



GENERAL ASSEMBLY

**Lisbon Cultural Center
Lisbon, Portugal**

18 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

TOPIC	PAGE
Official Welcome	2
Introduction of Presidents	2
General Secretary's Report & Lecture of Correspondence	2
Resume of Minutes from Board of Directors Meeting.....	3
Adoption of Minutes from 56th International Congress in China	4
2009 Treasury Report & 2010 Budget.....	4
President's Report.....	5
New UICH Flag Presentation	5
Future Congresses.....	5
UAE/Dubai Application.....	6
American Express Presentation	6
Diplomas d'Honneur.....	7
Andy Pongco Award.....	8
Sponsors & Partners	9
Vissoie Report.....	10

TOPIC	PAGE
Questions/Commentary from the Floor	10
Commentary from the Comité des Sages	11
President's Final Remarks	11

OFFICIAL WELCOME

President Robert Watson warmly greeted all delegates to the General Assembly of the 57th International Congress of Les Clefs d'Or.

The meeting was officially opened.

INTRODUCTION OF PRESIDENTS

General Secretary Michael Romei gave a brief description of the procedures as well as the role of various members of our BOD, Executive Committee, Sages, etc. He thanked his colleagues on The Executive Committee with particular mention to The Comité des Sages who have been so helpful and supportive throughout the year.

Secretary Romei then began the official introductions; he introduced the Board of Directors, Executive Committee Members, Zone Directors, and members of the Comité des Sages.

Newly elected presidents (since China) were announced:

- Brazil – Silvio Gomes
- Canada – Toni Daoud
- Mexico – Yasmin Flores
- Thailand – Suwit Niyom
- New Zealand – Franz Stouffer
- USA – Regena Falling

37 of our 40 sections were represented at today's meeting:

General Secretary Romei also introduced Mr. Charles Ferrer (UAE), who was invited to take his rightful seat on the podium. UAE was the 41st member section accepted into UICH, and the decision was made at the Board of Directors meeting on 15 January.

GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT & LECTURE OF CORRESPONDENCE

General Secretary Michael Romei thanked President Nuno Condeco and all the Portuguese members for hosting a wonderful Congress.

General Secretary Romei distributed to all delegates The Congress Booklet; a collaborative effort between himself and Virginia Casale. The Booklet contains detailed agendas, zone reports, and other information from this Congress. The booklet is a good tool to bring home and share with hotels, sponsors, etc.

General Secretary Romei reported that the winter edition of The Revue entitled “Joyeux Noel” is now out and has been mailed. Delegates should receive them shortly after they return home. He is quite pleased with this edition of the magazine especially the cover featuring the historic village of Vissoie.

Delegates were asked to stand and observe a moment of silence for deceased members, as follows:

- From Australia, Mr. Hartley Bennet
- From Hellas, Mr. Ioannis Varotsis
- From Italy, Mr. Mario Basalini, Mr. Carlo Mori, and Mr. Guido Barbacci
- From Norway, Mr. Jan Naevestad
- From the USA, Ms. Susan Miller

A lecture of correspondence was heard from Ms. Marjorie Silverman; Mr. Gerald Parent; Mr. Albert Ostertag; Mr. Catalin Malaureanu; and Mr. Alain Ethier.

Secretary Romei mentioned the existence of the LCD Facebook Page and gave an update on membership useage and organization of the Page.

General Secretary Romei read a resume of decisions taken at the 15 January Board of Directors meeting, as follows:

President Robert Watson welcomed all Presidents and delegates and declared the meeting officially open.

President Watson gave a report on his activities since being elected in China.

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

Newly elected presidents were announced: 37 of our 40 countries were represented at the meeting. Observers from Macao, India, Poland and the UAE were present, along with the winner of last year's Andy Pongco Award, Mr. Christophe Caron from the Georges V.

A lecture of correspondence was read from Marjorie Silverman, Albert Ostertag, and Catalin Malaureanu.

The Board of Directors heard highlights of the minutes from the Executive Committee Meeting.

Treasurer Jean-Roland Boutillé gave a Power Point presentation showing the full details of the 2009 financial books and a proposed budget for 2010.

Third Vice President Colin Toomey, whose job it has been to oversee zones, applauded all the zone directors on their highly detailed reports, which are included in the congress booklet.

Assistant Secretary Shujaat Khan gave an update on the status of the new 2011-2012 Book of Members, which is on target and will go to press some time in late April or early May. The Book is being published au gratis by MVP and we'd like to acknowledge their generosity.

Past President Roger Bastoni announced that he will help oversee a year-long project to update the international statutes so they are more in line with current practices.

French President Roderick Levéjac reported on updates and new features being added to our international website.

The procedures and nominees of the 2010 Andy Pongco Award were discussed. This year's sponsor for the award is Gold Key Solutions.

Having been host to the 2016 Olympic decision, President Arshad Khokhar presented gifts on behalf of the Queen of Denmark to the four contending countries -- Brazil, Japan, Spain, and the USA.

Presentations for upcoming Congresses were heard from President Toni Daoud (Toronto 2011); President Paul Still (Great Britain 2012), and Mr. Gustavo Concha (New Zealand 2013).

President Federico Barbarossa offered Italy as the host country for 2014.

President Tamas Ungar proudly revealed our new international flag, which was designed in Hungary. The old flag was restored and cleaned and will be permanently on display at the rue Cambon headquarters.

The United Arab Emirates was accepted as the 41st member section of UICH.

Poland and India presented formal applications for membership, which will be reviewed and voted on next year in Toronto.

Mr. Aldo Giacomello and President Claudio Caser gave a brief history on the little village of Vissoie, where Ferdinand and Jean Gillet (the founders of UICH) were born and where they are buried. The Swiss section offered to host a Board of Directors meeting in Vissoie in August of 2011.

First Vice President Virginia Casale, who was given the duty of grooming new sponsors, reported that she has successfully recruited three new partners so far. She encouraged the Board of Directors to continue to provide her with leads.

Zones may now receive funding – if it's available – to help offset their regional meetings. Guidelines on how to apply for such funding were distributed to all Presidents.

Future candidates for Executive Committee positions will now sign a document affirming that they meet all the qualifications required of them.

The Board reviewed comments and proposals as follows:

- *Denmark stressed the need to groom a stronger educational culture among our members to ensure that our profession remains viable into the future*
- *Great Britain suggested that a list of raffle prizes be printed and distributed so that donors are appropriately acknowledged.*
- *Morocco asked the Board to consider creating two tiers of registration fees that might make congresses more affordable.*
- *The Executive Committee agreed to honor Portugal's request to provide international flags to all sections.*
- *The Board of Directors talked about developing an international membership card – also Portugal's suggestion.*
- *Italy shared the details of its newly designed website business, called conciergeserviceitalia.com.*

In honor of its 80th anniversary celebration, the French section created a book detailing the history of the French section and of Les Clefs d'Or. President Levéjac shared the book with the Board of Directors.

President Watson was inspired by how many sections are active and involved in UICH. The Executive Committee pledged to continue working to help encourage less active sections.

President Watson thanked the Board of Directors, the Comité des Sages, the Executive Committee, and the Zone Directors for all their hard work on behalf of UICH.

Zone presidents met in groups to discuss regional issues, and the meeting then concluded. Federico Barbarossa our Italian President was appointed the new Mediterranean Zone Director.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM 56th INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS IN CHINA

President Nuno Condeco motioned to approve the minutes from the China Congress. President Spiros Arathimos seconded. By a unanimous show of hands, the motion passed.

2009 TREASURY REPORT & 2010 BUDGET

Treasurer Jean-Roland Boutillé presented the 2009 Treasury Report. At year end, the bank balance was 99 368,78 Euro.

President Regena Falling motioned to approve the 2009 Treasury Report; President Elvis Soiza seconded. By a unanimous show of hands, the motion was approved.

Treasurer Jean-Roland Boutillé next presented the 2010 budget. President Claudio Caser motioned to approve the budget. President Gregory Tan seconded. By a unanimous show of hands, the motion was approved.

Treasurer Boutillé shared some slides showing how the membership and cash flows have improved over recent years. There is now a balance of approximately 100 000 Euro in the account – adequate funds not only to run the association efficiently but also to meet any unforeseen extraordinary charges that might occur.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Robert Watson said that all delegates were given suggestion sheets, which they are encouraged to fill out and forward to the Executive Committee for consideration. The sheets may serve to help encourage ideas and commentary from individuals who might be reluctant to speak aloud during the open forum.

President Watson reported that he has traveled extensively since being elected in China. He attended the Canadian national congress in Calgary in April. In May, he went to the USA national meeting in Florida. In August, he attended a fundraiser and golf tournament in Niagara on the Lake. Also in August, he went to Germany and Switzerland, where he met with the Mayor of Vissoie. In October, he traveled to Portugal for a site inspection and then on to Dubai to ensure that the UAE requirements were all in order. In November, he held an Executive Committee meeting in Las Vegas and then traveled to Paris to participate in the French 80th anniversary celebration.

During his tenure, he pledged to enhance communications amongst the Committee by hosting regular conference calls. He feels he has achieved this goal of better and more timely communications throughout the organization.

NEW UICH FLAG PRESENTATION

President Tamas Ungar proudly unveiled Hungary's gift to UICH: a newly designed international flag. The old flag has now been restored and cleaned and will be permanently on display at the headquarters in Paris. He explained the basis of the design. There is a tiny acknowledgment printed on the back stating that the flag is a gift of Hungary created and presented to UICH in 2009.

President Watson showed the sample of the miniature flag that each President will receive in order to display it at national meetings.

FUTURE CONGRESSES

58th International Congress – Canada 2011

President Toni Douad and fellow Canadians presented details on the upcoming 58th International Congress, to be held April 28-May 3, 2011. It was in 1976 at the Congress in Lisbon when Canada was accepted as the 18th member section, so it is fitting that Canada gets to share details of the first congress it will hold on Canadian soil.

Headquarters for the Congress will be the Fairmont Royal York Hotel, which is conveniently located in the heart of the city and walking distance from most everything. The meeting will have a strong educational component, the theme of which is "Rendezvous to Capture our Potential." Members may visit the official congress website at www.uich2011toronto.com. Every attempt is being made to set the congress price at under 1000 Euro. Pre- and post-trips will be available.

59th International Congress – Great Britain 2012

President Paul Still and his British colleagues are pleased to host a congress that coincides with an Olympic Year for Great Britain. A video clip was played, after which President Still tempted delegates with details of the congress to come, such as tickets to a show, a Thames cruise to the Olympic Village, and a spectacular educational program.

Dates for the Congress will be 26 January – 1 February 2012. The hosts hope to keep the package at under 1000 Euro and even less for shared rooms. There will also be separate registration fees for even less that exclude accommodations.

60th International Congress – New Zealand 2013

President Franz Stouffer and Past President Gustavo Concha presented a video showing the highlights of New Zealand. The presentation began with a Maori saying that means "Greetings, greetings, greetings." New Zealand is a special and different place, a Pacific nation the size of Great Britain..

UAE/DUBAI APPLICATION

Mr. Charles Ferrer, Secretary General of the 41st section of UICH, addressed the assembly and received a standing ovation. He is proud to become a member of the UICH family and wished to thank Mr. Andy Pongco, in particular, for his mentorship.

It is Mr. Pongco who spearheaded the UAE's efforts and who taught them the ethics and culture of the concierge profession.

AMERICAN EXPRESS PRESENTATION

Comité des Sages Mr. Aldo Giacomello introduced Mme. Daniela Cerboni, Vice President and General Manager of American Express Membership Travel Services International. Mme. Cerboni is UICH's major benefactor. She delights in the relationship she has fostered with Les Clefs d'Or, and she was pleased to give a detailed presentation on the many ways American Express and Les Clefs d'Or members work together to serve their mutual clientele.

Mr. Giacomello asked Mr. George Postian, a retired American Express executive and the individual who first began the LCD/Amex relationship, to stand and be honored. Mr. Postian received a standing ovation.

Mme. Cerboni is responsible for luxury travel and lifestyle services for all Platinum and Centurion cardholders. The program spans 25 markets outside of the USA and employs 2000 people in order to meet cardmember requests.

The theme of her address was creating brand loyalty "beyond reason." To do this, American Express:

- Delivers rational products and value (which necessitates working closely with suppliers to get the right products)
- Focuses on the customer experience (by leveraging the collective expertise of all parties)
- Creates customer engagement through emotional affinity

Mme. Cerboni is pleased to employ several Les Clefs d'Or members, such as Ms. Mary Steadman (Canada), Mr. Eugene Bagdasarov (Russia) and others.

She constantly seeks opportunities for innovation and growth. In Hong Kong, for example, Les Clefs d'Or concierges meet regularly with American Express teams to plan strategies for success. Such one-on-one coaching injects a high degree of professionalism into the American Express team.

In Switzerland, Les Clefs d'Or is planning to host a hotel training day for American Express employees, when they will actually spend a day working behind a concierge desk.

There are three levels of opportunities that Mme. Cerboni sees:

- Work together to be sure the clientele receives seamless, equal quality service from start to finish
- Work together on a local level to provide support to customers (American Express as an extension of the Clefs d'Or network)
- Care for customers in a crisis

Mme. Cerboni's speech concluded.

DIPLOMAS D'HONNEUR

Secretary Romei described the procedure of the Honorary Diplomas and read the designated list chosen by their Presidents while President Watson presented the actual diplomas to each Section President.

Presidents received honorary diplomas for the following individuals:

From Brazil: Mairos Fontana, Marius Degustare
Newton Mendonza, Grupo Pacifica

From China: Wei Xiao' An

From Chinese Taipei: Danis Chen, Chairman of Have Fun Travel Services Ltd.

From Great Britain: Andrew Turner, Group Sales Director, Morris Visitor
Publications

From Hellas: Yanni Souvatzoglou, Yanni Art

From Holland: Benno Leeser Gassan Diamonds

From Hungary: Peter Fabian, Manager, Restaurant Nosztalgia

From Israel: Rumi Gorodisky, Deputy Director General of Israeli Hotel Association

From Italy: Bernabo Bocca

From Hong Kong: Michael Wu, Managing Director of Gray Line Tours of Hong
Kong, Ltd.

From Morocco: Mehdi Badaa, Dalia Prestige

From Portugal: Anil Sampat, General Manager of Lisbon Marriott

Antonio Teijeiro, Director of Operations, Marriott

Ana Taveira Ribeiro, Lisbon Convention Bureau

From Russia: Eugene Bagdasarov

From Singapore: Eric Lee, Luxury Tours & Travel

From Thailand: East Meets West Travel

From Turkey: Babur Arsian, President, Travelium Limousine Istanbul

ANDY PONGCO AWARD

The four 2010 Andy Pongco Award Judges took the podium: Assistant General Secretary Shujaat Khan, Third Vice President Colin Toomey, President Tamas Ungar, and Ms. Carolina Avaria (Canada).

Applicants for the award must meet the following qualifications:

- Must be a member of Les Clefs d'Or
- Must be under 35 years of age
- Must be attending their first international congress
- Must be nominated by their member section
- Must be fluent in English

Applications are submitted via electronic format. Once the application has been checked to be sure the applicants meet all qualifications; the applicant then receives a comprehensive e-exam. In addition, they are required to write two essays: (1) what does Les Clefs d'Or mean to them? And (2) Why are they a good candidate for the award?

Judges then held personal interviews with each candidate. These interviews were done on the previous day.

All contenders received a standing ovation. Mr. Shujaat Khan stated that there are no losers. Everyone is a winner simply by having been nominated to be on the stage today.

The winner of the award receives registration and airfare to the next international congress.

This year there are 12 candidates for the award, and all were asked to take the stage:

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

In order to honor the gentleman whose name is on the award, a short video of Mr. Andy Pongco was shown to the assembly.

Mr. Benjamin Malpass from Great Britain received the 2010 award.

This year's sponsor of The Andy Pongco Award is Gold Key Solutions.

SPONSORS & PARTNERS

First Vice President Virginia Casale was asked by President Watson to work on finding more international sponsors for UICH. She explained that seeking sponsorship on international levels is an entirely different endeavor than grooming sponsors locally, or even nationally.

She is pleased to report that she has signed on 3 new international sponsors to advertise in the Review:

- Outlet Shopping Centers – shopping villages and chic outlets located in seven countries throughout Europe
- Newspaper Direct – prints newspapers in over 80 languages and distributes them daily to hotel guests in their preferred language
- Joel Robuchon – internationally renowned restaurateur

These three new sponsors will help enhance the international flavor of the Review. Historically, most of the advertising revenue has been generated by the French section and has involved French sponsors.

If adequate funds from sponsors are available, zones may now apply for some funding to help offset the costs of hosting regional meetings. Together with Third Vice President Colin Toomey, Ms. Casale composed and distributed the guidelines that zone presidents should follow when applying for funding.

VP Casale recognized and thanked the French Section for all the past years of dedication with local sponsors. Now she envisions the new Revue with these three new sponsors which will finally give a more global look that reflects its purpose.

VISSOIE REPORT

Vissoie is a village in Switzerland. It is the birthplace, and also the resting place, of Ferdinand and Jean Gillet, the founders of Les Clefs d'Or. The Mayor of Vissoie has honored the Gillets with a plaque on the door of their home, and he is working with Les Clefs d'Or to turn his mountain village into the "Village de l'Amité," the village of friendship. Within this village is contained the roots of our association. Vissoie hopes to host a Board of Directors meeting in Autumn 2011 in this hamlet.

QUESTIONS/COMMENTARY FROM THE FLOOR

President Robert Watson asked Mr. Ronnie Govender, a British adherent member who resides in South Africa, to briefly address the assembly. South Africa will host the 2010 FIFA World Cup in Johannesburg. Already, 8,000 room nights have been booked for FIFA officials, media, sponsors, and officials. More than 7,000 employees will wear football shirts on what they are referring to as "Football Friday."

A 24-hour nerve center has been set up to handle all last-minute requests efficiently and professionally. Mr. Govender invites all delegates to come to South Africa to get a taste of Johannesburg hospitality.

Past President Ron Crowdy asked the Executive Committee what amount of surplus they wished to retain on permanent reserves in the UICH Treasury. President Watson answered that there is about 100,000 Euro in the account now, and the Executive Committee feels this is a good minimum amount. Treasurer Jean-Roland Boutillé will put 70,000 Euro into an interest bearing account. The remaining 30,000 will remain available for cash purposes. He suggested that the Board of Directors revisit Mr. Crowdy's question again at the end of 2010.

Mr. Simon Thomas (Great Britain) shared that the Great Britain delegation had a small meeting and voted to 1000 Euro to Haiti rescue efforts. He encouraged other member sections to do the same.

Mr. Thomas Klingsbigl (Austria) respectfully shared his disappointment with the educational part of the Congress. He referred back to the Copenhagen 2007 speakers and said he would like to see that level of public speaking expertise at every congress.

The Indian delegation was disappointed that their flag was not on display with the flags of the other nations since, in China at last year's congress, it was on display. President Watson said his flag would fly when India was accepted as a member section. The Indian delegation felt that the flags of all observing nations should be included with the flags of established sections.

Mary LaMarche (USA) suggested that delegates receive a printed list of attendees as this helps everyone learn who their colleagues are.

Andre Plouffe (Canada) suggested that Les Clefs d'Or get a minister of protocol to speak to a congress. Many guests come from many nations, and the younger concierges could benefit from learning proper protocol by culture.

COMMENTARY FROM THE COMITÉ DES SAGES

Mr. Denis O'Brien made concluding remarks on behalf of the Comité des Sages. First and foremost, he thanked the Portuguese delegation for a wonderful congress. The Portuguese have open arms and open hearts. They wore smiles on their faces 24/7, which is no small feat when putting together an international congress. Mr. O'Brien also thanked the young students from the tourism school as well.

Determination, dedication, and decision... these are the words Mr. O'Brien chose to describe the colleagues who are here today from all around the world. Business at this congress has been conducted in a very business-like manner. Gone are the days of acrimony, and that is a testament to the way Robert Watson has managed his presidency. With the quarterly conference calls, issues now get addressed every three months rather than every year – a timely and efficient improvement. Mr. O'Brien is particularly pleased to see that UICH is solvent now, with a healthy Treasury. He

applauded the way in which Treasurer Jean-Roland Boutillé now presents the accounts.

Mr. O'Brien believes that the flag of the society is a special thing that makes UICH unique. The new flag depicts the modern, vibrant Les Clefs d'Or and heartily congratulated the Hungarian section on the project.

Mr. O'Brien said the Comité des Sages believe that the future of UICH is healthier than ever before. One has only to look at the caliber of the 12 Andy Pongco Award nominees to know this.

Friendship is at the cornerstone of the society, and so Mr. O'Brien warmly welcomed the UAE as new friends.

In conclusion, Mr. O'Brien wished everyone safe journeys home and thanked the President, the Executive Committee, the Board of Directors, and the Zone Directors for all the hard work they do.

PRESIDENT'S CONCLUDING REMARKS

President Robert Watson thanked the Executive Committee whose assistance has been invaluable to him. He also thanked the Board and the Zone Directors, and also the members, whose hearts keep the organization alive through the motto of "Service through Friendship." The organization is only as strong as its members, and he is pleased to see such a strong organization.

President Watson acknowledged the Portuguese delegation and thanked them for a terrific Congress. He also gave special thanks his wife, Paula Brooks-Watson, for her continuous support and love.

The meeting concluded.