

International Union of the History and Philosophy of Science
Division of History of Science and Technology

Report of the 2009 General Assembly

The General Assembly of the IUHPS/DHST took place at the University of Technology and Economics, venue of the 23rd International Congress of History of Science and Technology. More than 150 colleagues participated in the G.A., because many Commissions and National Committees have appointed more than one representative. Representatives of the IUHPS/DLMPS also attended the G.A. as observers. The G.A. was open to all participants of the 23rd ICHST as observers.

First session

30th July, 9h-13h

The President, Prof. Ronald L. Numbers, welcomed the participants and declared open the IUHPS/DHST 2009 General Assembly.

1. Approval of the Agenda

Secretary General Efthymios Nicolaidis presented the agenda and asked for the following change: As during the first session, a vote by ballots should take place, the nomination of examiners for the DHST Council elections should take place at the first session (after the nomination of examiners of the accounts) and these examiners should act as examiners for all votes by ballots. The agenda with the suggested change was approved by the General Assembly.

2. Approval of the voting list

Following the list given by the Treasurer, Prof. Ida Stamhuis, seven members have not paid their dues during the previous four years of last Council term: Bulgaria, Egypt, Kirghistan, Korea, Mexico, Pakistan, Syria. The G.A. approved that these countries should not vote on financial matters.

3. Report of the Secretary General

(See annex 1). The report was distributed to the G.A. and its main lines were presented orally by the Secretary General.

4. Report of the Treasurer

(See annex 2). The report was presented by the Treasurer. Given DHST's modest income (about 21,000 \$ per year), DHST is financially solvent and on solid fiscal grounds with a balance of about 40,000\$. The G.A. congratulated the treasurer for these excellent results and her well-organized and informative report.

5. Nomination of examiners for the accounts

The G.A. nominated and approved the following three examiners:

Sona Strbanova (Czech Republic), Craigh Fraser (Canada) and Jontgtae Lim (South Korea).

6. Nomination of examiners for elections.

The G.A. nominated the following three examiners:

Claude Debru (France), Roy MacLeod (Australia) and Helena Durnova (Czech Republic).

7. Proposal on DHST annual dues reform and vote.

The Treasurer presented the proposal for reforming the annual dues of IUHPS/DHST members (see annex 3a). She pointed out that the aim of the proposal is to establish a list of dues based on objective criteria for each country similar to those established recently by the ICSU. This reform takes into account the special requirements of some National Committees which have specific difficulties in paying the fixed dues and also of some other National Committees which find themselves in a position and are willing to contribute at a higher level (see annex 3b). About the annual dues of Ireland (asks remain cat. A), the Netherlands (ask pay 400 Euros), Turkey (asks remain cat. A) and Poland (postpone the higher due for one year) the Executive Council DHST/IUHPS will take a decision.

The proposal was approved by secret vote. Result of the vote:

YES: 88

NO: 0

BLANK: 0

After the vote, the Second Vice-President, Prof. Fabio Bevilacqua asked for permission to present some views about the Website of the IUHPS/DHST which he has designed and maintains. Prof. Bevilacqua said that after having served twelve years on the Council he is stepping down, but that he is willing to continue to maintain the site in its present form. If in the future the Division decides to go further by using the new Web2 facilities of the site, the implementation of this will require much additional labor. The G.A. thanked and congratulated the Second Vice-president for his many important contributions to the Division.

8. Proposal and vote for revising the DHST statutes in order to have a President-elect serve on the Council rather the past-President

The President, Prof. Ronald Numbers, explained that the proposed revision of the statutes addressed the problem of the eventual election of a new IUHPS/DHST President with no experience of the functioning of the Division. Under the new proposal, the President-elect would have the necessary time to acquire this experience and learn the procedures before acting as President. The number of the Council members will remain unchanged; the President-elect will replace the Past-President in the Council. This reform is to take place at next Council term, and a candidate for the Office of the President-elect is to be presented for next elections in four years.

The President then explained in further detail the proposal to revise the statutes which I summarize below.

New version of 4.2 of the *Vade Mecum*:

Add:

“President-elect.

Serves for four years before assuming the presidency.

Responsibilities:

- as determined by the President
- serves on the Executive Committee”

Delete 4.7 of the *Vade Mecum*

Article 19 of the statutes will be revised in consequence.

The motion was accepted by the G.A.

9. Presentation of candidatures for next DHST Council

The list of candidatures presented by the Nominating Committee chaired by Prof. and Past-President Robert Fox was presented to the G.A.

The Secretary General explained the procedure: 48 hours before the voting G.A. (i.e. this afternoon at 15.00), he should have received all additional proposals for candidates by members of the G.A. The final list will be posted on the door of the room hosting the G.A. and on the main hall of the Congress venue.

Second session

1st August, 15h-19h

1. Report of the financial examiners

The financial examiners presented the following report:

“The Financial Examiners of the Treasurer’s Report examined thoroughly the following documents related to the Financial Report of the DHST/IUHPS prepared by Prof. Ida Stamhuis, the Treasurer of DHST/IUHPS:

-Official Audit and Financial Control made by the independent audit Department and Financial Controller of the Vrije Universitet Amsterdam.

-Four Annual Financial Reports 2006-2009 approved by the Council of the DHST/IUHPS.

The Financial Examiners came to the following conclusion:

-The above mentioned documents give a true and fair view of the financial position of the DHST/IUHPS and are in agreement with the financial accounts maintained for the DHST/IUHPS.

-The Financial Examiners highly commend the excellent work the DHST/IUHPS Treasurer Ida Stamhuis has done.”

The G.A. approved the report and congratulated the Treasurer for the excellent and transparent keeping of the accounts. G.A. and Council members wish Prof. Stamhuis well in her new duties and regret that she is not able to continue as Treasurer.

2. Proposals for hosting the next (24th) IUHPS/DHST Congress in 2013 were presented to the G.A.

There were two well-crafted proposals for holding next Congress and both were presented to the G.A.:

Prof. Cesar Lorenzano, head of National Committee of Argentina, presented the candidature of Buenos Aires. Prof. Lorenzano described the facilities of the venue and the capacity of the Argentina's community of historians of science to support the project. Prof. Jeff Hughes, President of the British Society for the History of Science, presented the candidature of Manchester. Prof. Hughes described the facilities of the venue and distributed a document with all the requisite details and cost projections (see annex 4). The decision was taken by secret vote. Result of the vote:

Manchester: 44

Argentina: 20

The G.A. congratulated the British team who will organize the 2013 ICHST and members thanked Prof. Lorenzano and our Argentinian colleagues for their bid.

3. Approval of the nomination of the Chair of the Programme Committee of the next Congress.

The following proposal of the DHST Council was presented by the Secretary General: "According to the IUHPS/DHST *Vade Mecum*, the Chair of the Programme Committee is chosen by the Council and approved by the G.A. four years before the Congress. This procedure does not take into account the opinion of the Local Organizing Committee, as the venue is voted on at the same session of the G.A. which approves the Chair of the Programme Committee. Therefore, the Secretary General asks the G.A. to give power to the Council to nominate, in collaboration with the L.O.C., the Chair of the Programme Committee."

The proposal was approved by the G.A.

4. Approval of the nominations of the Presidents of the Commissions

The Secretary General explained to the G.A. that following IUHPS/DHST tradition, the Commissions are independent and that they have their own rules in order to choose their board. These boards are renewed every four years (but for a few Commissions earlier) and for many Commissions the new boards are chosen during the ICHST. Therefore, the approval by the G.A. of the Commissions' Presidents is a formal procedure.

Nevertheless, for reasons of transparency, the Council proposes that during next term, a commission should be nominated in order to develop some basic common rules for the functioning of the Commissions.

The President requested that the list of Commissions boards be presented to the G.A. and asked the members if they had some objections concerning the names on that list. No objections were expressed and the G.A. approved the new Presidents of the Commissions.

5. Proposals for new commissions

The Secretary General explained to the G.A. that the Council had received a proposal for the constitution of a new Commission on the history of computers. The proposal was sent by Prof. Girolamo Ramunni (Centre National des Arts et Métiers, France). Unfortunately,

Prof. Ramunni was not able to attend the Congress in order to present and support the proposal.

The success of a new Commission depends on its capacity to be present in the international community of historians of science and technology. Four years is a sufficient time for a Commission to demonstrate its intellectual and organizational capacities. Therefore, the Secretary General proposed to the G.A. that the Council to create this Commission on a provisional basis and that in four years the next G.A. be charged to finalize this decision one way or another. The G.A. approved this proposal.

6. Other matters (presented by G.A. members)

No other matters were presented by the G.A. members.

7. Election of the new DHST Council

The G.A. voted by secret vote, following the final list of candidatures (see annex 5).

Result of the vote:

President: Liu Dun (China)

1st Vice-President: Paolo Brenni (Switzerland)

2nd Vice-President: Michael Osborne (USA)

Secretary General: Efthymios Nicolaidis (Greece)

Treasurer: Catherine Jami (France)

Assistant Secretary General: Karine Chemla (France)

Assessors (by order of votes):

Michio Yano (Japan)

Frank James (UK)

Annette Vogt (Germany)

Alexey Postnikov (Russia)

Pablo Lorenzano (Argentina)

Ana Rosa Barahona Echeverria (Mexico)

The complete results (number of votes for each candidate) are given in annex 5.

The President, Prof. Ronald Numbers, thanked the participants of the G.A.

He especially thanked Prof. Éva Vamos, chair of the L.O.C. and expressed the Council's gratitude for organizing of such a successful Congress. He thanked all stepping down Officers and particularly Past-President Prof. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu who during his Presidency worked to make the performance of the Union more transparent and initiated the DHST Prize for Young Scholars He also thanked the examiners of the accounts and of the elections for their work and declared closed the 2009 General Assembly of the IUHPS/DHST.