consider possible criteria for establishing and dismantling sections; asked all to take part in renewing the field of media education. This conclusion was accepted.

9. Committees of the IC and Taskforce

The proposal on replacing the WSIS taskforce with a new and more generic task force was discussed and it was approved to submit the following to the General Assembly:

In view of the active involvement of the IAMCR in the ongoing media and communication policy issues – at international and national levels, the General Assembly resolves to establish a Standing Task Force on Media and Communication Policy, with the membership decided by the International Council. In the spirit of critical independent scholarship the Task Force will:

- *contribute to the sharing of relevant information and documentation about media and communication policy issues, as they arise, with the broader academic community and civil society;*
- *facilitate the synthesizing of existing research on information society issues and feed this into relevant international forums;*
- *assist in the clarification of crucial policy-relevant concepts for the IAMCR membership;*
- *assist in the development of effective and relevant alliances with other individuals and organisations concerned with key media and communication policy issues; and*
- *ensure effective representation of IAMCR in selected forums (formal and informal) in line with IAMCR members' expressed interests.*

10. Legal Committee and Election Committee

At the International Council meeting in Taipei (2005) it was agreed to change the existing voting procedure, and the following amendment to the statutes was passed on to the General Assembly:

Existing Statute:

“S5.5 It shall elect the President, the Executive Board, the International Council, the Section Heads and all such committees as I may establish, using a system of optional preferential voting;”

Proposed statute

“...using a first past the post electoral system;”

11. Conference Committee

Vice-president Divina Frau-Meigs presented the plans for holding the 2007 conference in Paris in order to celebrate the 50th anniversary. The conference will take place at the UNESCO headquarters, but several financial and logistic problems are not yet solved. There was a general agreement to go on with the planning in spite of the difficulties, and to try to work out a plan for future conferences well ahead.

The 2008 conference was still to be decided, as negotiations between three proposals had not yet been concluded.

12. Membership and Participation Committee issues

Ullamaija Kivikuru presented the report and stressed that the recommendations were extensions of the previous report. Apart from the recommendations, the report contained an exercise on trying to identify the membership potential by collecting baseline data compared with IAMCR membership figures. The exercise was done with Nordic countries as an example, and it was suggested to contact various regional or national associations in order to compile such baseline data as a vehicle for recruitment.

13. Other business arising

None.

Ole Prehn

**(Draft) Minutes of the IAMCR General Assembly
Cairo, 26 July 2006, 16:30-18:45**

Past president Cees Hamelink asked the General Assembly to stand in silence in memory of George Gerbner, Jim Carey, Michael Traber, and Roger Silverstone, who had died since the last assembly.

1. Approval of the agenda

The agenda was approved, and due to the statutes Thomas Jacobson was elected as vice-chair to take over as chair of the assembly during the presentation of reports from the Executive Board.

2. Minutes from the General Assembly (Porto Alegre, 30 July 2004) and matters arising

The minutes were approved, and no matters arising were identified.

3. Report from the local organizing committee of the Cairo conference

On behalf of the committee professor, Hussein Amin gave a brief report. He noted that there were at least 900 people registered making the Cairo conference the biggest event in the history of the IAMCR. He also stressed the importance for the Middle East and Egypt in particular to hosting the conference in this region. The conference had attracted a huge interest in the media, and he thanked the many sponsors for their donations that had made the conference possible.

4. Presentation of the Schiller and Smythe Awards

Stijn Joye (Ghent University, Belgium) was awarded the IAMCR prize in memory of Herbert I. Schiller for his paper "Raising Awareness in a Digital Society: The case of IPS Flanders".

Felicity Brown (Auckland University, New Zealand) was awarded the IAMCR prize in memory of Dallas W. Smythe for her paper "Rethinking the Role of Surveillance Studies and the Critical Political Economy of Communication".

Both award winners thanked for the honour and both stressed that this was their first IAMCR conference.

5. Reports from the president, the treasurer and the vice-presidents

a) The president's report

The president used the opportunity to thank the Cairo local organising committee for having done a tremendous work to make the Cairo conference happen. She especially thanked Hussein Amin, Ibrahim Saleh, Ralph Berenger and all the students. She also thanked everybody having been involved in the preparation of the conference, not least Beate Jospehi for her work in the new position as programme coordinator.

The president referred to her two published reports and only highlighted a few issues.

First of all an agreement has been reached on how to present the IAMCR in a wider context. The five themes will be used to organise the new IAMCR web site.

Due to a decision in the International Council, IAMCR has commissioned a company in Uruguay called *Communica.org* (Bruce Girard) to establish a new flexible web site. Amongst others, the web site offers new opportunities to communicate through lists, to publish etc. Thus the web site will be much more content rich. Added to that there will be built up a new membership database later this year that will enable us to reach all members or part of them. She also mentioned the new

membership fee structure and the journal offer attached to being a member. She also underlined the fact that on-line discussions in the board and council had been disciplined and made it possible to make a lot of decisions.

In the coming years, emphasis will be given to national and regional membership recruitment and external relationships. We have many opportunities, especially after WSIS and the follow-up activities including the Internet Governance Forum, and she thanked all who had been and still are actively involved in the WSIS and its aftermath.

She concluded by stressing that IAMCR is back on track and in a robust shape to fulfil the mission of the IAMCR.

b) Report from vice-president Annabelle Sreberny

Annabelle Sreberny reported on the IAMCR Newsletter which is issued twice a year and is expanding its content from various members. In 2005 revenues from advertising totalled \$ 1,200 which is far less than it costs to run the newsletter.

From this year IAMCR offers members a choice from three discounted Sage journals: New Media and Society, International Communication Gazette, and Global Media. As of June 2006 107 members joined the journal system, but as it is expected to grow, further subvention from the IAMCR will be necessary. She thanked Sage for the agreement, but underlined that other journals and publishers are open for consideration. She also mentioned a possible collaboration between Blackwell and IAMCR to publish a series of handbooks.

Finally she announced that in future conferences abstracts will be published in advance on the web site, but she also proposed that full papers will not be published. She told the assembly that the new web site could be an effective tool for publishing individually from conferences and other events. This was a true added value for the membership.

c) Report from vice-president Divina Frau-Meigs

Divina Frau-Meigs reported on her numerous liaison activities with international organisations of various kinds – especially those relating to UNESCO, human rights, and other activities. She suggested that IAMCR needs to target key organisations more effectively in the future in order to get formal observer status, and that we need to designate individuals who are well placed in terms of interests and geographical location to do this work. She also said that she would continue to support the new IAMCR Task Force on Media and Communication Policy Issues.

d) Report from the treasurer

The report was presented by the president in the absence of César Bolano. She mentioned that the International Council had approved a new fee structure and a new categorisation of rich and less well-off countries. It had also approved to offer a one discount for new members attending the conferences.

On the financial side she mentioned that during 2005 revenues has been far less than expected. This was due to various problems with changing the treasurer's office from Canada to Brazil and the fact that there was no functional database. These problems have now been solved and financially, IAMCR is now back on track with estimated revenues of \$ 46,000 for 2006, and an accumulated surplus of \$ 57,000.

One major expense has been auditing, but after some investigations the status is that neither in the United Kingdom or in France there is now demand for a professional auditing in non-profit organisations with revenues below £ 225,000 such as IAMCR. She had therefore asked Dipak Di to go through the accounts, and he had found no real anomalies. She further proposed that two members from the General Assembly volunteered to function as internal auditors. She also

suggested that the existing budget committee was re-named “budget and finance committee”. The committee will have to work out an investment plan for association.

From the floor it was warned that eliminating real auditing could potentially be a risky affair, and the president promised to look for cheaper possibilities although she was not optimistic.

6. Approval of election of section heads and any changes in sections and working groups

As not all sections have not held business meeting during the Cairo conference, all changes were approved ex ante.

From the floor it was asked why sections and working groups sometimes overlapped, and why working groups were only active during conferences with the General Assembly meeting. The secretary general promised that the Executive Board will be looking into this during the coming year.

7. Proposed amendments to the statutes

At the International Council meeting in Taipei 2005, it was unanimously agreed to propose to the General Assembly to change the statutory election modality from the optional preferential voting system to a first past the post electoral system.

It was therefore proposed to make the following change:

Existing Statute:

“S5.5 It shall elect the President, the Executive Board, the International Council, the Section Heads and all such committees as I may establish, using a system of optional preferential voting;”

Proposed statute

“...using a first past the post electoral system;”

The proposal was unanimously approved..

8. Proposal for establishing a task force on Media and Communication Policy

In 2004 a task force to represent IAMCR during the WSIS process was formed in Porto Alegre. Especially the task force document “The International Researchers’ Charter for Knowledge Societies” has been of great value to present IAMCR and to enhance the development of policy perspectives on behalf of media and communication researchers.

The continued focussing in these aspects in the future is of paramount importance, and the president and Andrew Calabrese (with input from the International Council and the WSIS Task Force) therefore proposed the following to the General Assembly:

In view of the active involvement of the IAMCR in the ongoing media and communication policy issues – at international and national levels, the General Assembly resolves to establish a Standing Task Force on Media and Communication Policy, with the membership decided by the International Council. In the spirit of critical independent scholarship the Task Force will:

- *contribute to the sharing of relevant information and documentation about media and communication policy issues, as they arise, with the broader academic community and civil society;*
- *facilitate the synthesizing of existing research on information society issues and feed this into relevant international forums;*
- *assist in the clarification of crucial policy-relevant concepts for the IAMCR membership;*

- *assist in the development of effective and relevant alliances with other individuals and organisations concerned with key media and communication policy issues; and*
- *ensure effective representation of IAMCR in selected forums (formal and informal) in line with IAMCR members' expressed interests.*

The assembly approved establishing the new task force, and it also approved that Andrew Calabrese will chair the force.

9. Approval of new members

The (preliminary) list of new members was approved.

10. Forthcoming conferences

Divina Frau-Meigs presented UNESCO/Paris as the venue for the 2007 conference and pointed to the fact that this conference will mark IAMCR's 50th anniversary, hence Paris would be the natural place since IAMCR was formed here. This was approved.

The Secretary General told that two bids for the 2008 conference and General Assembly had been submitted to the Executive Board. Both bids – from Sweden and South Korea – needed some details to be worked out before a final decision could be made, and he therefore suggested that the assembly hand over the decision to the International Council during October/November. This was approved.

11. Motions from the floor

M. Siddiqi proposed a motion condemning the Egyptian Government for not issuing visas to Iranian participants. After some discussion on the wording and the widening of members hit by such actions, the assembly approved the following:

The General Assembly of the International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR) denounces the Egyptian government for not issuing visas to the participants from several countries including Iran and Nigeria. The General Assembly asks IAMCR Executive Board to convey our denunciation to the Egyptian ministry of foreign affairs and the Egyptian Embassy in Tehran.

12. Any other business

It was suggested and approved that the General Assembly will send its best greetings and hope for a smooth recovery to past president Frank Morgan, who was absent due to illness.

Ole Prehn