



BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

**New Century Grand Hotel
Hangzhou, China**

24 March 2009

Present:

ARGENTINA	FRANCE	ITALY	PORTUGAL
AUSTRALIA	FINLAND	JAPAN	SINGAPORE
AUSTRIA	GERMANY	LUXEMBOURG	SOUTH KOREA
BELGIUM	GREAT BRITAIN	MEXICO	SWITZERLAND
BRAZIL	HELLAS	MOROCCO	THAILAND
CANADA	HOLLAND	NEW ZEALAND	TURKEY
CHINA	HONG KONG	NORWAY	USA
CHINESE TAIPEI	HUNGARY	ROMANIA	
CZECH REPUBLIC	ISRAEL	RUSSIA	
DENMARK	IRELAND	PHILIPPINES	

Absent: MALAYSIA and SPAIN

Inactive: SWEDEN

Observers: DUBAI and INDIA

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Official Welcome

President Roger Bastoni and the Board of Directors stood to applaud President John Sun Dong for his wonderful work organizing this meeting.

Of the 39 active member sections, 37 countries are represented and 2 are absent. Presidents from each section briefly stood to introduce themselves and their delegates. Each gave a brief overview of activities within their section.

President Bastoni welcomed observers from India and Dubai. He also thanked Gerry Soh for his participation at this meeting.

President Bastoni announced that the Andy Pongco Award was entering its second year. He asked that all award candidates sit at different tables during lunch so they can speak to as many international members as possible. There are 10 nominees this year.

He reflected on time's passing and on the reasons he became President. One of his goals was to establish an Ethics Committee.

First Vice President Robert Watson talked about the Code of Ethics, which are contained within the annual Book of Members. The goal for the Ethics Committee is to ensure appropriate member behavior at all times. The following individuals volunteered to serve on the committee:

- Maurice Dancer - USA
- Kevin Trimoulla - Switzerland
- Gregory Tan – Singapore
- Gustavo Concha – Argentina

As the membership grows and the world shrinks, it becomes increasingly important – and simple – to communicate regularly through email. President Bastoni encouraged all Presidents to reach out and stay in contact with their colleagues throughout the world. It is incumbent on all Presidents to communicate and interact regularly with their Zone Directors. Five of the Zone Directors were introduced, as follows:

- Colin Toomey, Zone Director of Australia and Oceania

- Christian Sussman, Zone Director of Asia
- Shujaat Khan, Zone Director of the Americas
- Arshad Khokhar, Zone Director of Scandinavia
- Tamas Ungar, Zone Director for Central Europe

Zone Directors Claudio Caser (Western Europe) and Mario Erroico (Mediterranean) were not present.

Comité des Sages members Mr. Andras Gunst, Mr. Aldo Giacomello, and Ms. Marjorie Silverman were introduced.

Members of the Executive Committee introduced themselves and briefly addressed the delegates.

Lecture of Correspondence

A lecture of correspondence was read that included letters from Mr. Andre Damonte, Mr. Piotr Prasula (Warsaw) and Marco Milanez (American Express Centurion, Mexico), Gerald Parent (American Express Canada), and a message from Liborio Pimenta of Portugal.

Resume of Minutes from Executive Committee Meetings in Livorno (January 2009) and China (23 March 2009)

General Secretary Virginia Casale reviewed minutes from Executive Committee meetings held in Livorno and here in China..

- The new Book of Members will be printed in 2010 in both CD format and in book form. The last book cost 8 Euros per member.
- The International Review continues to evolve in a positive direction with good advertising revenue.
- The UICH logo use is strictly regulated. Approval must be received prior to its use.
- The Swiss bank account has been closed. The Paris office now processes all requests for Bucherer keys.
- Most countries are now in full compliance with documentation filings in Paris. Warnings will be issued to countries that are still delinquent. Eleven sections are still missing trademark protection.
- The Executive Committee is in place to help all sections Presidents are encouraged to ask for assistance if they need it.
- Mr. Aldo Giacomello will be officially stepping down as the American Express liaison after this meeting concludes.
- Sections must remain in full compliance with UICH statutes. Sections failing to meet these requirements will be officially placed “under observation.” Presidents who receive notices of “observational status” will be required to write a letter to the General Secretary, before the next Congress, explaining the progress they have made toward statutory compliance. Failure to do so may result in a section’s suspension.
- As a reminder, there is no provision for cruise ship concierges. Such individuals are not authorized to wear keys, nor may they claim to be members of UICH.
- Countries that host congresses must provide proof of insurance for all attendees. Guidelines of the exact insurance requirements will be created for distribution. The cost of insurance should be factored into the registration fee.

President Maurice Dancer motioned to approve the Board of Directors Minutes from Copenhagen. President Catalin Malureanu seconded; all approved.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Jean-Roland Boutillé gave a powerpoint presentation detailing the cash flow, balance sheet figures, and 2008 year-end budget. He described where the sponsorship dollars are coming from and the expenses involved in running UICH. 85,000 Euro was received from subscription fees. 3,292 members paid 2008 fees, and there was also some income from past-due 2007 fees. President Bastoni congratulated all member sections for paying their annual subscriptions on time the past year.

President Geoff Argue motioned to approve the budget; President Gustavo Concha seconded; the motion was approved by a show of hands.

International Review

The major expense of the Review is shipping. All advertisers who sponsor the Review have been asked to renew their sponsorship commitments. The current price to produce the magazine is approximately 1.5 Euro/member.

President Bastoni was disappointed that some countries consistently failed to submit items for publication in the Review. A review of the last eight publications makes it clear who has participated and who has not. He encouraged those who have not participated to do so in the future.

Deadlines continue to be a disappointment to the Executive Committee. Articles are not submitted in a timely fashion. Also, there are some countries that do not distribute the magazine in a timely manner to their members. Presidents are responsible for ensuring that all members receive the publication in a timely fashion.

Book of Members:

Currently, the cost of this book is 8 Euros per member. For accounting purposes, all charges for the 2008-2010 Book of Members are being billed to fiscal year 2008.

President Bastoni wanted so much to reinforce the importance of Zones that he redesigned the 2008-2010 Book of Members to reflect this importance. Each country was listed under its Zone. For ease of locating colleagues, however, the Board of Directors all agreed to return to printing future editions in alphabetic order by country name.

Website:

Roderick Levejac will make himself available after the lunch break for any updates.

Bucherer Keys:

In acquiring Bucherer keys, proof of a wire transfer must be given to the International Treasurer. Bucherer will then ship the keys from Switzerland (without any added shipping charges). Orders must be placed by National Presidents only.

Much discussion ensued about the best way to ensure that only full members receive keys. The Board of Directors agreed that Presidents must forward a list of names of all members within their section who received keys during that fiscal year.

Some presidents were disappointed that keys were not available at this meeting, since that is what had been promised originally. Treasurer Jean-Roland Boutillé will be taking key orders from Presidents at this meeting. All orders will be filled during the last week of April. 672 sets of keys were sold during 2008.

Membership Inquiries from Different Parts of the World

Robert Watson reported that Dubai has presented all their documents for consideration of being the 41st member section of UICH. A large file was given to President Bastoni from a representative of Dubai for consideration.

Countries expressing interest in becoming member sections of UICH should forward their inquiries to the General Secretary. The Executive Committee is working to standardize procedures for new member sections and will inform sections as these practices are more fully put into place.

Statutes:

President Bastoni has made a list of all the statutes that he feels need revision. He will pass this on to the next International President. If you have suggested revisions, please submit them to the International General Secretary.

Application Process Proposal for UICH Membership

President Colin Toomey and Ms. Regena Falling (USA) have put together a comparison of application processes in each country. The purpose of the study was to check on how countries go about selecting candidates of superior quality and integrity.

They presented a list of minimum standards (included in the statutes) that are required for membership. They then made the following suggestions for the application process:

- Conduct a personal interview.
- Test candidates in several areas of knowledge (general knowledge, UICH historical knowledge, etc).
- Require letters of recommendation from active members. Active members must mentor candidates. This helps retain the tradition of excellence toward the future.
- Review the Code of Ethics with the applicant.
- Ask the candidate for a statement of how he/she plans to contribute to UICH.
- Require that members pay subscription fees within four weeks of acceptance.

The template developed by President Toomey and Ms. Falling is not intended to replace the applications of those countries that already have stringent procedures in place. Rather, it is intended to assist those countries who need to professionalize their membership processes.

President Bastoni thanked President Toomey and Ms. Falling for their work. The draft of their document will be reviewed with each Zone Director so that they may make suggestions to enhance the final form.

President Roberta Bezzera requested that all official documents, including the application, be created in a standardized language (i.e., English).

Area Director Reports and New Zone Director Nominations

Oceania. Zone Director Colin Toomey characterized his small zone as very well-organized. All expect tourism in Australia to rebound in the near future. Australia has had a surge in membership over the last few years. They now have 38 members. There has been steady growth in New Zealand as well. Mr. Toomey credits support from hotel management as a major reason for this growth. Mr. Toomey will be retiring as the Zone Director at the conclusion of this meeting, when President Gustavo Concha will take his place. Australia brought 8 members to this China Congress; New Zealand was able to bring 4 members.

Scandinavia. There are four countries that make up the Scandinavian Zone. Zone Director Arshad Khokhar's goal has been to reactivate the Swedish section. Mr. Khokhar visited Sweden numerous times to help promote the growth of the concierge profession in that country. Mr. Khokhar will retire as Zone Director at the conclusion of this meeting, and Mr. Henning Kletvang will take his place.

The Scandinavian Zone hosts regional meetings periodically. Mr. Khokhar thanked President Roger Bastoni for attending the most recent one in Helsinki. The next meeting will be in Copenhagen, 14- 17 August 2009, and Mr. Khokhar invited any member from the executive committee or zone directors to attend this meeting on a complimentary basis.

Central Europe. Austria, Germany, Czech Republic, Romania, Russia and Hungary are within this zone. Thought not yet a member section, Poland, too is included within this Zone. Zone Director Tamas Ungar attended the European Zone directors meeting on 30 June 2008. Last year in Copenhagen, Romania was put under observation and Russia was suspended. Both sections continue to try and move forward in strength, and Mr. Ungar has assisted them wherever possible. Requests for all documentation from the Paris office have now been answered, with the exception of the trademark protection filings, with which Russia and Romania continue to struggle. Last November, Hungary celebrated its 25th anniversary as a UICH section with a party in Budapest. Mr. Ungar thanked Third Vice President Emmanuel Vrettos for his support over the past year.

Western Europe. Roderick Lévejac presented the report in the absence of Zone Director Claudio Caser. President Bastoni attended a Western Europe regional meeting this past year. The Irish section is stronger than ever, and at their AGM, awards were given to Tom Doyle and Robert Devine. Meetings have been held in various sections of Ireland. Luxembourg presently has 10 members and 3 are present at this China Congress. Luxembourg hopes to organize a Zone Directors meeting in June. Switzerland has 190 members, their national meeting was held in May 2008.

The Netherlands has upgraded its website. The International Herald Tribune sponsored a member from the Netherlands at a reception they held in January 2009.

France is celebrating its 80th anniversary this year and will be holding its national meeting on 27 November 2009 – the exact date that, 80 years ago, French concierges first came together after a major bank crash. Mr.

Lévejac will be discontinuing his involvement with the Executive Committee at the end of this year, when he turns his attention toward developing a training program.

Mr. Lévejac reported on the progress of Ethiopia to form a Clefs d'Or section. The salaries of the concierges there are four times the average salary of the country's residents. One site inspection has already occurred, and a second trip has been planned for October. In three years, UICH will require a follow-up site inspection to ensure that UICH standards continue to be met over the long term. If all is well, at that time Ethiopia may be considered for UICH membership.

Asia. Mr. Christian Sussmann gave a huge thank you to all Asian member sections. Mr. Sussmann feels there should be a new Asian Zone Director. He has made his contributions and is ready to relinquish this responsibility to a new individual.

Americas. The American Zone is very strong. Zone Director Shujaat Khan thanked the five great presidents who comprise this zone. "They are so dedicated and take their jobs so seriously, that tomorrow, after dinner, they will have a zone meeting." Mr. Khan distributed an American Zone newsletter to all delegates. Canada's meeting will take place 17-19 April 2009. The USA meeting is scheduled for 22-26 May 2009. Mexico's annual meeting is 27-30 August 2009. Brazil's meeting is scheduled for September.

The American Zone is in compliance with all requested documents for Paris.

The USA conducts classes called "The Art of the Concierge" throughout the Caribbean. Today, in fact, a class is being taught to 400 hospitality workers in Curacao. Ms. Marjorie Silverman conducts classes called "Keys to Excellence" all around the country. Last year, she taught classes in Florida, New York, and Washington.

The Foundation of the Americas has a little over \$500,000 in the bank; \$21,000 was given in grants this past year.

The Mediterranean. Zone Director Mario Eroico could not be present due to personal reasons. Six of the seven countries comprising the Mediterranean Zone held a meeting to determine how business will be conducted moving forward. The Mediterranean Zone will create a newsletter to keep its member sections involved and to keep other UICH sections informed. Mr. Federico Barbarossa believes the zone will have excellent participation and he looks forward to working cooperatively with his Mediterranean Zone Presidents.

President Bastoni said Zone Directors are the essential means by which UICH creates a proper communication flow between countries. He asked all Presidents to please respect the need for communication and to respond to all correspondence promptly.

Zone Directors for 2009-2011 were announced as follows:

- Americas: Mr. Maurice Dancer
- Central Europe: Mr. Tamas Ungar
- Mediterranean: Mr. Mario Eroico
- Oceania: Mr. Gustavo Concha
- Scandinavia: Mr. Henning Kletvang
- Western Europe: Mr. Claudio Caser
- Asia (still undecided; to be announced later)

Third Vice President Emanuel Vrettos has been the liaison between the Zone Directors and the Executive Board. He applauded the work of the outgoing Zone Directors and thanked them for their service. President Bastoni thanked his Third Vice President.

The Board of Directors is not in compliance with the statutes that require all nominations for Zone Directors be submitted to the General Secretary two months prior to the start of a Congress. The Executive Committee discussed this situation at its meeting with an eye toward meeting these requirements at next year's Congress.

Future Congresses

The 57th International UICH Congress will take place in Portugal, 14-20 January 2010. Delegates watched a short video on Portugal. In an effort to make the meeting affordable to everyone, they intend to offer different accommodation options. The price has been set at 800 Euro for meeting attendance only. Accommodation prices have not yet been set. To help garner interest, Portugal is offering a 100 Euro discount to members who register before the end of June 2009. Sponsors and other non-LCD members who wish to attend will be assessed an additional 100 Euro fee. Much discussion ensued about the steep pricing structure and the need to evaluate Portugal's plans more closely. President Bastoni is confident that a good solution will be found.

President Geoff Argue announced that Canada will host the 58th International Congress in the spring of 2011 and are proud to welcome their friends from around the world. A detailed presentation will be given at the general assembly.

President Paul Still is pleased to have Great Britain host the 2012 Congress on 27 January for five nights in London. The committee has created two housing options. The Congress gala coincides with Britain's longstanding tradition of its annual Ladies' Night. London hopes to be able to accommodate 1,000 attendees, and already, theatre tickets and sponsorship guarantees have been put into place.

New Zealand and Switzerland have expressed interest in 2013 and 2014. President Gustavo Concha showed delegates a beautiful video featuring several highlights of New Zealand.

Proposals for Future Board of Director Meetings

President Federico Barbarossa from Italy presented a video of Sardinia, and looks forward to perhaps hosting an international congress in 2014.

President Bastoni is delighted to know that congress hosts have been found for meetings through the year 2014. He encouraged future host countries to enlist the support of those who have recently held congresses. Education remains a very important and expensive feature of meetings. In addition to financial contributions, value-added contributions (i.e. Holly's presentation) help to defray overall expenses.

Andy Pongco Award

This is the second year of the Andy Pongco Award, honoring the memory of Mr. Andy Pongco (Philippines), who was about to become the President of UICH when he was taken from us suddenly. Past President Denis O'Brien is happy to know that Mr. Pongco's legacy will live on through the mentorship of young concierges, which was Mr. Pongco's passion.

The first award was given to Mr. Tony Chang (Chinese Taipei) in Copenhagen in 2008.

Requirements for award candidates are:

- The candidate needs to be a member of Les Clefs d'Or.
- They must be under 35 years of age.
- They must be attending their first congress.
- They must be fluent in English.
- They must be sponsored by their national section.

The winner receives paid registration and airfare to the next congress.

This year we have 10 candidates. They are from Argentina, Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, Great Britain, Holland, Hungary, Thailand, and USA.

President Bastoni explained that Ms. Marjorie Silverman was put in charge of organizing the guidelines for the award. She enlisted the help of President Tamas Ungar and President Colin Toomey, and a comprehensive test was created that included areas of hotel knowledge, UICH history, restaurant knowledge, geographical expertise, and more. The test also included two essays:

Candidates were given 10 days to complete the exam, and they were invited to use any resources necessary. Candidates will also undergo personal interviews with the Award Committee.

Last year American Express sponsored the winner. This year the sponsor for the award is Elite Limousine. President Bastoni wished all the candidates good luck and said that although there will be one winner, all the candidates are winners. Ms. Silverman expressed her delight at having met each of the candidates. She enjoyed assisting with the award process overall.

Code of Ethics

At last year's Congress in Copenhagen, four countries were either put under observation or suspension. Romania, Russia and Morocco have been returned to full status. The Philippines will remain under observation.

The Executive Committee believes the activities of Spain remain unacceptable. As a result, they will be put under observation for one year.

Introduction of International Board Candidates

Candidates were introduced by General Secretary Virginia Casale:

Treasurer: From France, Mr. Jean-Roland Boutillé

Assistant General Secretary: From USA, Mr. Shujaat Khan

General Secretary: From USA, Mr. Michael Romei

Third Vice President: From Italy, Mr. Massimiliano Errichiello
From Great Britain Mr. Simon Thomas
From Australia, Mr. Colin Toomey

Second Vice President: From Hellas, Mr. Emmanuel Vrettos
From Denmark, Mr. Arshad Khokhar

First Vice President: From Canada, Ms. Virginia Casale

President: From USA, Mr. Robert Watson
(Great Britain's candidate, Mr. Colin Short, withdrew)

Questions and Proposals from Various Countries

Great Britain. Great Britain suggested revisiting the ways in which the international Treasury operates. President Roger Bastoni answered that during the last two years, UICH has been lucky with getting a great deal of sponsorship and support. He concluded by saying that 97,000 Euro in the UICH Treasury is a comfortable cushion to continue to operate a worldwide organization.

Looking to the future, the Board of Directors may want to consider how incomes differ in varying parts of the world. A tiered congress fee structure and/or tiered subscription format might allow more members to attend meetings, which is a very important facet of UICH membership. It would be ideal to ensure that congress attendance is affordable to all.

Belgium. Belgium has a partnership with outlet shopping in several different countries. Mr. Alain Vanderouwer distributed a little booklet to everyone that describes the outlets and their locations. He believes there is a good possibility that this company can become a source of advertising revenue in future editions of the International Revue.

Hungary. The international flag will be updated and repaired by the Hungarian section.

Portugal. An international membership card would offer added value and prestige to members. A discussion on this issue was tabled until Mr. Roderick Lévejac could give a presentation on a alternate idea that might satisfy Portugal's desire for a membership card.

China. UICH flags are available through John Sun Dong for purchase. Countries interested in purchasing these flags are welcome to contact him.

USA. There are still cruise ship concierges wearing Bucherer lapel keys on their uniforms. The Executive Committee reiterated that these concierges are not members of Les Clefs d'Or and that this is a problem that continues to plague the association. The discussion veered toward the topic of club-floor vs. lobby-level concierges. Canada, for example, accepts club level concierges for membership while the USA does not. The Board of Directors will give consideration over finding a solution to the varying requirements in varying nations. The Board of Directors agreed to ask Bucherer to consider designing alternative clasping options that could accommodate different uniforms and fabrics throughout the world.

Romania. The section was removed from observation status and returned to a section in good standing.

Singapore. Creative solutions to cost-cutting were explored. The “In the Know” program created by InterContinental Hotels has been successful. Working closely with the sales departments of hotels can also be beneficial. The Board of Directors agreed that this would be an excellent topic for deeper discussion.

Luxembourg. Luxembourg asked if there was a school for concierges anywhere in the world affiliated with UICH. President Bastoni responded that there is a school in France that trains concierges, but it is not affiliated with UICH nor does it have the right to use any UICH logo. The school is part of a public college that is open to all individuals. Luxembourg hopes that the Board of Directors will exhibit appropriate decorum in all its communications with each other. President Simon Delcomminette reminded everyone that UICH is an organization based on friendship. Sections are each independent and must be given the autonomy to operate thusly.

France. President Roderick Lévejac had several points to address:

- Executive Committee term limits should be increased.
- It should be mandatory for Presidents to ensure that at least one member from their country attends all international congresses. Representation from all countries should be seen at all congresses.
- Perhaps the Board of Directors should consider giving countries with larger numbers of members a greater number of votes.
- New member sections should go through a probationary period before they become fully autonomous sections of UICH. Furthermore, new member sections should not be responsible for ancillary members from other countries under their wing. The tutelage of these individuals should come from established sections.
- Every UICH member should be assigned a member number. The first two numbers would be the year their member section became a member of UICH. It would be an excellent way to track the evolution of the association and it would also remedy Portugal's desire for a membership card.
- The Board of Directors might wish to rethink the way it distributes Membre d'Honneur diplomas. Simply forwarding the name of an individual does not seem adequate. Perhaps a more complete proposal would be better.
- The Book of Members should include the names of affiliate members of sections.
- The statutes need updating and revision. A policy for maintaining currency of the statutes should be developed.

Concluding Remarks

President Lévejac reminded the Board of Directors of the dangers of growing the membership too quickly. It is always best to contemplate an action first. It is much more difficult to try and undo an action later.

Presidents were asked to be sure to give Mr. Lévejac a USB key containing their membership lists before the conclusion of today's meeting.

President Bastoni thanked everyone for their participation and attendance.

The meeting was adjourned.