

# INTERNATIONAL UNION FOR PHYSICAL AND ENGINEERING SCIENCES IN MEDICINE

*SYDNEY August 2003*

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT Professor J.P.MORUCCI

## Introduction

When becoming your President, at the General Assembly in Chicago, I noticed a kind appreciation from Colin Orton to Keith Boddy, my predecessor as President : “ ***It was a great three years, thanks to your leadership. Jean Pierre has a difficult act to follow***”. Colin’s powers as a prophet were even greater than he expected. In addition to following Keith’s leadership, a series of unprecedented difficulties unfolded, some of them almost immediately. There is a curse that says “ May you live in interesting times!” Effectively, the Presidency has been particularly ‘interesting’ and eventful!

When starting my mandate, I thought the role of a President was to serve as the representative, planner, co-ordinator, point-of-contact and cheerleader of the Union. Practically, my principal role seems to have been that of a fireman quenching fires within IUPESM or as a helmsman trying to save the IUPESM boat being wrecked on the rocks of internecine strife.

My activity as President was polarised and bogged down during the initial 14 months to solve “virtually”, with the Administrative Council, the complex and unexpected situation induced by an appeal from Korea concerning the WC 2006 site selection. The appeal was shortly after WC 2003 had formally ended. So that you can share and appreciate the problems, I have chosen to summarise-as best as possible and for posterity –the **saga** of 14 months of tumultuous exchanges through emails. Who said that modern electronic communication was a blessing?

## **The saga of Selection of the site for the WC 2006**

### **The storm clouds gather**

In *September 2000*, following a virtual meeting of the Administrative Council, a letter was sent to IFMBE and IOMP delegates. It informed them that, following the vote of the General Assembly of the IUPESM, Korea submitted an appeal to the IUPESM Council regarding the selection of the site for the 2006 World Congress.

The appeal was based on a procedural error, which was the only acceptable basis for appeal. The IUPESM guidelines specify a schedule for submission of proposals for hosting the Congress. The past Congress Coordinating Committee erred by accepting certain bids considerably past the deadline for submission of proposals. By doing so, the Committee did not follow its own published procedures, potentially penalising countries that submitted their bids on time and potentially giving undue advantage to countries that submitted late bids.

### **The storm begins**

After extensive discussions during a “virtual meeting”, two motions were approved by the IUPESM Council:

**Motion 1:** That the Administrative Council accept the Korean appeal based on point number 5 (and not on point number 8) of our guidelines. The vote was 9 to approve, 2 to disapprove, and 1 abstention.

**Motion 2** That the voting process will be repeated by mail after applicants have been given the opportunity to submit a short summary of any additional information. Passed unanimously.

It was recognised that an unfortunate consequence of this decision was the impact on the European Consortium which had acted entirely in good faith, following the (incorrect) instructions they were given.

### **The eye of the storm**

In *October 2000*, the decision of the IUPESM AC to approve Korea's appeal was challenged and disputed by Dr. Neilson of IPEM and co-bidder of the Consortium in the Lausanne proposal. Numerous exchanges of emails and phone calls were exchanged during several weeks on the arguments raised by Dr. Neilson using parliamentary reasoning. Nevertheless, the only compelling argument that Dr. Neilson was presenting related to the section that states:

*In relation to the first phrase Statute 5.3(b) gives as one of the functions of the General Assembly "to review, accept or reject recommendations of the Council".*

The Consortium disagreed with the Council decision to revote. It argued that " *If a re-vote is to proceed, it must be first be approved by a ballot of the General Assembly and all the parties involved should have the opportunity to have their case presented to the voting delegates of the General Assembly, in order to comply with the principles of natural justice. Only if the General Assembly authorises a re-vote should the CCC make arrangements for such a vote.* "

### Setting the compass and identifying rocks

The position of the Council was that "*the General Assembly is the real sovereign whom the AC has to serve and from which the AC has to obtain acceptance and support*". It was decided to have a virtual meeting of the Council to seek an email vote by the General Assembly that would determine whether we should re-vote on the site for 2006.

On 5 December 2000, the agenda for the December virtual meeting was distributed and on, 14 February 2001, a motion was submitted and was moved to approve the procedural appeal from the Korean applicants for 2006. On 21 February 2001, the motion was carried with a majority of the full membership of the IUPESM Administrative Council.

### 'All hands on deck!'

Finally, on 4 May 2001, the virtual meeting of the IUPESM General Assembly was called to order. I was totally conscious of the risks of holding a virtual General Assembly. However, the challenge was interesting and had to be taken up so that the President of the International Union for Physical and Engineering Sciences in Medicine was not responsible for its fragmentation or its possible disappearance.

There was a number of important reasons for the long delay between 21 February and 4 May 2001 in initiating the re-vote process. A draft of the "Note to Delegates" was prepared and reviewed by each member of the Council. The note went through numerous revisions before being approved by the IUPESM Administrative Council. The Council felt that it was essential to convey to the delegates a full picture of the process and the reasons for its recommendations in order to avoid any perceived bias on the part of the AC. This is the reason for the lengthy text, having in mind a management of the re-voting procedures which is fair, democratic and within the spirit of IUPESM Statutes.

Furthermore, the voting was to be done in two steps. The first motion before the delegates of the IUPESM General Assembly was to approve the recommendations of the Council for a re-vote. Only if this motion were approved, would we proceed to the actual re-vote.

### Steadying the ship

On 4 June 2001, an email was sent to the IOMP and IFMBE delegates from the IUPESM Council with the subject: **Call for a vote**

The Council introduced a motion to approve its recommendation for a re-vote on the 2006 site. This was the motion placed before the Assembly:

**"TO RESCIND THE DECISION OF THE JULY 27, 2000 GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND APPROVE THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE IUPESM ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL FOR A RE-VOTE ON THE SITE SELECTION FOR THE 2006 WORLD CONGRESS.**

The Council recommends that you vote in favour of this motion."

I considered it important to attach to this email a personal letter as well as additional comments from delegates that had been received most recently by the IUPESM during the virtual discussion period.

*"Dear delegates from IFMBE and IOMP,*

*As President of IUPESM, I wish to announce the beginning of the vote on the first motion.*

*On behalf of the Administrative Council, I thank all the delegates who have participated in this open discussion and contributed to an exchange of positions, which has offered the opportunity to provide clarification to this unfortunate problem. You have to be convinced that the Council has made huge and long run efforts to identify with frankness and honesty all the errors made before and after the Chicago Administrative Council Meeting concerning the choice of the WC site .*

*As the new President, I take upon myself my part of responsibility in these unintentional errors, but having always in mind to have a fair process for a successful World Congress. Since the beginning, the Council has always thought the best was to consult you and to establish your opinion on the appropriateness, or otherwise, of a re-vote. This long delay is due to our willingness to identify and discuss in depth the past events and the errors of procedure and to establish an analysis approved by Council. An opportunity was then provided for discussion by delegates and to consider thoroughly any comments, especially the arguments of the bidders for Lausanne. All comments by the Council which were sent to you as replies to arguments submitted by delegates, were approved by the Council.*

*Now it is up to you to vote to accept or reject Council's motion of recommendation for a revote. Only if this motion is approved, will we proceed to the actual re-vote for the World Congress site.*

*With all my kindest regards, J.P.Morucci."*

Great care was taken to ensure the regularity and the confidentiality of the voting procedure. The Secretaries General of the IFMBE and IOMP have checked that the email arrived from an approved delegate. Only one vote per delegate was allowed. The attachment has been detached from the email and collected separately.

### Setting the course

25 June 2001

A clear majority (74% of 126 certified votes) had approved the motion for a revote.  
percent of the participating delegates who voted: (IOMP 93%, IFMBE 89%)  
percent of the voting delegates who approved the motion (IOMP 66%, IFMBE 82% )  
percent of the voting delegates who voted against motion (IOMP 30%, IFMBE 15% )  
percent of the voting delegates who abstained (IOMP 4%, IFMBE 3%).

### Taking a fresh course

Following this approval by the GA, the prospective hosts for the World Congress 2006 were asked to attach 3 documents: the proposed budget, a map of the Congress site (indicating location of hotels) and a floor plan for the conference site. The delegates received only the completed questionnaire and the budget page and the URL for the site where all the information was posted so that they could examine it on the web. The questions to the bidders were allowed until the end of August 2001 and, as the questions arrived, they were forwarded to the bidding entity for response. The bidding countries were allowed one extra week after the end of August for final responses.

### Calming the waters

The "friendly" exchanges between the different parties led the Council to make the following statement:  
"STATEMENT BY IUPESM COUNCIL:

*Council wishes to re-emphasise that the decision taken by the General Assembly to hold a re-vote for WC 2006 was based entirely on serious procedural errors by the CCC.*

*This is a situation that Council deeply regrets, causing distress and inconvenience especially for the bidders but also to IUPESM members. It has been a major distraction for Council itself, which has taken enormous care to ensure, as far as humanly possible, that this unprecedented situation is handled with scrupulous fairness. Council is also undertaking a major review of the procedures with the aim of avoiding any future recurrence.*

The discussion on voting procedure ended mid-September and, on the 19 September 2001, we received the withdrawal of the bid from the Consortium. The two exploders, used in the voting procedure, were operational at the beginning of October. The vote then started and Korea was the winner of the re-vote.

### Abatement of the storm

14 months after the Chicago meeting a period of calm after the hurricane seemed to return.

### Revision of the CCC Procedures for Selection of the Site for the World Congress

In order to eradicate such problems in the future, it was suggested, in November 2000, that a manual to be called "Policies and Procedures" be created. It would incorporate operating procedures for committees, guidelines regarding our Congress, participation with other organisations on various projects, sponsorship of other conferences, awards, and anything else that will not require approval by the General Assembly. Material to be included in this manual, unless otherwise specified, would require only approval by the AC. The procedure for site selection can be the first chapter of this manual.

At my request as President, Keith Boddy has undertaken a revision of the CCC Procedures for Selection of the Site for the World Congress. They have been drafted in close consultation with Dov Jaron, who made substantive contributions. The purpose of the revision is, hopefully, to avoid a repetition of recent events. **Optimism is not dead!**

Following their approval by the Council, the CCC Site Selection Procedures were posted on the IUPESM home page on 18 December 2001.

### New logo

In November 2001, after this period so full of trouble, Keith Boddy considered it appropriate for a revitalised IUPESM to update its image with a fresh and relevant logo. At his request, colleagues in his former department have produced the new design, which gives some indication of our scope and activities. After several proposals of modifications, the new logo was adopted, in December 2002 (no one against), and is posted on our Web site. Delegates will be asked to ratify the decision of Council at the GA in Sydney.

## **IUPESM Policies and Procedures (P&P) Manual**

In *December 2001*, Dov Jaron moved that we should establish a document called "IUPESM Policies and Procedures (P&P) Manual". The purpose of this Manual is to document policies and procedure that will guide the operation of the organisation and its committees and all its established entities. This Manual will include any policies and procedures that do not appear in the Constitution or Bylaws of the organisation.

An ad hoc committee to oversee the creation of the P&P manual was appointed and chaired by Azam Niroomand-Rad.

## **Site selection of the world congress in 2009**

In order to begin the process for the site selection of the World Congress in 2009, several documents, that have become part of the IUPESM Policies and Procedures, were drafted by Dov Jaron and Keith Boddy. Following their amendment, they were approved-late *April 2002*- by the Council.

1. Composition and Responsibilities of the CCC
2. Criteria for Selection
3. Application form
4. Questionnaire

On *26 June 2002*, all the relevant documents regarding the 2009 World Congress were posted on the IUPESM web site.

The following e-mail was sent by the CCC to all IOMP and IFMBE national secretaries:

*"The IUPESM is ready to accept letters of intent to host the 2009 World Congress. While a complete preliminary application is not due until the 23rd of February, 2003, we urge those countries or regions, interested in hosting the Congress to begin discussions with all relevant organisations that are likely to co-host the event. The Congress Co-ordinating Committee (CCC) will appreciate receiving a letter of intent from potential bidders as early as possible."*

*April 2003* Proposals from Canada and Germany to hold the 2009 WC

*May 2003* Withdrawal of Canada

*June 2003* Proposal from Germany on the Web site [www.dgbmt.de/wc2009](http://www.dgbmt.de/wc2009)

## **Activities within ICSU**

Working with ICSU is not easy, because to understand the structures, strategies and programmes takes time. Our activities, developed in the long-40 pages- report from the ICSU Liaison Committee, prove that our internal problems have not prevented our Union from being present on the international scene.

## **Future of IUPESM**

As I do often, I will extract a wise comment from Keith Boddy in his President's report in Chicago. It summarised the potential benefits of being a full member of ICSU due to greater opportunities for the Union to interact and collaborate in a wider range of international science projects involving WHO, UNESCO and other International Bodies.

***"The future of IUPESM is dependent on the wholehearted support of the membership. The active involvement of many more members is essential for several reasons. First, not only is democracy improved but also a wider range of intellect, perceptions and new ideas should result. There are potentially exciting times and opportunities ahead for an invigorated IUPESM, which will demand greater and broader inputs. If IUPESM is to exploit its new potential as full member of ICSU, the workload is bound to increase and must be shared more widely." K. Boddy.***

## **Summary**

This report has attempted to show that our integrity and our union have been possible thanks to the excellent support, contributions and sustained efforts of the Officers and Council Members as well as many other members of IUPESM. The role of our Secretary General Gary Fullerton and of his team, Terri O'Neill-Martin and Loretta Edwards,-overloaded by thousands of emails-has been determinant and essential . I would like to pay particular tribute and express my deepest thanks to all the IUPESM Administrative Council.

Personally, I am especially grateful to Keith Boddy ,Dov Jaron and Colin Orton, for their unstinting support and wise counsel. Un très grand merci, chers Amis.

Sadly, Oskar Chomicki, our friend, long-standing servant (particularly in relation to Developing Countries) and the distinguished President of IOMP has decided, for understandable personal reasons, that he cannot accede to the Presidency of IUPESM as would have been expected. In accordance with the Statutes and Bylaws of IUPESM, the Nominating Committee, which has the responsibility of making nominations for the General Assembly, has carefully considered this situation and has nominated Colin Orton as the next President of IUPESM. Not only, does Colin have enormous experience of international affairs as a former Secretary General and President of IOMP and currently as our Vice-President but also his appointment would maintain the alternating sequence of the Presidency between IFMBE and IOMP. I am sure that the General Assembly will wholeheartedly endorse his appointment.

I wish him and the new team good luck and success for the future.

It has been a great honor and privilege to have served as your President and to have this forum for communicating with members throughout the world. All this communication has been possible thanks this virtual- and terrible -reality called electronic mailing.

I am grateful to you all. Kindest regards. Jean-Pierre Morucci