

## **Minutes from General Assembly, European Society of Pathology, Ljubljana, September 10, 2003**

175 persons were present in the beginning of the meeting.

### **Present:**

President of ESP: Gianni Bussolati  
Past President: Manuel Sobrinho-Simões  
President Elect: Antonio Cardesa  
Treasurer: Urbain van Haelst  
Secretary: Jahn M. Nesland

### **Item 1: Welcome**

The President asked non-members to leave the General Assembly and stressed that the Society was in the hands of the General Assembly. He also oriented that if necessary, an extra meeting could take place after 30 minutes.

The President wished welcome to all members and thanked for their interest in the Society.

### **Item 2: Approval of agenda**

The President suggested to postpone Item 8 until the end of the meeting, and the proposal was approved by the General Assembly.

### **Item 3: Approval of Minutes from the General Assembly-meeting in Berlin, September 2001**

The Minutes were approved.

### **Item 4: Report of the President**

The President, Prof. G. Bussolati, oriented about the evolution of ESP and assured that ESP is not a political society.

The President mentioned EuroCellPath and European School of Pathology as important for the Society. He mentioned also the ESP web site and the job done by Dr. Bjørn Risberg, who is the editor of the web site.

The number of members is increasing, now doubled since ESP congress in Barcelona 1999.

The President reported that Prof. A. Llombart Bosch is resigning as Chairman of the Advisory council. The reason was that it would not be optimal for the Society to have both the President of ESP and Chairman of the Advisory Council coming from the same country.

He expressed his warmest thanks to Professor A. Llombart Bosch for all he had done for the Society.

The Working Groups are active and very productive. This is good for the Society. A better structure and clarifying relations to other bodies in the Society are needed. He also mentioned that a group of nephrologists wish to establish a new Working Group.

European School of Pathology:

The President came back to the School and mentioned that the present Director, Professor Mauro Papotti, had decided to resign. Professor M. Papotti was thanked for his work with the School.

The “Blue Booklet” with Statutes and By-laws of the Society and a lot of additional information has been updated by Christine and Urbain van Haelst. The President especially thanked them for the work they had done.

The President mentioned the need for the Society to have a more democratic election of officers, more transparency, but at the same time efficiency. He oriented that a new election system is to be foreseen.

The President reported further that he was pleased with the development with Virchows Archiv, now with an Impact Factor of 2.05. In addition colour figure printing is free and he invited ESP members to publish in the journal. He also announced that Professor G. Klöppel resigns as Managing Editor and that Professor Heinz Hoeffler, Munich, will replace him.

The President mentioned officers of the Executive Committee to leave: Professor F. Bosman, Professor E. Sivridis, Professor M. Dietel and Professor P. Bedossa. He thanked for their contributions in the Executive Committee.

The great job of Christine and Urbain van Haelst in the Treasurers position was also mentioned.

#### **Item 5: Statutes and By-laws**

The President briefly oriented that changes in the Statutes will be proposed. The By-laws will also be modified and the work is ongoing.

#### **Item 6: Report of the Treasurer**

The Treasurer, U. van Haelst, reported about the period 2001 – end July 2003. The Financial Committee (Prof. M. Marichal, Prof. Jan van Krieken and Dr. R. Simpson) had approved the report. The Treasurer provided a very detailed report. Total income in the period was 105.509 Euro, and total expenditure was 64.895 Euro. Total assets was reported to be 383.686 Euro. The Treasurer also carefully reported about the estimated budget for the period 2003 – 2005. In addition to membership fee 60.000 Euro, investments will give another 30.000 Euro. The ESP congress in Ljubljana is expected to provide a surplus. Estimated costs will include costs of Executive Committee, Treasurer, Secretary, loan for ESP congress in Paris 2005 and sponsoring of EuroCellPath and Escop activities. In total a surplus of 12.500 Euro is expected.

The number of members August 2003 is 1123 from 62 countries. ESP has 19 honorary members and the percentage of members in arrear of payment is 20%. The number of new applicants in the period was 219, in addition to 40 new members registered at the ESP desk in Ljubljana during the congress. In the period 98 cancellations had been registered. 35% of the members an electronic subscription to Virchows Archiv only, 65% have a combined electronic and paper subscription. An updated version of the members handbook, 4<sup>th</sup> edition, was distributed under the congress. Among the countries with most members are the following:

Germany:	109
Italy:	83
Greece:	78
Turkey:	64
Belgium:	63

The General Assembly approved the report of the Treasurer.

### **Item 7: Report of the Chairman of the Advisory Council**

Professor Antonio Llombart Bosch, Chairman of the Advisory Council, reported from the meeting September 6, 2003 in Ljubljana.

26 members from various countries in Europe attended the meeting. The Chairman mentioned that a number of European countries are still without representation in the Council and asked the General Assembly to contact people around, so that representation can be improved.

The Advisory Council had discussed the possibility for a closer link between the national societies and the ESP website. The upcoming congresses in Iguassu 2004 and in Paris 2005 were mentioned. The European Board of Pathology and an accreditation system were also discussed. The relation between the Advisory Council and the Working Groups and especially in relation to assistance of congress organizers to select speakers were debated.

The importance for the Advisory Council to cooperate with the Working Groups was stressed. It was also mentioned that the Past-President, Professor M. Sobrinho-Simões, later was going to discuss a proposal for regulation of activities of the Working Groups with the leaders of the groups.

The Chairman mentioned the ESP website and the possibility to distribute information world wide. The next meeting of the Advisory Council will take place in Iguassu, Brasil 2004. The Chairman ended his presentation to announce that he now after a period of 6 years is resigning. He expressed his thanks to the Society and the Advisory Council for all support over the years since he became a member in 1975. He also mentioned that the Society is in growth, with a scientific level recognized in Europe and US. He carefully advised the General Assembly to keep the responsibility to secure that ESP could continue to be united.

After ending his report, Professor A. Llombart Bosch was applauded by the General Assembly and the President, Professor G. Bussolati, remarked that he fully agreed with the considerations of the Chairman.

### **Item 8: Election of New Officers and Chairman of the Advisory Council**

The President started with the position as new chairman of the Advisory Council. He proposed Professor G. Klöppel, who had been serving the Society for a long time and now was going to leave the position as managing editor of Virchows Archiv. The nomination was approved by the General Assembly.

#### **New Officers of the Executive Committee:**

The President oriented about the procedure with invited proposals from the members of the Nomination Committee. The need for scientific, geographic and other considerations was mentioned.

For position as new Treasurer, the Executive Committee had nominated **Jan van Krieken**. The nomination was approved by the General Assembly.

The new members nominated for the Executive Committee were:

Professor Frédérique Capron, France  
Professor Dilek Yilmazbayhan, Turkey  
Professor Veli-Pekka Lehto, Finland  
Professor Michael Wells, UK

The nominations were approved by the General Assembly.

For the position as President Elect the Executive Committee had nominated Professor Niki Agnantis. The President mentioned that Professor N. Agnantis had been member for a long time in the Society, and also being Chief Editor of EuroPathNews.

The President proposed the nomination of Professor Agnantis, but before approval he invited members present in the General Assembly to express their opinion. Some members of the General Assembly asked for more information about the nomination process and the handling by the Executive Committee. The President oriented that Professor G. Mikuz had been discussed as a candidate and he presented details about the nomination process. After some discussion, Professor Philip Heitz officially proposed Professor G. Mikuz as candidate for President Elect and asked for a ballot. Several other members stressed the violation of statutes and By-Laws if such a procedure was followed. The Secretary, Professor Jahn M. Nesland, made it clear that the General Assembly is the supreme body of ESP, but the procedure is that the Executive Committee nominates candidates and that the General Assembly approves or disapproves the nominations.

The discussion about to vote or not to vote was continued. The President stressed that in addition to the nomination from the Executive Committee, in line with the Statutes, he wished to open up for proposals which had been made by the General Assembly. Other members of the General Assembly strongly objected and mentioned the need to have the majority of 2/3 of present members in favour for a new proposal to be valid.

The President mentioned that he was applying the Statutes, and about the validity of the Assembly, only a proportion of the 1175 members were present (much less than the 50% needed) and therefore this would also interfere the previous elections. The President expressed that he wished to open up for more candidates to the best of the Society and in line with the decision made by the Executive Committee. Professor N. Agnantis made it clear that she was the only candidate nominated by the Executive Committee and that she wanted the General Assembly to approve or disapprove her nomination.

The President disagreed and said that this matter was very much debated. He stressed the need for new democratic procedures to elect Presidents of ESP. The possibility to vote by mail was suggested by Prof. Wells and to ask the General Assembly to say YES or NO for such a procedure. Others objected and stressed the fact that this was not according to regulations of ESP. The time was running out and the President ended up proposing a vote by mail as the best solution.

Many members presented in the General Assembly had left the room, so approximately 100 or less were present when the President asked the members to vote by raising their hands:

In favour of voting by mail: 50

In favour of voting in the presence of the General Assembly: 30

The General Assembly ended without any further conclusions from the President, approximately at 2 pm.

### **Item 9: Honorary memberships**

The President, Professor G. Bussolati, announced that Christine and Urbain van Haelst had been nominated as Honorary members of the Society for the work as Treasurer of ESP. The General Assembly approved the nomination and diplomas were handed over. The very efficient job, carefully performed by Christine and Urbain van Haelst has been highly appreciated over the years.

The President had received a letter of congratulation from their daughter.

The Treasurer Professor U. van Haelst, oriented that he was elected as Treasurer under the ESP congress in Prague 1987 and thus had 16 years in the position. He expressed his sincere thanks to his wife, Christine, who had been very central in running the Treasurers office. The Treasurer also presented a series of slides of previous collaborating presidents of ESP and added some humourous remarks. In the end he thanked the General Assembly for all friendships established over the years. The presentation was very well accepted of the General Assembly.

**Item 10: ESP-Congress 2007**

The President announced that Istanbul was suggested of the Executive Committee as the place for the ESP congress in year 2007. The proposal was approved of the General Assembly. Professor Dilek Yilmazbayhan thanked the General Assembly for the honour. On behalf of the Turkish Society of Pathology, she invited all to Istanbul.

**Item 11: ESP congress – Paris 2005**

Professor P. Bedossa invited all participants to Paris in year 2005. Paris - the city of life. He also mentioned that many famous pathologists in the history were situated in Paris. Professor P. Bedossa also complimented Professor D. Ferluga and his collaborators for the great success with the present congress in Ljubljana, and hoped to repeat the success in Paris. The programme will be attractive for all pathologists, both in clinical work and in research.

September, 2003

Gianni Bussolati  
President

Jahn M. Nesland  
Secretary