



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

**Lisbon Marriott Hotel  
Lisbon, Portugal**

**15 January 2010**

**Present:**

Argentina	France	Italy	Portugal
Australia	Finland	Japan	Singapore
Austria	Germany	Korea	Spain
Belgium	Great Britain	Luxembourg	Switzerland
Brazil	Hellas	Mexico	Thailand
Canada	Holland	Morocco	Turkey
China	Hong Kong	New Zealand	USA
Chinese Taipei	Hungary	Norway	
Czech Republic	Israel	Romania	
Denmark	Ireland	Russia	

**Absent:**

Malaysia  
Philippines

**Inactive:**

Sweden

**Observers:**

Macau  
Dubai  
India  
Poland

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## **OFFICIAL WELCOME**

President Robert Watson welcomed all delegates to the 57<sup>th</sup> International Congress in Lisbon, Portugal. His President's Report ensued.

President Watson has traveled extensively since he took office in China. He went to the Canadian national meeting in Calgary and the USA national meeting in Miami. In August, he visited the headquarters at Rue Cambon; met with Mr. Christian Netzle (Vice President of the German Section), and then went to Vissoie, Switzerland, with President Claudio Caser and Mr. Aldo Giacomello. He came to Lisbon in October to perform a pre-congress site inspection along with Assistant Secretary Shujaat Khan and Second Vice President Emmanuel Vrettos. Mr. Vrettos then accompanied President Watson to Dubai, where the two reviewed the UAE's application for membership. In November, the Executive Committee hosted a meeting in Las Vegas and shortly afterward, President Watson traveled to France to attend a party in honor of the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of UICH.

President Watson reiterated that his mandate when elected in China was to organize regular conference calls to enhance communications amongst the Executive Committee and Board. He has succeeded, and the committee has already had two such calls as well as the face-to-face meeting in Las Vegas. The entire organization runs more efficiently as a result of these practices.

## **ETHICS COMMITTEE**

Mr. Denis O'Brien announced the new members of the Code of Ethics Committee: President Alain Vanderauwera (Belgium), Mr. Geoff Argue (Canada), President Elvis Soiza (Australia), and President Robin Van Kooten (Holland).

## **INTRODUCTIONS**

General Secretary Michael Romei welcomed and thanked our Board of Directors for their input and efficiency in relaying necessary information on a timely basis. He presented the newly published Congress Booklets and described the value of its contents and that it is an excellent document to bring home to show to one's hotel management, local sponsors, etc. Secretary Romei also presented the latest "Joyeux

Noel” Revue which was currently in the process of being distributed worldwide. He further explained the significance of the historic village of Vissoie being on the cover and added that more would be explained of Vissoie later in the meeting.

Secretary Romei then introduced all attendees at today’s meeting, including the entire Board of Directors, the Comité des Sages, the Zone Directors, the national Presidents, and the Executive Committee.

There were 37 sections present, with observers from Macau, India, Poland, and the UAE. In addition, Mr. Christophe Caron from the Four Seasons Georges V in Paris (winner of last year’s Andy Pongco Award) also was present as an observer.

## **LECTURE OF CORRESPONDENCE**

A lecture of correspondence was heard from Comité des Sages Ms. Marjorie Silverman, Mr. Albert Ostertag, and President Catalin Malaureanu.

## **RESUME OF MINUTES**

General Secretary Romei read the highlights from the Executive Committee meeting held on 14 January 2010, as follows:

*President Robert Watson welcomed the Executive Committee to Lisbon and gave a report on his activities.*

*The Executive Committee reviewed a comprehensive booklet of information for this Congress, and I’d like to thank First Vice President Virginia Casale for helping me to compile it.*

*The Winter edition of the International Review is now complete, and I am particularly pleased with it.*

*A lecture of correspondence was read..*

*The Executive Committee spent some time brainstorming improvements on the website.*

*Treasurer Jean-Roland Boutillé presented a full, year-end report of our finances. The Executive Committee is pleased to report that our reserves are now adequate enough to allow us to run efficiently and remain viable in case of major unforeseen expenses.*

*There is now a line item in the budget to allow for reimbursement of Executive Committee expenses, as necessary. The committee member fills out and submits a standardized form to Treasurer Boutillé.*

*Assistant General Secretary Shujaat Khan reported on his progress with the Book of Members. All information has now been received and the layout process will begin shortly. Presidents will have a chance to forward any last-minute updates before the Book goes to press. The target date for publication is late April/early May.*

*In the coming year, your Executive Committee will be working on a formal proposal to change the statutes so they are in line with current practices. You will receive the proposal in time to digest it and vote on it formally next year in Toronto.*

*The Executive Committee discussed giving more time to country proposals in order that they are given adequate consideration. When the proposals come at the end of a meeting, they are often tabled due to time constraints and fatigue.*

*There are 12 candidates for this year’s Andy Pongco award. Looking to the future, the Executive Committee hopes every country will submit candidates. It is nice that there are 12 candidates this year. It would be better if there were 30.*

*The Executive Committee continues to groom new sponsors and partners. Sponsorship is the responsibility of every president, and the Executive Committee wishes to remind the Board of Directors to please forward all potential leads to First*

*Vice President Virginia Casale for follow-up.*

*The Executive Committee discussed the application of Dubai and the presentations by Poland and India, which you will hear later today.*

*The Executive Committee reviewed the agenda for this Congress.*

*Instead of displaying host country gifts at the gala night, Presidents are asked to bring their gifts to the Sunday, January 17 dinner – which is here, at the Marriott.*

*The Executive Committee wishes to thank Mr. Shujaat Khan and his Tiger Raffle, which has raised \$125,000 since its inception. The raffle is an excellent way to help offset the financial burdens of a host country. We spent a good amount of time talking about ways to ensure that the raffle is conducted most equitably and fairly.*

*The Executive Committee addressed noncompliance issues from sections placed under observation and from sections that have still not completed paperwork requirements and/or trademark protection.*

*The Executive Committee reviewed the questions and proposals submitted by various member sections.*

*President and Zone Director Tamas Ungar presented the new UICH official flag.*

*After reviewing some housekeeping details, the meeting concluded.*

## **2009 TREASURY REPORT & 2010 BUDGET**

Treasurer Jean-Roland Boutillé presented some slides with details on the 2009 Treasurer's Report and the 2010 proposed budget. Actual 2009 year-end figures were right on target with the 2009 budget. At 31 December 2009, there is a balance of 99368,78 Euro in the bank. Extraordinary expenses anticipated in 2010 include the printing of the 2011-2012 Book of Members. Still, Treasurer Roland expects to see a surplus of approximately 6000 Euro at the end of the coming year.

The Board of Directors was encouraged to continue to seek new advertisers for the International Review, which will help offset the cost of the publication. All such advertising leads should be filtered through First Vice President Virginia Casale.

In 2006 the bank balance was only 5328 Euro. Today, it is 105000 Euro – so cash flow has improved greatly. Now that the Treasury has a healthy amount in it, Treasurer Boutillé will place 70000 Euro into an interest-bearing account; the remaining 30000 Euro will remain in the checking account for cash flow purposes.

In 2007, UICH had 3157 members. Today it has 3345 members. The trend continues upward.

Treasurer Boutillé asked all Presidents to submit their current membership numbers to him in writing so he could prepare subscription invoices for 2010. Also, if Presidents wish to order keys, they may do so. Treasurer Boutillé has 150 pairs of keys on site that he can sell.

All 2009 subscription fees have been paid, and Treasurer Boutillé thanked sections for responding to invoices in a timely manner.

The full fiscal report will be ratified by a motion at the upcoming General Assembly.

## **ZONE REPORTS**

Third Vice President Colin Toomey explained that much time and effort goes into the compilations of the Zone Reports. He applauded the Zone Directors on putting together such detailed information. To save time, Presidents received a printed booklet that contains all reports. This gives delegates time to digest the information more thoroughly. Additionally, the printed reports are a wonderful tool to help Presidents learn what other sections are doing around the world. The success of each report rests entirely on the shoulders of the presidents within each zone. It is important to respond to zone directors' requests promptly by at least acknowledging the request. UICH understands that Presidents may not be able to provide detailed information with a same-day turnaround.

Presidents met by zone for 15 minutes to discuss regional business. The Mediterranean section elected President Federico Barbarossa to fill the Zone Director position in that area.

## **BOOK OF MEMBERS**

Assistant General Secretary Shujaat Khan gave an update on how the 2011-2012 Book of Members is progressing. He is quite pleased with the efficient cooperation he has received from all Presidents. Everyone upheld his timelines and he now has all the necessary information to begin the printing process.

There were some smaller sections that did not submit their lists in the proper Excel format. Ms. Muffin Spielman will input the lists into Excel and send a copy to each section. Ideally, all sections will then retain currency of their lists in the appropriate Excel format for future printing purposes.

Mr. Khan told Presidents to expect the following changes in the next printing of the Book:

- The statutes will not be printed in the book. Instead, they will appear only on the website.
- Sections will be listed in alphabetical order by country instead of by zone.
- The logos and flags of each section will appear inside the front and rear flaps of the book.

Mr. Khan expects the number of pages of the Book to approximate 375. He hopes to have the books completed by late April or early May of 2010. He intends to order about 4000 books.

Thanks to the generosity of Morris Visitor Publications, the only charges incurred with the printing of the Book of Members will be administrative costs and shipping charges.

Quotes from Fedex Europe and Fedex USA will be obtained, and the books will be drop-shipped from whatever location offers the best rates.

## **STATUTES**

Past President Roger Bastoni reported that he has reviewed the statutes in detail and that there is much work to do to update them so they reflect current practices. This was, in fact, one of his mandates and the Executive Committee has asked him to continue the project in the coming year. He intends to put together a small panel of Executive Committee members and, together, they will present a formal proposal for adoption at the 2011 Toronto Congress. If Presidents have comments or ideas, they should share them with their Zone Directors, who will then take the information to the Executive Committee for consideration. This will assure a most democratic process that will satisfy all of UICH in the end.

## **UICH WEBSITE UPDATE**

French President Roderick Levéjac continues to update the website. Coming improvements include:

- Enhancing the sponsor links
- Posting photographs of Executive Committee members
- An Andy Pongco Award page, which will describe the history of the award. It will also feature small photos/bios of each of the winners to date.
- Congress guidelines, which will allow sections pondering the idea of hosting a congress to learn more about what it involves
- Zone reports
- Minutes of all meetings

President Levéjac asked Presidents to keep a close eye on their own section's pages and be sure to keep their information current.

## **ANDY PONGCO AWARD**

The 12 candidates for the 2010 Andy Pongco Award are:

- Andreas Schofbenker (Austria)
- Chanel Mongeon (Canada)
- Carrie Lee (Chinese Taipei)
- Christian Runge (Denmark)
- Julien Brunel (France)
- Jan-Felix Weidenhammer (Germany)
- Benjamin Malpass (Great Britain)
- Juliette Roschard (Holland)
- Maria Otilia Cozarescu (Romania)
- Veronika Vakhrameeva (Russia)
- Atiphol Soonthornsingh (Thailand)
- Nathan Goff (United States)

In past years, Ms. Marjorie Silverman has overseen the panel of judges. In her absence this year, Assistant General Secretary Shujaat Khan takes her place. Other judges are President & Zone Director Tamas Ungar, Third Vice President Colin Toomey, and Ms. Carolina Avaria (from Canada).

The award continues to evolve as the years go by. Refinements this year included the creation of a standardized form that Presidents use to submit their candidates to the Committee. This ensures that the candidate meets all qualifications. There is also a scoring system in place now, with written exams (worth 20 points); essays (worth 30 points); a personal interview (worth 40 points); and the presentation of the candidate (worth 10 points).

Gold Key Solutions (a concierge software company) is the sponsor of this year's Award.

## **FUTURE CONGRESSES**

Presentations for future congresses were heard from Canada (Toronto 2011), Great Britain (London 2012), and New Zealand (2013).

**58<sup>th</sup> International Congress – Toronto, Canada.** Canada President Toni Daoud announced that the 58<sup>th</sup> Congress in Toronto will be held April 28 to May 3. The Fairmont Royal York Hotel will be the headquarters of Congress. The theme for the educational program is: Rendezvous to Capture Our Potential. This will be the first time Canada hosts an international congress, and 2011 happens to be Canada's 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a member section. Members may visit the congress website at: [www.uich2011toronto.com](http://www.uich2011toronto.com).

**59<sup>th</sup> International Congress – London, England.** President Paul Still shared a short video with the Board and is looking forward to seeing everyone in London in 2012.

**60<sup>th</sup> International Congress – New Zealand.** President Franz Stouffer will make a video presentation about the 2013 Congress at the General Assembly.

**61<sup>st</sup> International Congress – Italy (Milan or Florence).** President Federico Barbarossa announced that Italy would like to host the 61<sup>st</sup> International Congress in 2014.

## **NEW UICH FLAG**

On behalf of Hungary, President Tamas Ungar proudly unveiled the new UICH international flag, which his section designed and produced. The old flag has now been restored and cleaned, and will go on permanent display at the Paris headquarters. President Ungar thanked the Board for the opportunity to be part of such an historical moment.

President Robert Watson handed around a prototype of a miniature version of the new flag. Hungary will have enough of these made to distribute to Presidents in Toronto.

## **UAE/DUBAI APPLICATION**

The Executive Committee has now completed its review of all documents relating to the application of the UAE for membership in UICH. The formal application was

received in China. All documents are in order, including an official translation of the statutes in English and Arabic. In November, President Robert Watson and Second Vice President Emmanuel Vrettos performed a site inspection in Dubai, where they visited the working desks of 10 hotels. UAE's sponsor countries are Hellas and the Philippines. President Leo Hidalgo (in absentia) gave a letter authorizing Mr. Emmanuel Vrettos to formally propose a motion to accept the UAE as the 41<sup>st</sup> member section of UICH.

Observers from the UAE were then asked to leave the room so that the Board could review the application privately, discussion followed and the motion to accept the UAE as the 41<sup>st</sup> Member Section of the UICH was passed by a majority vote.

The UAE will become a member of the Mediterranean Zone. Mr. Charles Ferrer graciously thanked the Board and assured them that an international Congress in Dubai is a most definite possibility for 2015 or beyond.

President Robert Watson uncovered the UAE flag that was hidden on the new international flag designed by Hungary. The UAE received much applause.

### **PRESENTATIONS BY POLAND & INDIA**

Mr. Piotr Prasula presented the Executive Committee with an official application for Poland to become a member section. Denmark and Hungary are Poland's sponsors. Presidents Tamas Ungar and Arshad Khokhar both expressed how excited they are with Poland's progress in a few short years. Warsaw hosts many major hotel chains. Management and hospitality industry professionals all seem quite supportive and passionate about the growth of UICH in their nation.

Mr. Stephen Fernandez, President of CAI (Concierge Association of India) presented each member of the Executive Committee with a copy of India's formal application to become a member section of UICH. Singapore and the USA are India's sponsors. The spirit of hospitality is alive and well, with an expanding tourism industry in Delhi and Mumbai. Already, the CAI has over 50 concierges.

### **VISSOIE REPORT**

Mr. Aldo Giacomello and President Claudio Caser gave a short presentation on the village of Vissoie, known as *le village de l'amité*. Vissoie is the birthplace of Ferdinand Gillet and son Jean Gillet, the founders of Les Clefs d'Or. It is also where they both rest. At the moment the Swiss are working with the Mayor of the village to host a Board of Directors meeting in Vissoie in August 2011. The association may be French in origin, but the soul of UICH rests in Vissoie. The Swiss hope to warmly greet the Board of Directors and share the village of Vissoie with everyone.

### **SPONSORS AND PARTNERS**

First Vice President Virginia Casale explained that in China, she was asked to recruit sponsors and partners. Of course she is working with Mr. Aldo Giacomello to continue to collaborate on the American Express relationship. In addition, she is pleased to have recruited the following advertisers for the Review:

- Outlet Shopping Centers (located in all major European cities), thanks to a lead provided by President Alain Vanderauwera.
- Newspaper Direct (located in 80 countries) is a newspaper printing company with a head office in Vancouver, Canada. President Watson contributed to this lead.
- Joel Robuchon – world-renowned restaurateur whose lead was given to us by Jeanne Mills from The MGM Grand Hotel following our Executive Committee which took place there.

First Vice President Casale explained that trying to fundraise on an international scale rather than on a local or even national one is an entirely different endeavor. She asked all Presidents to please forward any additional international leads they might have.

First Vice President Casale and Third Vice President Colin Toomey collaborated on a document that explains how Zones can apply for funding to help offset the costs of Zone Meetings. Funding is not guaranteed and depends on the generosity of sponsors and on the state of the UICH Treasury. The document was given to all Presidents.

To clarify, Zones must host meetings in a country that is an established section. Zone meetings may not be hosted in observing countries.

## **CANDIDATE CERTIFICATION FORM**

The Executive Committee passed around a sample of a form that candidates will be asked to sign when running for an Executive Committee position. President Spyros Arathimos objected to the words “oath” and “swear.” The recertification form will therefore be revised to assure that it is entirely neutral in its verbiage, and it will be resubmitted for approval next year. President Raffaele Sorrentino was curious whether something had happened in the first place that caused such a form to be created. There was not.

## **FORMAL QUESTIONS AND PROPOSALS**

***Denmark*** – President Arshad Khokhar stressed the importance of having an extensive educational aspect at all congresses. This is especially important as so many younger members are joining the association and need to be mentored. The experienced must transfer their skills and knowledge to the next generation. President Khokhar suggested forming an education commission to hold annual educational seminars within zones to assess what international seminar topics should be. He also suggested inter-zone competitions to put forward a member’s best achievements; concierge exchange programs; talent competitions; and the creation of new awards that encourage excellence.

***Great Britain*** – The Executive Committee and Board of Directors all agreed that it is important to print a list of Tiger Raffle prizes and who donated them. Because many prizes are donated right up to the last days of the Congress, the list will be printed and distributed on the final night at the Gala.

**Morocco** – In order to combat rising congress costs, perhaps host cities could consider creating two tiers of registration fees: one that including hotel accommodations and one that does not.

**Portugal** – All countries should have international flags to display at their annual meetings and zone events. The Executive Committee agreed. Presidents wishing to obtain a flag may inform Michael Romei and one will be sent, au gratis. President Nuno Condeco was pleased with this decision, because when government officials and other VIPs see the flag waving, it will dignify the entire UICH worldwide.

**Portugal** – President Condeco again pushed for membership cards for every member in every section. President Watson replied that this suggestion has already been examined in the past and rejected because of prohibitive costs and logistical problems. President Condeco was invited to come up with a solution to these factors – cost and logistics – and present his findings in Toronto. President Condeco was happy to tackle the cost issue. However, he believes the logistics should be the responsibility of the Executive Committee.

**Italy** – A new project is under way in Italy called [www.conciergeserviceitalia.com](http://www.conciergeserviceitalia.com), which links UIPA members with hotel reservation systems. The Board of Directors took a very preliminary look at the website and discussed its possibilities. President Barbarossa explained:

- The site allows UIPA to give something tangible to its sponsors. Sponsorship money is essential because without it, membership would be too costly. The 8.5% profits made from the site help to offset congress costs, host educational seminars, etc.
- The program eliminates the need for concierges to call or email each other back and forth. All reservations are tracked by code within hotel group so UICH and management can keep track of business generated.
- The website provides the guests with the faces and names of the concierge team at the destination hotel, and also serves the guest by suggesting activities, restaurants, sightseeing tours, etc.

President Condeco was excited by the prospect of the website as a valuable communication system. He thinks it might be a great way to maintain a current database of all UICH member hotels. Perhaps even one day, it could become a universal reservation system that management would appreciate.

Past President Roger Bastoni applauded President Barbarossa for his innovative thinking. It is just one of many ideas that concierges can share with their teams and hotels when they return from this meeting.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

President Roderick Levéjac passed around a copy of the book, L’Histoire des Clefs d’Or from 1929 to Present, which was created to honor France’s 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. At the end of this Congress, copies of the book will be sent to each Board member. President Arshad Khokhar reminded the Board that he had suggested

the idea of putting together a history book and even had sponsorship dollars procured toward its end. Perhaps it is time to revisit the idea once again.

On behalf of the Queen of Denmark, President Arshad Khokhar presented gifts to the four Presidents whose countries competed for the 2016 Olympics -- Brazil, Japan, Spain, and the United States. The Olympic Committee was in Copenhagen when it announced Brazil as the winner. To President Khokhar, all nations are winners.

Because the role of the concierge is changing, President Federico Barbarossa wanted the Board of Directors to look closely at Article 4 to consider whether it needs revision or reinterpretation. President Robert Watson tabled the discussion for this year and suggested that Italy present it formally as one of next year's Questions & Proposals.

### **PRESIDENT'S FINAL REMARKS**

In concluding the meeting, President Robert Watson said he is pleased that there are four sections here today whose observation status has been lifted and who have returned to active participation levels. There are still two other sections under observation for one reason or another and both are working hard to resolve their issues. It is inspirational to see.

President Watson thanked everyone for their time and communication over the past year. The communication is what binds the organization together and allows it to remain global.

In 2009, President Watson traveled 60,100 miles on behalf of UICH.

Upon concluding the meeting; President Watson asked the various Zone Directors and their appropriate Presidents to take the opportunity to meet briefly in their respective Zone groups to discuss among themselves any various Zone issues they may have.

Later it was announced that Italian President Federico Barbarossa was appointed as the new Mediterranean Zone Director.