



## Executive Committee Meeting

Grand Hotel Palazzo, Livorno  
Livorno, Italy

10 January 2009

**Present:** President Roger Bastoni, Past President Denis T.C. O'Brien, First Vice President Robert Watson, Second Vice President Rainald Egerth, Third Vice President Emmanuel Vrettos, General Secretary Virginia Casale, Assistant General Secretary Michael Romei, Assistant Treasurer Jean-Roland Boutillé, French Representative Roderick Levéjac, Honorary Past Presidents and Comité des Sages Aldo Giacomello and Andras Gunst, and Zone Directors as follows: Arshad Khokhar, Shujaat Khan, Colin Toomey, Tamas Ungar, and Mario Eroico

**Absent:** Zone Directors Christian Sussman and Claudio Caser, Treasurer Gérard Poirier, and Comité des Sages Marjorie Silverman

Topic	Page
Official Welcome.....	2
Roundtable Discussion.....	2
Book of Members .....	3
International Review .....	4
Protection of UICH Logo.....	4
Bucherer Keys .....	5
Future Congresses .....	5
Elections in China .....	5
Website Presentation.....	6
International Treasury Report .....	6
Zone Director Reports .....	7
Andy Pongco Award .....	9
China Congress .....	10
Other Business .....	10
American Express.....	11

## **Official Welcome**

President Bastoni welcomed everyone to the Executive Board Meeting. Attendees were greeted personally by Mr. Gastone Di Domenico, General Manager of the Grand Hotel Palazzo.

President Bastoni officially opened the meeting. He hopes the discussions will be open and friendly and that consensus can be reached on all points.

## **Roundtable Discussion**

The meeting began with a roundtable discussion. Each attendee highlighted their recent activities.

First Vice President Robert Watson is preoccupied with the upcoming Barak Obama inauguration in the USA. This past year he has focused his efforts on promoting concierge initiatives in the States. He is grooming sponsors, including MVP Publications, Where Magazine, and Hertz.

Zone Director Tamas Ungar reported that Hungary celebrated its Les Clefs d'Or anniversary last November, and their party hosted delegates from 12 sections in all. Mr. Ungar is working with the Romanian section to help them reestablish themselves.

French President Roderick Levéjac participated in the European Zone Directors Meeting in June 2008, which took place in Brussels. All sections were represented except for Luxembourg.

Assistant Treasurer Jean-Roland Boutillé has been working on UICH accounting business both from home and at the Paris headquarters.

Zone Director Arshad Khokhar has prepared a report from the Copenhagen Congress, which he will forward in greater detail to the Paris headquarters. In particular, Mr. Khokhar wished to thank everyone who was so helpful in light of the theft incidents that occurred during the Copenhagen meeting.

Past President Denis O'Brien attended the Pan-American Congress in Vancouver in 2008. He is concerned about the world's economic instabilities, and his hotel is suffering and his job is in jeopardy. As a result, he wished to apologize that his attentions have not been fully focused on Les Clefs d'Or business.

President Bastoni offered his understanding, stating that we all need to be respectful of personal priorities, especially in these difficult times. There is no shame in expressing our issues and taking the personal time necessary to resolve them.

Second Vice President Rainald Egerth said the economy in Vienna, too, is suffering and the health of his hotel is in question. Additionally, he has some family matters that have been pulling him away from his duties.

Mr. Andras Gunst is delighted to be present today. He acknowledged the success of the recent Budapest anniversary celebration and complimented Mr. Tamas Ungar on his leadership efforts and hard work.

Mr. Aldo Giacomello said he is fortunate that his hotel, so far, continues to do good business. Mr. Giacomello has tried to participate in all international activities as much as possible. He acknowledged the importance of the Comité des Sages and hopes to see it reenergized. Its role is to provide directions for the future based on historical perspectives from the past. In particular, he believes there

is great value from having a representative from the Comité des Sages say a few words at the end of each Congress.

Zone Director Shujaat Khan distributed copies of the report he will present in China. The past year has been a difficult one for Mr. Khan, especially in light of his son's accident and illness. Over the past year, he attended the Pan-American meeting in Vancouver and also traveled to Argentina with USA President Maurice Dancer.

Zone Director Mario Eroico attended the Morocco Congress and indicated that it was well attended. However, communications with Morocco are still lackluster.

Zone Director Colin Toomey received congratulations from everyone for enduring the 41-hour trip to Italy. Mr. Toomey's tenure as the national president of Australia has now concluded, so he feels freed up to assume his Zone Director role with vigor. He is pleased that the Executive Committee is considerate of family and job prioritizing, especially during difficult economic times.

Third Vice President Emmanuel Vrettos explained the desperation in Athens as a result of a recent bombing there. For the moment, tourism is dead, so it has been extremely difficult for city center hotels. Mr. Vrettos said it is difficult for him to travel, but he has done his best to stay in touch and conduct his activities via email.

Assistant Secretary Michael Romei thanked everyone for their kindness in the wake of his mother's passing last year. Fortunately, business at his hotel so far remains active. Mr. Romei traveled to Poland last year. He thinks the Poles show strong promise as an upcoming UICH section.

General Secretary Virginia Casale concluded a two-year maternity leave and is back working full time. Ms. Casale traveled to Dubai to take part at the Concierge of the Year Award. She recently gave up her Chef Concierge title at the Sofitel, which gives her more time to focus her energies elsewhere. It is challenging to balance job, family, aging parents, and UICH. She reiterated what a great volume of work is required of the General Secretary and cautioned the next person taking over to balance the load with the assistant secretary.

President Roger Bastoni touched on the importance of Spain as a large member of UICH. The section has grown quite distant and he hopes to reconcile this situation. He has done his best to manage his travels and his responsibilities at work. He participated to the Italian AGM in Olbia, and formally apologized to their Section President for not having held the Excom meeting. President Bastoni spoke about the Code of Ethics and how they can help mediate difficult circumstances such as the unfortunate theft incident in Copenhagen. In light of that occurrence, UICH may wish to consider hiring some personal security at future congresses. Mr. Khokhar said that some theft occurred at the Vienna Congress, too, though no one reported it officially.

### **Book of Members**

A new Book of Members will be published in 2010. In addition to the print version, it will also be issued on CDs. President Bastoni has a record on CD and UBS keys of all the 2008-2010 version. This will ease a lot the printing of the next version. There are pros and cons to a CD version, he believes it makes good sense to have a database that can be updated more regularly. But he does not believe it can replace the concrete value of the printed version.

General Secretary Casale explained what a huge task the Book of Members is. She congratulated President Bastoni on doing such an amazing job in putting it together. She does not believe she would have been able to complete her tasks on the Book if she had not been on maternity leave.

The Executive Committee discussed best practices to make the Book of Members as error-free as possible. Even in a perfect world, there will be some errors due to the lag time between typesetting and distribution. Getting Presidents to adhere to deadlines is another big hurdle. Mr. Levéjac suggested that Zone Directors could receive galley proofs and assume the responsibility of following up with section Presidents to get any necessary corrections made. The Executive Committee liked this idea.

Mr. Aldo Giacomello congratulated the Executive Committee for agreeing to continue producing a Book of Members in print format. He suggested that Mr. Levéjac might be a good person to create a database file and continually update it, since he is quite an expert with the computer.

Assistant Treasurer Jean-Roland Boutillé said the Book cost 26,000 Euro to produce. The previous book costed including the shipping charges, 42,000 Euro. Because each Book's production costs are spread out over two years, the total cost of the Book per member comes to 7.95 (less than 4 euros per year). This is very minimal, and he believes that Presidents will appreciate this fact.

### **International Review**

The Executive Committee discussed future plans for the Review. All agreed that the magazine continues to evolve in a positive fashion. Suggestions for changes to the format included:

- Forming a panel to handle the magazine issues
- Changing the size of the magazine
- Changing the number of pages (this last edition has 4 additional pages, 3 of which were dedicated to the upcoming China Congress)
- Creating magazine content that reflects positively on UICH from a public relations perspective (i.e., management and vendor friendly)
- Get more participation from countries that have not submitted articles for many years

The Executive Committee agreed that it is a good idea to eliminate the printing of minutes within the Review. It makes the product more presentable to hotel management. The Executive Committee reiterated that it is imperative to publish the magazine in a timely manner. Each section President must adhere to deadlines for submission of articles.

President Bastoni enjoys a good relationship between UICH and Jet Media/Mr. Garozzo. The contract between the two parties can be renewed each year as either party seems fit. (There was a solicitation from an Italian company who offered to produce the Review for reduced costs, but according to Mr. Mario Eroico, the printing company has not responded further.)

Advertisers presently include Lufthansa (now in its second year), Elite Rental Car, The Rodriguez Group, American Express, Jet Media, Cofinlux Perfume and the Austrian Section (which advertises its products for sale). American Express was the first sponsor to pay directly to the Treasury.

As regards the net profit/loss from the Review, Assistant Treasurer Jean-Roland Boutillé explained that production costs total 36,509 Euro (including printing & shipping) for two editions (spring-summer and fall-winter). Publicity and advertising generate 25,098 Euro, leaving a net cost per member of 3.46 Euro for 2 reviews so 1.73 Euro per member (less than 4 euros per year for 2 issues).

## **Protection of UICH Logo**

President Bastoni quickly reiterated the importance of protecting our international logo. The Executive Committee agreed that usage of the UICH logo must closely monitored and regulated. The USA section was featured in a travel magazine recently and the UICH logo appeared within the body of the article. Mr. Aldo Giacomello said the new 2009 Leading Hotels of the World book contained a page about our organization and using the international logo. Though it is good to have such positive press, President Bastoni was disappointed that he had not been asked for the appropriate authorization before the publication went to press. Past President O'Brien supported Mr. Bastoni's view. In conclusion, President Bastoni will remind all Presidents of the restrictions surrounding the use of the UICH logo.

## **Bucherer Keys**

The Swiss account is now closed and Bucherer retains the inventory directly. They presently have 850 sets available. They are very organized and efficient and ship quickly upon request.

Last year, the intent was for Presidents to preorder keys that would be distributed on-site at the Copenhagen Congress. However, customs restrictions made this impossible. This year, the presidents will be ask again well in advance for their needs for the year to come. In China they will give a copy of the money transfer to the international treasurer as well as the name and address to whom the keys should be sent to.

Mr. Boutillé specified that in case of emergency throughout the year (and only justified emergencies), the President can contact the treasurer at the Paris office to arrange for a special shipment.

## **Future Congresses**

Dates and location of future congresses are as follows:

- 2009 China
- 2010 Portugal
- 2011 Canada
- 2012 Great Britain

President Bastoni is not concerned about the status of Congress planning in Portugal, even though he has not heard much from them since Copenhagen.

The Executive Committee would like a bit of feedback from the Portuguese in order to reassure them that plans are moving along well.

## **Elections in China**

President Bastoni reviewed the statutes on candidate nominations. Candidates must submit their nominations to the General Secretary no later than January 26, 2009 (two months prior to the start of the China Congress). Candidates must present a copy of the minutes from their country's AGM showing that they have been nominated to run by their section.

So far, candidacies have been declared from:

- Jean-Roland Boutillé for Treasurer
- Michael Romei for General Secretary
- Virginia Casale is considering a run for 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President (not yet official)
- Messrs. Massimiliano Errichiello, Simon Thomas, and Colin Toomey for 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President

- Emmanuel Vrettos for 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President
- Robert Watson and Colin Short for International President

President Bastoni will not run for a second term as President. Gérard Poirier will not run again as Treasurer. For the moment, there is no mention of an Assistant Treasurer, but this is not an official position and can be appointed, if necessary, at any time. Rainald Egerth remained undecided about whether to run. Roderick Lévejac will remain as official representative of the President in Paris.

There was a short discussion about various Zone Directorships and who may or may not wish to occupy these positions. All Zone business will be decided at the Board of Directors meeting and announced at the General Assembly.

After consulting the Statutes, the Executive Committee agreed to ask all candidates to speak at the Board of Directors meeting. Speeches should be succinct yet detailed, highlighting both the candidate's desires and accomplishments. In addition, presidents of sections proposing a candidate should also give a synopsis of their candidate's abilities and why the section nominated them.

### **Website Presentation**

The Executive Committee reviewed details of the official website. Most country data is now complete, though Malaysia, Morocco and Spain are missing information. All agreed that it is frustrating to have sections who do not communicate with UICH officers at all. Much discussion ensued on how best to police these types of situations.

- Mr. Lévejac believes that someone must make direct contact with these section presidents in order to investigate the way the section is organized and how they are handling (or mishandling) their responsibilities
- President Bastoni said warnings can be effective. He is pleased that one such "warned" section has improved quite favorably
- Past President Denis O'Brien suggested we create a separate category on the website for "inactive" countries, or countries who do not participate

In order to stay effective, the website must stay current. This means that section Presidents must be ever vigilant about updating the address information of their section's members. This is a big challenge.

The Executive Committee explored the most effective means to meet this challenge. The idea of email blasts was discussed -- either to section presidents or even to all members directly -- though Mr. Mario Eroico pointed out that email blasts on such magnitude could become very cumbersome. A reminder should be sent to presidents who have not subscribed and encourage them to become more active and participatory.

There was much discussion on best practices regarding the website. In the end, the Board agreed that it is difficult to hand-hold and/or police sections who do not participate. Three volunteers agreed to form a website committee: Mr. Colin Toomey, Mr. Rainald Egerth, and Mr. Tamas Ungar. These three individuals will work with Mr. Lévejac on continuous website improvements.

Mr. Roderick Lévejac was thanked heartily for such excellent work.

### **International Treasury Report**

Mr. Jean-Roland Boutillé presented a synopsis of the Treasurers Report for 2008.

\$2500 from the USA, originally earmarked for the Copenhagen Congress in 2007, was never credited. The money has now been deposited in our account, however.

- Expenses totaled 95,721.07 Euro, and include the Paris Office, secretary fees, Bucherer keys, accounting fees, the International Review, the Book of Members, travel expenses, meals/meetings, internet services, bank fees, and miscellaneous.  
Very important to note that the cost of the Book of Members was totally covered in 2008 instead of half in 2008 and 2009 (over a two year period as it was done before).
- Income totaled 123,338.93, and includes advertising revenue from the Review, adjustments, Bucherer key sales, 15% Austrian merchandising license fee, annual subscriptions, and Jet Media advertising retrocessions.
- The balance in the account as of January 2009 is 27,617 Euro.
- The Swiss account is now closed and no longer exists. A total of 59,631.81 reflects the transfer of moneys from the UBS Swiss account combined with the ongoing balance already in the Credit Lyonnais account.
- The budget for 2009 expenditures is 65,662 Euro.

President Bastoni reminded us that UICH is a nonprofit organization – we must be careful not to show too much of a profit. Overall, Mr. Jean-Roland Boutillé reported that UICH was very close to its targeted expenditures and income for the 2008 calendar year.

Some discussion ensued regarding American Express sponsorship. At the Executive Committee meeting in Cannes (2007), it was agreed that the American Express sponsorship money would be deposited directly to the Credit Lyonnais operating account. This has not yet happened.

The Executive Committee discussed whether there were adequate monies to expand the travel expenses of its Board members, especially since a future president may not be able to count on sponsorship dollars in a depressed economy.

The Executive Committee agreed to post specific budgetary lines to cover Ms. Esther Baldocchi's salary; expenses incurred by the General Secretary; and secretariat fees incurred by Muffin Spielman to take minutes at meetings.

When asked by Mr. Giacomello whether the details of the former Swiss Account could be obtained, Mr. Jean-Roland Boutillé responded that he did not think so.

Mr. Boutillé should have a full and audited financial report prepared by February 20 which he will distribute to the Board of Directors in advance of the China Congress.

### **Zone Director Reports**

President Bastoni is quite concerned about sections that have not responded to his request to have certain documents filed with the Paris headquarters. The Committee pondered whether to prohibit sections in arrears from voting in the upcoming elections in China.

The Committee agreed it must issue warnings to sections with deficiencies. Zone Directors will be asked to take firmer stances with sections that have been uncommunicative.

Third Vice President Emmanuel Vrettos summarized the following:

- Documentation from Malaysia, China and Chinese Taipei are incomplete. 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President has sent emails to Presidents requesting information but they have gone unanswered.
- Thailand, Singapore, and Japan documentation is complete
- Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico are missing trademark protections and logo
- Canada is missing a list of past presidents from creation until today.
- Morocco and Turkey have not provided any documents whatsoever.
- Portugal, Israel and Greece are in compliance.
- Spain has not communicated anything.
- Italy is missing its list of past presidents
- Austria, Russia and Romania are missing trademark documentation
- Ireland is missing a copy of its statutes, trademark protection, and webmaster information

First Vice President Robert Watson said he has perhaps located an international attorney who might be able to assist UICH with creating an international trademark. He will revert with further details when they come available.

Zone Director Tamas Ungar had prepared a 19-page Powerpoint presentation but due to time constraints, he was asked instead to give a quick summary of activities within his Zone. He has had some interest from concierges in the Ukraine and Slovakia. He has provided these individuals with the requirements and procedures, and will continue to work with them to expand interest. There is also some interest from former countries that have been reorganized, such as Bulgaria and parts of former Yugoslavia. Poland continues to grow in strength and Mr. Ungar believes they are becoming a strong candidate for eventual UICH membership. Mr. Ungar is helping Romania reenergize their section and believes they show great promise to return to full membership soon; for the moment, they still have a lot of missing documentation, statutes, logo protection, etc.

Mr. Ungar reported on good relations with Mr. Michael Koft (Kempinski Baltschug). Russia has paid its 2007-2008 subscription fees and Mr. Koft has been attending regional meetings. In all, Mr. Ungar believes Russia is in a much better situation. The Executive Committee agreed to recommend to the Board of Directors that Russia be removed from suspension and placed under observation. Mr. Aldo Giacomello reminded the Executive Committee that decisions to suspend or expel a member must be decided by the Board of Directors, not the top table.

Zone Director Shujaat Khan gave a report on the Americas. Instead of being attached to Brazil, Chile has asked to join the newly formed Argentinean section because they are closer. Mr. Khan thinks this is a good idea, since Argentina is very strong and they are in a good place to assume the responsibility of developing Chile. There are at present 12 Chilean members. Argentina has its statutes and procedures firmly in place, and is in the process of organizing a Pan-American Congress next year. President Bastoni expressed reservations that Argentina was taking on too much too soon, but Mr. Khan believes they are fully ready and capable.

A general discussion ensued on whether newer countries should undergo an observational period, during which time the Executive Committee can assess their viability ensure that the section fully understands and adheres to all procedures. In particular, Mr. Lévejac does not think it appropriate for Argentina, which is a brand new section, to take on Chile at this time. Mr. Lévejac also wondered about the fairness of smaller countries casting votes that are equal in weight to larger sections, even though the small countries have tiny percentages of members.

The Executive Committee talked at length about the deficiencies of the Brazilian section and their inability to adequately supervise Chile. There was disagreement on letting Argentina assume the role. Third Vice President Emmanuel Vrettos suggested that UICH adopt the general rule that countries such as Chile should go directly under a Zone Director's section as a safe haven until neighboring countries have the tenure and strength to tackle mentorship.

Mr. Khan said there is a concierge from the French section working in New York City and wearing keys. An argument ensued about what to do in such instances. The Executive Committee reviewed the international statutes and compared them to the USA's statutes. In the end, President Bastoni suggested that the French and USA Presidents must together remedy this problem. The concierge may have his French membership suspended while he applies for official membership in the USA.

Zone Director Mario Eroico expressed frustrations in his dealings with Turkey, Morocco, and Spain. President Halil Tinaztepe (Turkey) has moved hotels and over the past year, has only sent two emails to Mr. Eroico. Mr. Roderick Lévejac was recently in Turkey and believes they are active but that their President has been busy opening a new hotel. Mr. Arshad Khokhar, too, was a recent visitor to Turkey and said they are an active and well-organized section, but that their President is occupied with personal matters and so has been somewhat untimely in completing reports.

Zone Director Colin Toomey wondered if sections become particularly silent when they are most dearly in need of help. Perhaps they are reluctant to request assistance. He thinks the best approach to remedy this defect is for Zone Presidents to really reach out and extend greater guidance and assistance.

Though the Scandinavian Zone is very small, it is diverse. The Zone produces its own magazine and offers special prices to its members and the hotels within the Zone. There will be a Zone meeting in Copenhagen in August 2009 and Zone Director Arshad Khokhar warmly invited everyone to attend if they wish. Mr. Khokhar will present a complete report on Scandinavia's extensive history at the China Congress. The Scandinavian sections are considering planning a Zone Congress in 2010.

Mr. Roderick Lévejac spoke on behalf of Zone Director Claudio Caser (Western Europe). There was a Zone meeting in Brussels, where the new President of Ireland was formally introduced to colleagues. The only absent section was Luxembourg, and this is the second year they have been absent. Some discussion ensued about whether to allow Luxembourg to continue participating in UICH activities and what can be done to help them reestablish themselves.

Zone Director Colin Toomey distributed copies of an application/interview process outline. It provides a map for candidates to follow on the road to UICH membership. By creating uniform guidelines, the process becomes streamlined. Also, sections that have no documents nor procedures in place will have concrete steps to follow. President Bastoni asked Mr. Toomey to present these documents to the Board of Directors in China. He is certain that it will be a tremendous help to many, and should also act as a springboard for further suggestions and improvements to the process.

General Secretary Virginia Casale complimented Mr. Toomey on this first most amazing step to unite the membership in a collective fashion.

### **Andy Pongco Award**

To recap, last year the Board of Directors created the Andy Pongco Award, which honors a rising-star concierge with free registration and airfare to a Congress. American Express generously agreed to sponsor the award, and Mr. Tony Chan (Hong Kong) was the inaugural recipient in Copenhagen.

Mr. Shujaat Khan pointed out that the Award could possibly result in a winner attending a Congress twice – once on the sponsorship of their section and the next year on the sponsorship of the Award, which did not seem fair.

At the moment there are candidates from the USA, France, Denmark, Germany, Austria and Holland. Mr. Colin Toomey was sad that there were a number of excellent concierges who were being subsidized to attend the China Congress, but because they were not bilingual, they did not qualify.

After some discussion, the Executive Committee agreed to the following revisions of criteria for the Andy Pongco Award:

- Candidates must be fluent in English
- They must be nominated by their member section (instead of sponsored).
- If the winner is not available for the next year's congress, the award will go to the member section.

The second award will be sponsored by Elite Rent this year.

### **China Congress**

President Bastoni and the Executive Committee are pleased to announce that they have gathered the following sponsorship for China: 2,500 Euro from Elite; 10,000 from the Herald Tribune, and complimentary presentations from Luxury and Attitude (assuming China congress sponsors the airfare). In theory, this will save the Chinese Congress 10,000 Euro in speaker costs. Also if necessary for the airfare of Holly Stiel, taken care of by the China congress).

President John Sun Dong asked about wine and President Bastoni is working to see what can be done to procure wine for the Congress. A raffle idea is in the works and, so far, UICH has received a couple of watches and an item from Chanel.

Ms. Holly Stiel and Ms. Marjorie Silverman have offered to do a complimentary presentation as well; once again, their airfares would be the responsibility of Les Clefs d'Or China. The Executive Committee agreed to go forward with educational plans that include Luxury and Attitude and Ms. Stiel and Ms. Silverman. This would offer a full day of education to all Congress attendees.

The Committee briefly touched on whether the Chinese have included insurance fees in their registration rates; it is assumed that the insurance will be procured through AXA. President Bastoni reiterated that the Congress Planning Guidelines and statutes demand that insurance costs be covered by the host country. Zone Director Tamas Ungar asked about the cancellation policy of the China Congress.

### **Other Business**

*Official Questionnaire.* Mr. Jean-Roland Boutillé wanted to know how many members are in each section and the approximate number of keys each section will require in the coming year. General Secretary Virginia Casale will include a request for this information on the Questionnaire she sends to Presidents. In this way, subscription fee invoices can be prepared in advance.

*Cruise Ship Concierges.* First Vice President Robert Watson received a complaint from a guest of his who was recently on board a cruise ship and saw cruise staff wearing Bucherer keys. Together, Mr.

Watson and Mr. Romei intend to draft a letter to the cruise line reiterating the UICH statutes and asking the cruise line for compliance.

*Dubai as a UICH Member Section.* General Secretary Virginia Casale visited with Dubai concierges this past year. She saw several hotels in just a few days and participated at the Concierge of the Year Award evening. Incredible group of concierge professionals with a strong support by government and local vendors. She was hoping to have documents and information to share with the Executive Committee today, but unfortunately, she never received any follow-up documents and hopes that it will be done for the Chinese congress. President Bastoni believes Dubai has a very good group of working concierges, but he has heard rumors of the impending resignation of Mr. Randy Santos, who has been one of the key organizers in that country. There is concern over what to do about turnover in Dubai, especially because of the government mandate that can compel workers to move at a moment's notice. Ms. Casale said the concierges she visited understood how this could be problematic; nevertheless, they remain convinced that Dubai has excellent potential to become a member of the UICH family some day.

### **American Express**

Mr. Aldo Giacomello indicated that American Express has agreed to give 20,000 Euro to UICH for the 2009 year. China will receive 10,000 for Congress sponsorship (which will be transferred through the UICH Paris Bank account); 7,000 has been earmarked for Zone meetings; and the remaining Euro will go toward advertising in the International Review.

Ms. Cerboni has expressed her desire to speak to attendees at the General Assembly as she did last year in Copenhagen.

Mr. Giacomello announced that he will step down as the official American Express relationship representative just after the China Congress. He reminded the Executive Committee to take appropriate care in how they continue to groom and maintain healthy relationships with sponsors.

The meeting adjourned.