



**55th International Congress
Board of Directors Meeting
12 January 2008
Radisson SAS Royal (Copenhagen, Denmark)**

Present:

AUSTRALIA
AUSTRIA
BELGIUM
CANADA
CHINA
CHINESE TAIPEI
CZECH REPUBLIC
DENMARK
FINLAND
FRANCE
GERMANY

GREAT BRITAIN
HELLAS
HONG KONG
HUNGARY
ISRAEL
IRELAND
ITALY
JAPAN
KOREA
MEXICO
NETHERLANDS

NEW ZEALAND
NORWAY
PORTUGAL
SINGAPORE
SPAIN
SWITZERLAND
THAILAND
TURKEY
USA

Absent:

BRAZIL
LUXEMBOURG
MALAYSIA

MOROCCO
PHILIPPINES
ROMANIA

RUSSIA
TURKEY

Observers:

ARGENTINA
DUBAI

POLAND
QATAR

SWEDEN

1. Official Welcome and President's Report

President Arshad Khokhar introduced the General Manager of the Radisson SAS Royal, Mr. Pasquale Baiguera, who warmly welcomed everyone to his hotel.

President Roger Bastoni opened the 55th Congress and welcomed everyone, including Mr. Pablo Castro, Mr. Alejandro Noya and Mr. Charles Budden, observers from Argentina, whose candidacy to become the 40th member section will be heard later today. Other observers included Mr. Ibrahim Yaqoot, Mr. Kamal Jayalath, Mr. Royston Sixtus, and Mr. Randy Santos from Dubai, Mr. Piotr Prasula from Poland, Mr. Siana Iong from Macau, Mr. Elie Saliba from Qatar, and Mr. Yngve Erik Lundin from Sweden.

It has been 10 months since the Vienna Congress, and President Bastoni is pleased with the work that has been done, especially regarding the international website. The new Book of Members is prepared and now available for distribution at today's meeting. The International Board has been appropriately registered in Paris now. President Bastoni has been traveling as much as possible, visiting colleagues around the world. He is sorry he was unable to attend the Asian Congress in Korea, the Mexican Congress, nor the Chinese Congress.

President Bastoni asked each members of the Executive Committee, the Zone Directors, the Board of Directors, and the Comité des Sages to briefly introduce themselves. There are 31 of the 39 member sections present at today's meeting.

2. Presidential Introductions

General Secretary Virginia Casale warmly welcomed the new presidents elected since the Vienna Congress:

- Mr. Christian Neubauer (Austria)
- Mr. Alex Lai (Chinese Taipei)
- Mr. Roderick Levejac (France)
- Mr. Spiros Arathimos (Hellas)
- Mr. Federico Barbarossa (Italy)
- Mr. Philippe Muller (Japan)
- Mr. Jeff Kim (Korea)
- Mr. Ragu Kumarasamy (Malaysia)
- Mr. Ben Wahlte (Netherlands)
- Mr. Catalin Malureanu (Romania)
- Mr. Praneet Wangcharoensook (Thailand)
- Mr. Maurice Dancer (USA)

3. General Secretary's Report and Lecture of Correspondence

A lecture of correspondence was heard from President Catalin Malureanu (Romania) and Mr. Liborio Pimenta (Portugal).

General Secretary Casale was sad to report on the absence of President Nuno Jardim Condeco, who could not be with us due to his mother's illness.

General Secretary Casale read a resume of the minutes from the Executive Committee meeting held on 11 January 2008.

4. Approval of Minutes from Vienna

President Gustavo Concha motioned to approve the minutes from Vienna and Mr. Brendan Enright seconded the motion. The Minutes from the Vienna Congress were duly approved.

5. Treasurer's Report 2007

President Bastoni announced the appointment of Mr. Jean-Roland Boutillé to the position of Assistant Treasurer. He is pleased with the help Mr. Boutillé has been able to give to Treasurer Gérard Poirier.

Treasurer Poirier summarily reviewed the receipts and expenses for 2007. While the accounting fees were almost 4000 Euro this year, they will be substantially less (about 2000 Euro next year), because a new accountant firm has been hired at a lower fee.

President Ron Crowdy congratulated the Executive Committee and Treasurers for producing such an excellent report that is simple to comprehend. When President Crowdy asked why he did not see any presidential stipend expenses, President Roger Bastoni responded that he has not needed to use UICH funds to date. President Crowdy asked for some clarification regarding the secretariat fees, and Treasurer Poirier responded that 4000 of the figure is applied to rent and the remaining amount covers payments made to Esther Balducci in both 2006 and 2007.

Treasurer Poirier confirmed that the Swiss account is now closed.

President Crowdy suggested that some of the Treasury funds should be placed into an interest-bearing vehicle. This can be investigated now that there is a surplus in the bank..

Morocco responded and paid both its 2006 and 2007 dues. Two years of subscription fees are still outstanding for Malaysia and the Philippines. Russia is also delinquent. All other subscription fees have been fully collected.

Treasurer Gérard Poirier next reviewed the 2008 Budget.

President Ron Crowdy made a motion to approve the 2007 Report and 2008 Budget. President Maurice Dancer seconded the motion. Both reports were duly approved.

Treasurer Poirier asked sections to please announce their membership numbers in order to allow him to prepare 2008 subscription fee invoices:

Australia 31	Great Britain 255	New Zealand 19
Austria 62	Hellas 50	Norway 12
Belgium 38	Hong Kong 74	Portugal 60
Canada 120	Hungary 66	Singapore 75
China 167	Israel 16	Spain 193
Chinese Taipei 18	Ireland 53	Switzerland 110
Czech Republic 18	Italy 337	Thailand 27
Denmark 30	Japan 17	Turkey 10
Finland 25	Korea 13	USA 525
France 402	Mexico 53	
Germany 167	Netherlands 53	

6. International Review

President Bastoni asked the Board of Directors to please send articles for the International Review to Secretary Casale in a timely fashion. He reminded the Board that it is important to respond timely to other requests for information, too.

The Review continues to evolve in a positive fashion. President Bastoni explained that JetMedia's production costs per edition are approximately 24,000 Euro (exclusive of shipping), but the revenue realized from advertising is approximately 20,000 Euro. Therefore, the net cost to UICH is presently 4,000 Euro.

JetMedia's contract is now up for renewal. However, there is a second proposal from an Italian company named Areté, a printer in Milan that has worked with the Italian section for many years. Areté publishes a magazine called "Luxury," which appears all over the world. President Claudio Caser is currently reviewing the details of this proposal and will ask Areté to produce a mock-up for the Executive Committee's review. Areté has offered to produce the magazine au gratis (exclusive of shipping) in exchange for the marketing of its Luxury publication at member hotels. However, there remain other aspects to consider before any decision is made, including the fact that the relationship with JetMedia is solid and familiar. All such considerations are presently under review by the Executive Committee.

President Crowdy asked for a breakdown of the percentage of French advertisers in the Review. President Bastoni does not prefer to single out the origin of an advertiser's country: UICH is an international body and so its publicity should also be seen as international.

7. Book of Members

President Bastoni announced that the Book of Members (2008-2010) is now finished. He admitted that when he originally proposed its production, he underestimated the investment it would take both in time and dollars. Highlights of the newly produced Book include a Code of Ethics and the statutes in three languages: French, English and Spanish. Everyone involved in the project did their best and President Bastoni thanked them for their assistance. President Bastoni apologized for any errors that might appear in the Book.

Presidents wishing to hand-carry the Books to their countries may pick up their orders at the Hospitality Desk at the Radisson SAS. Because there are extras, it may also be possible for some Presidents from larger sections to at least partially fulfill their orders on-site.

President Rafaele Sorrentino believes the printed Book is outdated and UICH should move to producing future rosters in an e-format. It would simplify the burden on the Executive Committee and it would help to keep information more current because individual members (or sections) could be responsible for maintaining their own profiles. Much discussion ensued. President Bastoni questions how many sections or members would participate in a timely fashion (or at all), and this is not acceptable. The purpose of the Book is to be able to find contacts around the world. If there are no contacts posted on the website, then UICH members all suffer the cumulative deficit.

He agreed with President Sorrentino: as UICH continues to move into the future, an e-format will become a more reasonable goal. However, President Bastoni does not believe it is an achievable goal today. He welcomed President Sorrentino's efforts should he wish to take on the task.

Third Vice President Emmanuel Vrettos believes an e-format would suffice annually, and he suggested that the Book of Members could be printed only once every 5 or 10 years. The financial savings realized from not publishing the Book could then be used to expand the Review.

8. Website Update

President Roderick Levéjac presented highlights of the newly designed international website. The address is www.uichlescledsdor.org. Most countries have already provided their information. President Levéjac still needs the following information from Ireland, Malaysia, Morocco, and Luxembourg:

- Name of the national association
- A copy of the national logo
- A brief introduction to the section (150-200 words)
- Number of members
- Year the section was created
- Year the section became a UICH member section
- Complete address information (including phone/fax/email/street/website address)
- Photo of President

This information appears on an introductory page which includes a link to the section's national website.

Other features of the website include:

- The ability to have news articles sent to members' email addresses.
- General news articles (and President Levéjac encourages the Board of Directors to submit articles for consideration)
- Letter from the President
- Copy of the Statutes
- Calendar of upcoming AGM and international meetings around the world
- Information and photos of the Paris office
- Information and photos of the Comité des Sages and Executive Committee members
- Archived photos and articles

9. Bucherer Keys

President Bastoni thanked Mr. Aldo Giacomello for his long service as liaison between UICH and Bucherer. Historically the purchase and sales of keys were overseen by Mr. Giacomello and filtered through the Swiss account. Now that the Swiss account is closed, however, the orders will be taken at the Paris office and the French account will receive the payments.

To streamline efforts, President Bastoni had the French office purchase 1,000 keys that he had hoped to sell on-site at today's meeting. However, the keys did not arrive in time to accomplish this. The alternate plan is for Presidents to pay for keys at today's meeting anyway. Receipts will be issued and the keys will be drop-shipped directly from Bucherer as quickly as possible (most likely before the end of January). The remaining portion of keys will then be shipped to the Paris office and will be available for sale thereafter.

President Bastoni believes that it makes good fiscal sense to do as much business as possible in person. The Board of Directors agreed. In the future, national Presidents will pre-order keys in bulk (within a reasonable deadline to be set ahead of each congress), and the French office will deliver the keys to the President personally when each Congress convenes.

President Geoff Argue asked the question whether payment for keys (or other items, such as subscription fees) could be made via credit card. Much discussion ensued. There would be an initial cost to purchase the credit card terminal, and there would also be service charges incurred for its usage.

The Board of Directors agreed that a credit card terminal would probably be a good idea. Treasurer Poirier was asked to look into it when he returns to Paris.

10. Partnerships

President Bastoni believes the image of Les Clefs d'Or continues to be an attractor to quality sponsors.

President Bastoni believes that UICH must focus on fundraising and creating stronger sponsorship relations. This can be done through the establishment of successful, longer-term partnership agreements with suppliers and vendors. The entire Board of Directors sympathized with how difficult it is to be on shaky financial ground year after year. It is always a big challenge for congresses and for national Treasuries to operate with financial security.

Recently, President Bastoni was able to contract with Lufthansa and the Rodriguez Group for 2008 advertising in the Review. This gives the association a bit of solidity. The International Review also enjoys income from American Express and other partners. These are examples of ways in which UICH can build sustainable partnerships with its sponsors.

President John Sun Dong shared stories about current fundraising efforts in China. Les Clefs d'Or has been chosen to provide more than 200 concierges to assist delegates at the upcoming Olympic Games in Beijing. He expects they will deliver excellent service, and he expects to receive excellent support from sponsors in return. President Sun Dong's philosophy is that Les Clefs d'Or must give to sponsors before it can expect anything in return from sponsors.

First Vice President Robert Watson is the official liaison between national section Presidents and American Express. He is happy to report that his primary contact, Mr. Chris Tambue, who replaced Mr. Guido Scarfo as the new international American Express representative, is located nearby regionally, which makes it easy for the two to meet in order to develop the relationship further. Mr. Tambue will make a presentation at the General Assembly.

In order to help Mr. Watson in his efforts, Presidents have each received a form to complete and return to Secretary Casale. This information will be forwarded to national American Express representatives in order to help sections create national relationships in addition to the international relationship we presently enjoy. President Bastoni requested that all presidents be sure to follow up and complete these forms if they have not already done so.

Mr. Aldo Giacomello asked the Executive Committee to distribute a document that explains precisely the expectations on behalf of American Express. He reiterated that it is imperative to maintain good relations with American Express worldwide. The success of these relations depends on the activation of solid local relationships in countries around the world.

President Ron Crowdy stated that countries should not have to be responsible, on their own, for the entire financial burden of hosting a congress. Many host countries simply do not have the resources to produce a financially sound congress. Everyone must remember that all Congresses are UICH Congresses.

There are techniques that can help Presidents negotiate more successfully with sponsors. Suggestions for success in these endeavors will be added to the Congress guidelines.

11. Area Director Reports and New Roles

Oral reports were heard from Zone Directors Shujaat Khan (Americas); Claudio Caser (Western Europe), Mario Eroico (Mediterranean), Raffaele Sorrentino (Central Europe), Arshad Khokhar (Scandinavia), Christian Sussman (Asia), and Colin Toomey (Australia/Oceania).

All Zone Directors expressed delight with the tasks and challenges they each face. They are pleased with the new direction and responsibilities they have been given, and each reiterated the importance of close communications on all organizational levels: the Executive level, the Zone level, and the national level.

President Arshad Khokhar invited Mr. Ynvge Erik Lundin (from Sweden) to address the assembly. Sweden is one of oldest original sections of UICH. Unfortunately, they had to suspend their independence and reattach

themselves to Denmark when the concierge profession suffered a seriously decline in Sweden in recent years. However, Mr. Lundin is pleased to report that he sees a positive future on the horizon, with many young concierges reappearing on the hotel scene.

12. Future Congresses

56th International Congress (Hangzhou, China): President John Sun Dong presented a short video on Hangzhou and the New Century Hotel (where all delegates will be housed). The Congress dates are 3-9 March 2009. Information on the Congress may be found on China's national website: www.lesclefsdorchina.com. China is able to accommodate 700 people and expects to charge a fee of 900 Euro (single) and 800 (double). President Sun Dong sincerely looks forward to welcoming colleagues to his country. China is currently developing reporting formats that prove concierge worth to management and the world by creating a national reservation tracking system for reservations made by Les Clefs d'Or members. This will be the feature of the educational format of China's meeting.

57th International Congress: Germany had to withdraw its nomination due to lack of managerial support. Proposals to host were generously offered by President Gregory Tan (Singapore) and Vice President Joaquim Alves (Portugal). By secret ballot, Portugal was selected as the 2010 destination.

58th International Congress: President Geoff Argue announced that Canada will host its Congress in Toronto, Ontario, in Spring of 2011.

59th International Congress (Great Britain): International Delegate Colin Short presented a brief outline of Britain's progress on the 2012 Congress. At the moment, he believes the price of the congress will be reasonable and flexible. They are exploring the ability to separate congress fees from hotel accommodations if a member prefers. Great Britain has good support from sponsors and the tourism arm of the government, and Mr. Short is sure the British will host an excellent congress.

13. Future Board of Directors Meetings

There is a proposal from President Maurice Dancer and from Mr. Shujaat Khan (Current Zone Director of the Americas and Past President of USA) to host a Board of Directors meeting in June 2008 in India. Delegates would all be housed at the Taj Hotel in New Delhi. The Congress dates would be June 6-9, 2008, and the cost would be \$750 USD per delegate.

There is also a proposal from Italy to host an Executive Committee meeting in November 27 (for 3 nights during their AGM) should a full Board of Directors venue fall through.

14. Youth Program

President Bastoni asked the Board of Directors to support a pilot program to encourage the youth of Les Clefs d'Or.

Past President Denis O'Brien explained details of a pilot program to encourage sections to bring young concierges to congresses. Andy Pongco always had a passion for encouraging youth, and so Past President O'Brien and the Executive Committee agreed to call this program the "Andy Pongco Award."

Constituents must be 35 or younger, and they must be at this year's Congress au gratis thanks to the sponsorship of their section. Candidates will be asked to complete a short questionnaire and undergo a personal interview. The winner will receive complimentary congress registration and airfare to China.

This year, because it is a brand new program, there might only be a few countries who meet the eligibility requirements. However, President Bastoni hopes the program will grow to include many more individuals in the coming years.

President Ben Wahlte suggested that another way to improve congress attendance would be to lower congress rates.

President Nelly Duarte hopes the Board of Directors will consider including members from sections who have not been able to sponsor members due to serious financial constraints. These members desperately need

assistance in order to attend meetings. President Bastoni agreed and apologized for the limitations in this inaugural award year. Ms. Marjorie Silverman suggested that Presidents from strong countries consider sponsoring candidates from their financially challenged fellow countries.

There are seven nominees for this year's award. At the General Assembly, a three-person panel will ask them to fill out a quick questionnaire and to participate in an interview. It was strongly suggested that each nominee look at the website before their interview time.

- Tony Chang (Chinese Taipei)
- Dean Madison (Great Britain)
- Anders Ruggerio-Olsted (Denmark)
- Mark Hubert (Hungary)
- Francois Pascal leBlanc (Canada)
- Emilie Garnier (France)
- André Kleinschmidt (Germany)

16. Organigram

President Bastoni distributed a preliminary draft of performance standards he believes will help Les Clefs d'Or work more efficiently. President Ron Crowdy was pleased to see the document and believes it will help make each member more accountable for upholding his/her duties.

President Bastoni will be happy to entertain revisions to this document as the Board of Directors might suggest from time to time.

Ms. Marjorie Silverman reminded the Board that all these job descriptions are formulated in accordance with the statutes.

The Board of Directors agreed to announce the adoption of the formalized organigram at the General Assembly.

17. Application of Argentina as a Member Section

First Vice President Robert Watson explained that Argentina has now met all its requirements for membership. The USA and Mexico officially presented Argentina's candidature for acceptance as the 40th member section of UICH. Their candidature was accepted by a unanimous show of hands, and they were warmly welcomed into UICH with a standing ovation and resounding applause.

President Pablo Castro thanked the assembly and the individuals who were instrumental in Argentina's success. He assured UICH that Argentina will uphold all its responsibilities with vigor.

18. Questions and Proposals from Various Countries

Great Britain would like to propose the development of an embellishment for the Bucherer keys that can indicate long service (15 years, 25 years, etc.). Many ideas were shared.

Australia would like to create a standardized application form that all Sections can use. President Colin Toomey and Ms. Regena Falling (USA) agreed to form a commission to make recommendations for such a form at next year's Congress in China.

Hungary asked the Board of Directors to help him reenergize the Romanian section. President Bastoni offered to do as much as possible and encouraged the entire Board of Directors to come forward with issues like these so that they can be brainstormed for solutions.

Israel expressed displeasure with rising Congress costs. President Ben Wahlte, who has long been outspoken on this same subject, is encouraged by the British efforts to construct their congress fees in a different fashion. He believes that many savings will be realized. He reiterated that a reduction in congress costs would make it easier for more people to attend. President Bastoni respectfully asked the Board of Directors to consider that the Danish registration fees for this congress cover only 30% of their overall costs. In fact, the Danes will more than likely suffer a deficit. To help offset the loss, the USA presented the Danes with a \$2,500 contribution.

Portugal asked about the international flag, and President Bastoni thanked the Chinese section for developing the two new flags proudly flying outside the SAS Radisson at this meeting. Portugal asked again about the merit of creating membership cards. Past President Denis O'Brien believes the cards would not be used and therefore they should not be created. President Sorrentino agreed and said that countries are welcome to implement a membership card program nationally if they wish. There are membership cards available for purchase through the Austrian section. Also, France has its own version of the card that could be produced, and President Bastoni reiterated France's suggestion to develop cards with individual membership numbers.

USA asked whether other countries besides itself were experiencing a trend of desks being outsourced. In the states, President Dancer and his colleagues are countering this trend with a media campaign. Germany experiences this same problem, and at a Kempinski Hotel in Hamburg, management outsourced not just the concierges but the doormen as well. President Sorrentino warned that this can happen to any of us and it is everyone's imperative to market themselves effectively to management. Turkey expressed concern over this trend, too, and Mr. Tarik Er said outsourcing compromises the personal touch that guests expect. He added that tour companies that approach hotels wield much power. Forearmed is forewarned, and Les Clefs d'Or must remain vigilant about showing its worth to management.

New Zealand asked for guidance on how to handle some membership issues. (1) The Executive Committee explained that members must be full-time concierges in order to retain their keys. A gentleman who only works at the desk occasionally may not continue his membership. (2) As long as cumulative time requirements are met, a concierge does not need to have served them consecutively in order to qualify for membership.

Japan asked if UICH is going to develop a Zone Director budget in the future. Mr. Christian Sussman replied that this is a difficult question as there are vastly different budgets required in each Zone. To distribute a budget fairly is then a difficult prospect. At the moment, Zones are mandated as self-funding. In the future, if it can be done, then UICH will surely entertain the notion.

19. Disciplinary Actions

The Board of Directors voted to place Morocco and Romania under one-year observations. Though these sections are current on their dues, they are unresponsive to requests for information and they do not participate actively in the association.

The Board of Directors voted to suspend Russia and Malaysia for one year. Neither of these countries have paid their subscription fees and as well, they have been unresponsive and nonparticipatory.

20. Code of Ethics Committee

Past President Denis O'Brien will head a Code of Ethics committee. He has appointed the following individuals to serve with him: Mr. Rainald Egerth, Mr. Geoffrey Argue, Mr. Gustavo Concha, and Mr. Ben Wahlte. There are two substitutes appointed: Mr. Alain Vanderauwera and Mr. Gregory Tan.

Mr. O'Brien thanked all the gentlemen for agreeing to participate.

21. Conclusion

President Roger Bastoni thanked all participants for their contributions and courtesy. The meeting was officially concluded.