



## **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**

### **MGM GRAND LAS VEGAS**

**5 November 2009**

**Present:** President Robert Watson, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Virginia Casale, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Emmanuel Vrettos, 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President Colin Toomey, General Secretary Michael Romei, Assistant General Secretary Shujaat Khan; Treasurer Jean-Roland Boutillé, Past President Roger Bastoni, Zone Directors Gustavo Concha, Henning Kletvang, Maurice Dancer, and Claudio Caser, Comité des Sages Members Marjorie Silverman, Aldo Giacomello, and Denis O'Brien, and Muffin Spielman

**Absent:** Zone Directors Tamas Ungár, Mario Eroico, and Gregory Tan, and French President Roderick Lévejac

#### **Official Welcome**

President Robert Watson greeted the Executive Committee and gave a special welcome to first-time meeting attendees Messrs. Maurice Dancer, Henning Kletvang and Gustavo Concha.

#### **Secretary's Report**

Secretary Michael Romei welcomed everyone to the meeting. He thanked Ms. Jeanne Mills and the MGM Grand for their generosity in putting this meeting together.

In preparation for today's meeting, the Executive Committee received copies of the most current UICH Board of Directors listings (address/phone/fax/email); minutes from the China Congress; a copy of the survey results from the China Congress; and copies of the 2009 quarterly Executive Committee conference calls.

Secretary Romei stated that it was an excellent idea from President Watson to ask for quarterly conference calls; it's a great way for our Executive Committee to be informed and in communication with each other. It also proves to be most efficient since the

minutes of our conference calls are distributed to each other; therefore it saves time at our Executive Committee meetings; not having to recite activities and events from the interim.

The Executive Committee is making an effort to send at least one representative to all Zone Meetings that may be taking place. Secretary Romei and 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Emmanuel Vrettos were able to attend the Eastern European Zone Meeting, and Mr. Romei reported that it was a terrific event and that the Eastern European section is gaining strength and moving forward in a positive direction.

Secretary Romei states that since China he has been quite active with communications between himself and various Presidents of member sections etc. During the past Summer he spent most of his time putting together the first of two International Revues slated for publication in 2009. The Spring/Summer edition is now complete and featured the China Congress. The Autumn/Winter edition will be a Christmas issue and will feature this Executive Committee meeting in Las Vegas and France's upcoming national meeting (celebrating their 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary).

He has enjoyed learning his position on the Executive Committee under the mentorship of First Vice President Virginia Casale and recently decided to delegate the task of the 2011-2012 Book of Members project to Assistant Secretary Shujaat Khan who has been most helpful throughout the year.

Secretary Romei has enjoyed constant contact with Ms. Esther Baldocchi (rue Cambon), who has helped him disseminate and gather information. Perhaps Ms. Baldocchi could join UICH at upcoming events so that everyone could get to know her.

While in Sardinia in Summer 2009, Secretary Romei met with Italian President Federico Barbarossa and Mr. Roberto Marin (President of the Sardinia section of Les Clefs d'Or). He said the Sardinians are very interested in hosting a Board of Directors or Executive Committee meeting in 2010, perhaps at the end of May or the end of September. Soon, they intend to forward a formal proposal, including costs, to the Board for review.

Secretary Romei also traveled to Chile this year, where he met with eager and excellent concierges who look forward to forming a section some day.

Secretary Romei received word that a concierge was seen on Oceana Cruise Lines wearing crossed keys and holding himself out to be a Les Clefs d'Or member. A formal letter was sent to the cruise line expressing concern over the misrepresentation. No reply was received.

Secretary Romei read a Lecture of Correspondence from Ms. Daniela Cerboni, Mr. Marco Milanez, Ms. Inger Boudouris, and Mr. Spiros Arathimos.

A moment of silence was observed for recently deceased Greek colleague, Mr. Ioannis Varotsis (Hellas).

## **Treasurer's Report**

Treasurer Jean-Roland Boutillé gave a complete accounting as of 1 November 2009, including profit/loss statements, bank balances, and projected 2010 budgets.

To date, UICH has spent 80819,94 Euro and received 123876,41 Euro, leaving a profit of 43056,47 so far this year. The bank balance at Credit Lyonnais shows 100771,33.

Bucherer keys are now shipped through the Paris office (rather than direct from Bucherer) and therefore, the shipping costs are higher than in past years. Still, the Executive Committee agreed that the control of keys by the Paris office is a good thing.

In place of Muffin Spielman, Ms. Elizabeth Wilson was retained to take minutes at the China Congress. Treasurer Boutillé thanked the USA section for helping offset these costs by paying Ms. Wilson's airfare.

Treasurer Boutillé will contact Fedex to inquire why the charges for shipping the last edition of *The Review* were double what they have been in the past. When he has an answer, he will revert to the Executive Committee.

All outstanding balances for 2009 have now been paid with the exceptions of Mexico (owes 2043 Euro), Korea (owes 325), and Morocco (owes 1170). 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President Colin Toomey will contact Korea to resolve the situation, and Zone Director Maurice Dancer will contact Mexico for the same purpose.

The situation in Morocco was discussed by the Executive Committee in great detail. They are in arrears for two years' worth of subscription fees, and they also still owe UICH for some Bucherer keys. After much discussion, it was agreed that 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Emmanuel Vrettos will contact Morocco and ask them to resolve the situation. Furthermore, President Robert Watson will compose an official letter warning Morocco that they will not be allowed to attend the Lisbon Congress unless they are paid in full. This is in accordance with UICH statutes. The Executive Committee will be copied on the Moroccan correspondence. If no response is received from Morocco, then when the Board of Directors meets in Lisbon, it will be asked to vote to suspend Morocco.

Before preparing the 2010 subscription fees, Treasurer Boutillé will cross-reference reported membership numbers with Assistant Secretary Shujaat Khan, who is gathering numbers of members for the Book of Members project.

Perhaps Zone Directors should contact section presidents to assess whether they have adequate budgets in place. Every section should have a workable budget that allows them to pay bills and function efficiently. If they do not have budget procedures in place, then Zone Directors may be in a position to help mentor them in this area.

Treasurer Boutillé presented a rough draft of a 2010 budget showing anticipated income of 136104 Euro and anticipated expenses of 116972.

We cannot know what amounts sponsors will contribute, nor whether there will be additional sponsors or fewer sponsors. To date, American Express and Lufthansa have committed funding, but Rodriguez, Cofin, and Elite have not. Mr. Aldo Giacomello will follow up with Elite and revert.

Spanish President Angel Masa has indicated that Corté Ingles wants to advertise in the next Review. However, neither Mr. Masa nor Corté Ingles have yet contacted us with solid intentions.

Cost savings are realized when advertisers are procured by UICH rather than by Jet Media, because UICH saves the middle-man costs. So for the benefit of neophyte Board Members, the Executive Committee in Lisbon will review the protocol to follow when seeking sponsors for the Review.

No one has come forth yet to sponsor the 2010 Andy Pongco Award. The 2008 award was sponsored by American Express; the 2009 award was sponsored by Elite.

The Book of Members will be produced au gratis this year courtesy of Morris Visitor Publications. This is a huge cost savings for UICH. Still, the 2010 budget has allotted 10000 Euro toward secretarial fees (to prepare and compile the lists in the proper format); shipping fees; and any other unforeseen production expenses.

Treasurer Boutillé will try to bring Bucherer keys with him to Lisbon to fulfill orders by Presidents. This will save shipping costs.

Treasurer Jean-Roland Boutillé presented a graph showing a five-year improvement in cash flow. Bank balances have grown annually and the Treasury now has a reasonable cushion of 118686 Euro in its account.

In Lisbon, the Executive Committee expects that some Board of Directors will see the cash reserves and ask that subscription fees be lowered. The official response will be that the Treasury is healthy, not excessive. It is always wise to retain adequate cash reserves.

Treasurer Boutillé reported that there is now a UICH corporate credit card available for Executive Committee use. This will streamline the way in which expenses are paid. President Watson asked Treasurer Boutillé to come to Lisbon with scripted procedural guidelines on how credit card requests should be handled.

## **Zone Reports**

*Asia.* 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President Colin Toomey delivered Asia's report in place of Mr. Gregory Tan, who was unable to come to Las Vegas. Mr. Gregory Tan has officially assumed Mr. Christian Sussman's job as Asian Zone Director.

Highlights of the report included the following commentary:

- UICH requires that sections have a minimum of 10 members to be in compliance. This is sometimes a problem in the Asian region. Past President Roger Bastoni stressed that a national president must take charge of growth in his/her section. Though Malaysia presently has only 8 members, it is taking on another 4 shortly and will also welcome 10 new adherent members in the coming year. The Philippines grew from 6 to 10 members and are now in compliance.
- India (presently under Singapore's wing) hopes to become an independent UICH member section soon. Mr. Tan is working with the Indians to help them get their bylaws into compliance with UICH statutes. There is also some challenge involved with unifying East and West India, which seem somewhat separated. Zone Director Maurice Dancer and Assistant Secretary Shujaat Khan have both been to India and see improvements in this area. India expects to send 9 delegates to Portugal
- The Asian Zone is vast and growing quickly. Zone Director Gregory Tan and Third Vice President Colin Toomey have been brainstorming ways to manage this challenge. They have discussed splitting Asia into two separate zones. However, so as not to sever the strong sense of Asian solidarity, Mr. Toomey believes that Mr. Tan will instead choose to take on an assistant. This will all be sorted out when the Zone Presidents meet in Lisbon. It was undetermined whether the creation of an assistant zone position would require a statutory change or whether it would instead be treated as a "policy and practice."
- Past President Roger Bastoni was very pleased and impressed with the Asian report. He asked Mr. Toomey to forward the report to all presidents.

***Eastern Europe.*** Third Vice President Colin Toomey presented Zone Director Tamas Ungar's report. There is good forward momentum overall for the Eastern European region. Poland has formed a solid section and hopes to soon become a member of UICH. Mr. Ungar and his colleagues are quite proud of the creation of the new UICH flag.

The Russian section, which had been dormant for several years, seems to once again be growing in strength under the leadership of its new President, Ms. Ekaterina Zhuravleva. Nevertheless, Mr. Denis O'Brien is concerned that Ukrainian concierges are being placed under a neophyte section's care.

***The Americas.*** Zone Director Maurice Dancer reported that his region continues to battle challenging economic and health issues that are affecting tourism. Argentina is working hard to plan the upcoming 2010 Pan-American Congress in July. Chile and Peru have written official letters asking if they can be attached to Argentina instead of Brazil. To complete the transfer of mentorship, Mr. Dancer will request a letter from Brazilian President Roberta Bezerra supporting the move.

Brazil has been solidifying its organization and now has 27 members, but the organization still lacks some cohesion that Ms. Bezerra is working to improve.

Canada is working diligently on the upcoming 58<sup>th</sup> International Congress in Toronto in 2011.

President Yasmin Flores is providing good strong leadership for Mexico, which hopes to present itself as a host city for an International Congress in Cancun, perhaps in 2014. Mr. Dancer will send them congress guidelines to review, which might help them in their decision.

The USA had its Board meeting in October and focused on ways to make congresses more cost-effective. The USA is also focusing on developing educational outreach programs; giving scholarships to hospitality students; and offering seminars around the country from time to time. Zone Director Dancer has set a goal of expanding the Americas region to Costa Rica, Colombia, Panama, Chile and Peru.

***Western Europe.*** Zone Director Claudio Caser believes the act of placing Luxembourg under observation for being too “sleepy” had the desired effect. Luxembourg is now wide awake and is even adding three new members in 2010. They recently hosted a good zone meeting and have also created a new website. Mr. Caser encouraged the Executive Committee to visit the newly designed site and forward congratulatory notes about it to President Simon Delcomminette.

Great Britain continues to work on plans for the 59th International Congress in 2012. Membership in Great Britain is growing exponentially, with an average of two new members joining the organization each month.

Ireland will have its AGM in February and Mr. Denis O’Brien extended a warm invitation to the Executive Committee members to attend.

Netherlands continues to swap presidents – but the switch-off is now between Mr. Brian McKenzie and Mr. Robin van Kooten, since Mr. Ben Wahlte has retired.

France is planning a grand 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary event. The event will last for four days and Mr. Caser invited the Executive Committee to look at his Swiss newsletter to find a link to the registration.

Switzerland continues to set the standards for innovation. They have recently implemented a program with American Express that invites its Lifestyle call center staff to be “hotel concierges for a day.” The program helps Lifestyle staff understand how a concierge works and it also helps the hotels procure more business from the Lifestyle staff. Great Britain, too, is implementing this Lifestyle/hotel desk interaction.

Mr. Caser had hoped to retire his presidency but it appears he will continue in his role for another couple of years. In its entire history, Switzerland has only had four presidents.

**Scandinavia.** Zone Director Henning Kletvang gave the Scandinavian Zone Report. Norway has 11 members and is the smallest country in the region. They meet every other month. Mogens Andersen has now returned from a leave of absence, though he is expected to retire within the next two years. Norway hopes to launch a website in 2010 and has pledged to become more active with international congress attendance.

Finland is planning a 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary event on March 27. Finland publishes a magazine twice yearly and has a new website.

Denmark has 32 members and meets monthly. President Arshad Khokhar is in Dubai at the moment, working on the opening of a Radisson there.

The economy continues to affect Scandinavian tourism. The Scandinavian Zone intends to publish an internal newsletter to increase communications within their zone. The inaugural issue has not yet been finalized.

Zone Director Kletvang received a letter from a Swedish concierge expressing interest in reestablishing Sweden's independence, but there was never any follow-up communication. Swedish concierges are presently under the auspices of the Finnish section. After some discussion, the Executive Committee decided to write an official letter to **Frank Olow** explaining that Sweden's status was discussed in Las Vegas and that the Committee is requesting an official status report on the region's activities. It may be necessary to vote on Sweden's status in Lisbon.

**Mediterranean.** Second Vice President Emmanuel Vrettos recently found himself at the helm of the Mediterranean Zone Report when, in late October, Mr. Mario Eroico resigned officially from the position and from Les Clefs d'Or. Vice President Vrettos emailed all section presidents on October 21 asking for someone to stand up and assume the zone leadership by the end of November. Though he received prompt responses from every President, none volunteered to assume the position. Italian President Barbarossa has not expressed any interest. Portuguese President Nuno Jardim Condeco is busy planning a congress and so is not in a position to lead the zone at the moment. Greek President Spiros Arathimos is interested in the position, but because he is young and new to Les Clefs d'Or, he does not want to offend more seasoned presidents by putting his own name forward. Third Vice President Colin Toomey will call President Arathimos to encourage him to make the move.

Past President Bastoni recalled his attempts to jumpstart the region by meeting with presidents individually while in China. He believes that it is really just a matter of finding the right leader, but this can sometimes be a timely endeavor.

**Oceania.** Zone Director Gustavo Concha reported that Australia presently has 38 members. They had their AGM in July and hosted balls in Perth, Melbourne, and the

Gold Coast. They had golf days in Melbourne and Sydney. Australia's bimonthly newsletter is a good way for members within the country to stay connected. Australia has a newly designed website, too.

New Zealand stands at 24 active members and growing. New officer positions were created this year to accommodate this growth, and a new President was elected at New Zealand's AGM in May. The New Zealand section hosted a ball in Auckland and an inaugural golf day, also in Auckland. New Zealand is very excited about its launch of a magazine called "Recommend," which will premier this month and will be placed in all Les Clefs d'Or hotel rooms throughout the country.

The Oceania region will be sending four people to the International Congress in Lisbon – two from Australia and two from New Zealand. Unfortunately, due to the cost involved, the region does not foresee any more people signing up. It is disappointing but understandable. There will be no Andy Pongco award nominee from Oceania this year.

Oceania will have its inaugural combined congress in 2011. They expect 80-100 delegates to attend, and Mr. Concha invited the Executive Committee to join the festivities as a sort of pre-site inspection of what will come in Queenstown in 2013, when New Zealand hosts the 60<sup>th</sup> International Congress in April (which is their autumn season). Planning for this meeting and strategies for its success are already well under way.

Oceania's vision is to grow its membership through positive exposure within the hospitality/tourism industry by promoting Les Clefs d'Or, the concierge profession, and the motto "in service through friendship."

### **China Congress Report**

After a lunch break, President Robert Watson welcomed President John Sun Dong to the meeting, thanking him once again for the terrific and hospitable Chinese experience at last year's Congress.

President Sun Dong thanked the Executive Committee for the opportunity to make a presentation at today's meeting.

There are challenges to managing Les Clefs d'Or China. He asked the Executive Committee to help him protect UICH and its standards. One effective way to accomplish this could be the implementation of a once-annual exam requirement for all Chinese concierges. If the exam could be overseen and performed by Executive Committee members, it would make it clear to the Chinese section that UICH is an international body with international statutes. It would help delineate the separation between Gold Keys Alliance (a Chinese national association) and Les Clefs d'Or China (the official UICH section), and it would help President Sun Dong authenticate his power to act on UICH's behalf.

There has been much growth and a lot of concierge turnover since 1998, when UICH first came to China. Many former concierges have retained their keys even though they are now General Managers or other leaders in other industries. Because the generic phrase “gold keys” has become so closely associated with excellence in China, these individuals are strongly in desire of maintaining a gold key connection. President Sun Dong is aware that these individuals no longer qualify according to the international statutes, but he faces a situation where he must manage these individuals with care because they are in positions of power and have expressed their desire to support Les Clefs d’Or. Therefore, President Sun Dong has created separate tiers of membership for GMs, managers, concierges, etc. – all on a national scale. Such members are considered affiliates (or local) members only.

To become an international Clefs d’Or China, a concierge must have worked five years in a hotel, three in the position of concierge. They must complete a training course, a personal interview, and an examination. They are tested on friendship, cooperation, and personal appearance. They need to obtain a letter of recommendation from their General Manager. Colleagues are consulted to ascertain a candidate’s reputation in the community. Lastly, the candidate needs to speak English. If the candidate successfully passes all these steps, then Les Clefs d’Or headquarters will bestow official UICH membership upon the individual.

It is the newly created English-speaking requirement for international membership that has caused the numbers of members in China to shrink.

President Sun Dong is fighting a unique and challenging battle within his section. As he said, “China is the copy nation.” He faces a situation where the Chinese are covetous of the unique brand image of Les Clefs d’Or. He also explained that marketing and free enterprise have spiraled out of control in China in recent years. It might be unfortunate, but when leaders change, policies change. Therefore, President Sun Dong has lost a lot of control over the situation and he needs the Executive Committee’s help to regain that control.

He continues in his position to protect the history and statutes of Les Clefs d’Or. Were he to relinquish his title, the country would face further dilution of the association as imposters adopt the gold key brand. President Sun Dong needs the Executive Committee’s help to preserve and protect the UICH brand in China.

Gold Key Alliance was created in 2003 by the head of the Chinese Tourism Department. It is a consortia of hotels and hoteliers spanning 45 regions across China, and each is self-policing.

The Gold Key Alliance members were invited to participate at the International Congress because President Sun Dong would rather retain control over these local associations than allow them to run rogue. Keeping them attached to UICH as “junior members” or “local members” gives President Sun Dong time to train them and teach them what the meaning

of Les Clefs d'Or is. Also, by partnering with Gold Key Alliance, President Sun Dong wins the financial support he needs to help him develop an e-concierge system.

The Executive Committee was sympathetic to President Sun Dong's challenges, but at the same time, they are concerned that the gold key image is being diluted in China.

President Sun Dong continues in his efforts to tightly control the distribution of official Bucherer keys. He believes a once-annual exam, issued by Executive Committee members, will help him enforce the international statutes within his section.

Ms. Marjorie Silverman complimented President Sun Dong on his many accomplishments. Really, in a very short time, he has created a very sophisticated and well-trained hospitality industry.

### **Book of Members**

Assistant Secretary Shujaat Khan is overseeing the project to produce a 2011-2012 Book of Members. To date, 30 countries have already forwarded their lists, though many are not in the proper format. Mr. Khan has asked Muffin Spielman to fix this problem and then send the correct file type back to that section so they can maintain it properly into the future.

Assistant Secretary Khan is tracking the numbers of members each section reports, and he will compare these figures to the numbers of members reported to Treasurer Boutillé for subscription fees.

Changes to the next Book of Members will include:

- Putting the countries in alphabetical order (eliminating zone groupings)
- Inserting a blank page at the front of each section (instead of a map). This would allow members to have space to write notes or important contact information. It would also require less layout work and save on printing costs.
- Instead of maps for each country, the Book will have a two-page spread of a world map, either at the front or the back, to show where member sections are located geographically and to delineate the borders of UICH's seven zones.
- The statutes will not be printed in the new book, especially because they need some revision to come in line with current practices. Instead, the statutes will be posted on the UICH website.

Assistant Secretary Khan intends to have all the information on hand before Portugal to allow him adequate time to lay out the material and go to press in May.

If a section's subscription fees are not paid in full, they will not be included in the Book of Members. Notification to this effect shall be sent to all Presidents so they have time to comply before Lisbon. The decision will be reiterated in Portugal, so Presidents are all made aware again.

## **International Statutory Changes**

Some discussion ensued about what statutes might need to be revised or updated to reflect current practices. Past President Bastoni agreed to review the statutes and compile remarks, which he will forward to Ms. Marjorie Silverman, Mr. Aldo Giacomello, and First Vice President Virginia Casale. Ms. Casale will ultimately present the suggested statutory changes to the Board of Directors for vote.

## **Lisbon Congress Update**

***Pre-Congress Visit.*** President Watson shared a video of the venues where events in Lisbon will be held. The congress is sure to be successful considering the eager, young team organized by President Nuno Jardim Condeça. The Executive Committee reviewed the preliminary agenda for the meeting. To date, 120 attendees have registered. There is one free night on the agenda that will help the host country save some money because budgeting is so tight.

***Educational Update.*** There was some confusion over whether Ms. Katherine Eustache would be hosting a symposium or not. President Watson will check with President Condeço to see what he has arranged with Ms. Eustache and revert back to the Executive Committee.

Treasurer Jean-Roland Boutillé believes that Ms. Eustache is slated to host a symposium and that she is simply waiting for the Executive Committee to give her a topic so she can begin planning.

Ideally, the education day will begin with a half-hour guest speaker, then a morning symposium by Ms. Eustache (perhaps an hour-and-a-half). Then, after lunch, the Executive Committee will ask Ms. Roberta Nedry – a hospitality trainer – to do an afternoon presentation.

***Andy Pongco Award.*** There is now a standardized form for candidate submissions. The process continues to be refined and Ms. Marjorie Silverman expects it to get better in each successive year. She passed around an example of the exam that will be used this year (exams will be changed every couple of years). Proctors for this year's award will be Mr. Colin Toomey, Mr. Tamas Ungár, and Ms. Carolina Avaria (Canada). Should Ms. Silverman be unable to attend the Lisbon Congress, Third Vice President Colin Toomey will direct the endeavor (since he is familiar with the award proceedings from last year). First Vice President Virginia Casale offered to help, too.

So far, there are candidates from Russia and Chinese Taipei. France and the United States will be submitting candidates, as well.

Because there was a candidate last year whose business card reflected a front desk position, this year the Executive Committee will reiterate clearly that all candidates must

be full-time working concierges with business cards that reflect this fact. Ms. Silverman will send an email to all parties alerting them to the business card requirement.

### **The International Review**

The winter/spring 2009 edition of The Review is under way, and General Secretary Romei already has a healthy amount of material. He apologized for some oversights regarding sponsorship visibility and other issues on the last edition. These will be corrected in future printings as he continues to learn and master the proper protocol.

### **The Website**

There is now a section for partner links on the UICH website. American Express already has a link; the International Herald Tribune will shortly be getting one. President Watson hopes to encourage other partners to link to the website, too.

### **Sponsors/Partners**

*American Express.* First Vice President Virginia Casale presented an outline detailing guidelines on how American Express can help sponsor Zone meetings.

Mr. Aldo Giacomello suggested that the document eliminate any reference to a specific dollar amount, since American Express may change the amount at any time. Secondly, the proposal makes it seem like the sponsorship is given every year. In fact, it's given every mandate. In other words, four zones might receive assistance one year, and three zones the next. Mr. Giacomello will more closely review the proposed document and work with Ms. Casale to finalize it in time to present in Lisbon.

At the moment, American Express sets aside 20000 a year for Les Clefs d'Or endeavors, but these funds are earmarked and allotted quite specifically. American Express operates differently in different areas of the world, too. However, he is no longer at liberty to gift sponsorship dollars without the permission of Mme. Cerboni.

American Express is the only sponsor (outside of the MGM) for this Executive Committee meeting.

If there is American Express sponsorship money left unspent at the end of this year, it will roll over toward Zone meeting sponsorships next year.

President Robert Watson relayed warm greetings from Mme. Cerboni, who could not be with us today.

*International Herald Tribune.* While in Dubai recently, Second Vice President Emmanuel Vrettos met with Ms. Elena Konstantopolous from the International Herald Tribune (she is stationed in Dubai and runs the European operations for the newspaper). As is often the case, partnerships can change as management changes. There is rumor of

Ms. Katherine Eustache's position being eliminated. But Ms. Konstantopolous has pledged to retain and even boost its sponsorship of UICH regardless of personnel changes at the newspaper. Second Vice President Vrettos invited Ms. Konstantopolous to Lisbon but she has yet to confirm her attendance.

***Morris Visitor Publications.*** President Watson enjoys a good relationship with MVP's Mr. Harvey Dana, who has been asked by the publication's owner, Mr. Morris, to print the next international Book of Members for UICH au gratis. This is a huge cost savings for our association.

***Other Sponsorships.*** President Watson was recently contacted by Newspaper Direct, a company that custom-publishes newspapers (about 400 worldwide) to hotel guests around the world. The concierge phones in a request for a specific newspaper from a specific location and it is immediately printed and delivered to the guest for every day of his/her stay. President Watson will continue to advise the Board as he negotiates a relationship with this vendor and Virginia Casale will be handling the follow up.

### **Dubai Application**

At last year's Congress in China, Dubai put forth its official application to become the 42nd member section of UICH. (They will actually be the 41<sup>st</sup> section because of Sweden's dormancy.) At this year's Congress in Lisbon, the Executive Committee will ask the Board of Directors to accept the application and award them membership.

President Robert Watson and Second Vice President Emmanuel Vrettos have both reviewed Dubai's application. Before the Board votes in Lisbon, Ms. Marjorie Silverman will also review it to ensure that it is complete.

Vice President Vrettos will contact Mr. Randy Santos to ask for an official Arabic translation of the English statutes to be sure they are the exactly the same in both languages. In particular, the Executive Committee wants to be sure that Article 4 is preserved in its entirety. The translation should be confirmed and stamped with an official seal from Dubai's tourism government.

Dubai is not an independent country but is one of the seven Emirates under the UAE name. Abu Dhabi is actually the capital of the UAE, therefore the application from the members of Dubai will be listed as United Arab Emirates (UAE).

### **International Flag Project**

President Robert Watson passed around the new design of the flag. Hungary did an outstanding job on it. There was some conversation about perhaps omitting the Swedish flag. The Executive Committee also considered using the UAE flag rather than the Dubai flag.

When the UICH flag is rolled out in Lisbon, the Dubai/UAE flag will be covered until such time as the section is officially accepted.

### **Future Congresses**

Planning is well under way for the 58<sup>th</sup> International Congress in Toronto in 2011. First Vice President Casale read a letter from President Tony Daoud about the upcoming event. All delegates will be housed at the Fairmont Royal York. The Congress will be held at the end of April. A price has not yet been set. Side trip locations were considered, perhaps to Montreal, Niagara on the Lake, and/or Quebec. At the moment, Canada can most likely rely on sponsorships from IHT and American Express. The educational event will be overseen by Mr. Gerald Parent.

The 59<sup>th</sup> International Congress will be held in Great Britain in 2012.

The 60<sup>th</sup> International Congress will be held in New Zealand in 2013.

The 61<sup>st</sup> International Congress has not yet been slated, but there is interest from Cancun, Mexico.

### **Vissoie Report**

Last summer, President Claudio Caser, Mr. Aldo Giacomello, and President Robert Watson visited Vissoie, Switzerland, the birthplace of Mr. Ferdinand Gillet (the founder of UICH). The area is known as the Valley of Friendship, and it is comprised of several different villages in the area. Vissoie is the seat of UICH history and a peaceful, symbolic place. Moreover, there are a combined 20,000 hotel rooms scattered in the mountain paradise. The Mayor of Vissoie is interested in hosting an Executive Committee meeting, or perhaps even a Board of Directors meeting, in his valley. The Executive Committee will propose the idea to the Board of Directors in Lisbon.

General Secretary Romei will consider featuring a wintry photo of Vissoie in the next Review, with a caption wishing everyone a merry Christmas.

### **ICI**

After receiving an invitation, President Robert Watson met with the Dean of the new ICI in Paris recently. The defunct ICI from Canada was purchased and has been resurrected as a school that trains customer service professionals across all industries

One of ICI's teachers is a past president of the French section of Les Clefs d'Or. Further, one of ICI's biggest supporters is the General Manager of the InterContinental in Paris, presently the home of an ICI intern. There is another ICI intern at the InterContinental in London. Both seem to be excellent concierges.

ICI has been misusing the crossed key logo. Past President Bastoni explained that in France, it has been a challenge to stay separate from the school without discrediting them.

To be perfectly clear, the Executive Committee will reiterate its stance on relations with ICI. This is imperative as new directors join the Board. As presidencies change hands, the history can get lost. Morocco, for example, is a recently reformed section that can benefit from this education (see the most recent Review).

### **Other Business**

There are only 3 honorary diplomas left in stock in Paris. An order must be placed immediately in order to have adequate stock on hand for Portugal.

Eleven countries are still missing trademark protection. The country files at Paris headquarters are woefully incomplete in other areas, too. Zone Director Colin Toomey asked Past President Bastoni to give him a list of what sections are missing what documentation at Paris headquarters. He continues to contact sections that are in noncompliance, albeit it with somewhat lackluster responses.

Eight months have now elapsed since the Board voted to place Spain under observation. No official letter was ever sent to President Angel Masa, though President Watson did give verbal notification to President Masa after the China Congress. The bylaws must be applied equally in every case. Spain is under official observation, and its good standing can only be restored by another Board vote, which should come in Lisbon.

Ms. Marjorie Silverman suggested that the Executive Committee look at revising the statutes to more clearly delineate what “observation” means, including minimal behaviors that are required to return a section to good standing.

Mr. Denis O’Brien continues to have major concerns over the unresolved situation in China. It seems clear that China manufactures its own keys, which is a copyright infringement. Past President Roger Bastoni believes it is imperative for UICH to keep keys out of the hands of local “Gold Key” concierges in China.

As was agreed upon at last year’s Congress, Presidents in Lisbon will be asked to provide a list of names of all members who purchased Bucherer keys during the year.

When the Board of Directors meets in Lisbon, they will need to update their Ethics Committee members.

Zone Director Maurice Dancer asked if there were guidelines for defining whether members can wear keys while abroad at other desks.

There is now a protocol for the way in which adherent member requests from unattached countries are handled. In Lisbon, Third Vice President Colin Toomey will distribute a generic application form and guidelines to the Board of Directors.

First Vice President Virginia Casale asked if Executive Committee members can request travel reimbursements. When can they be claimed and what is the process? Perhaps the Executive Committee could look into creating a budget line to address these issues.

Assistant Secretary Shujaat Khan presented a draft of an “oath of office” form to the Executive Committee. He sees three possible phases of implementation for the form. (1) Those running for international board positions can sign the oath confirming that they meet all requirements. (2) A similar oath could be implemented for the entire Board of Directors. (3) Presidents in each section could mandate that an oath be signed by members as they join the association. This proposal would require a statutory change.

Zone Director Claudio Caser asked the Executive Committee to consider developing an e-newsletter that could provide members with more consistent communications.

The Executive Committee meeting concluded.