

INTERNATIONAL ASTRONOMICAL UNION

Executive Committee

79th Meeting

May 24-26, 2004

UNAM

Mexico City, Mexico

DRAFT MINUTES

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

Present:	Ronald D. Eke rs	President
	Catherine Cesa rsky	President-Elect
	Oddbjørn Engv old	General Secretary
	Karel A. va n der Hucht	Assistant General Secretary
	Beatriz Ba rbuy	Vice-President
	Chen Fa ng	Vice-President
	Silvia To rres-Peimbert	Vice-President
	Brian Wa rner	Vice-President
	Robert E. Will iams	Vice-President
	Franco Pa cini	Adviser
	Hans Ri ckman	Adviser
Absent:		
	Kenneth A. Po unds	Vice-President
In attendance:		
	Monique Lége r-Orine	Executive Assistant
	Claire Vi donne	Administrative Assistant

OPENING BY THE PRESIDENT

The IAU President welcome the EC members and thanks S. Torres-Peimbert for her kind invitation to hold the meeting in México. He also mentions the sad news of the death of Lucia Padrielli, past President of Division X, and expresses the emotion and the thanks of the IAU community for her unvaluable work for the Union until her last days.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

After some minor reshuffling, the agenda is approved.

REPORT ON THE SECRETARIAT

The IAU secretariat functions generally well, thanks to the devotion and good work of Monique Orine and Claire Vidonne. The GS underlined in his report the need to provide on a permanent basis the necessary support for maintenance and operation of the computer systems of the IAU office.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF EC 77 and EC 78

The minutes are approved.

ISSUES DISCUSSED AT OFFICERS MEETING 2004

The follow-ups of number of issues from EC78 were reviewed and discussed.

The GS had appointed an ad hoc group chaired by Hans Rickman to conduct the negotiations of the new contract with the MPC.

The IAU President reported from the "Workshop on Future Large-Scale Programmes and Projects in Astronomy and Astrophysics" that was held in Munich on December 1-3, 2003 under the aegis of the OECD Global Science Forum.

The Peter Gruber Foundation accepted IAU's proposal that Jocelyn Bell-Burnell replace Lodewijk Woltjer as IAU representative to the Cosmology Advisory Board.

The IAU Secretariat had received a draft of new Working Rules prepared by Johannes Andersen, Robert Williams, Hans Rickman and Robert W. Milkey. The Officers' comments were communicated to the group immediately after the meeting.

The Officers expressed concern about the late payments of membership dues from a number of member countries. The GS was advised to contact these countries on the matter.

The GS reported on the on-going negotiations with the top tender for becoming the new IAU Publisher. The rationale and instructions for the IAU Editorial Board were reviewed, and the IAU Officers recommended the constitution of the board in accordance with the membership listed under Agenda Item 11.2 of the current document.

BUSINESS CONDUCTED BY CORRESPONDENCE SINCE EC 78

IAU'S RESPONSE TO ARTICLE IN AAS NEWSLETTER OF OCTOBER 2003, n. 117, p. 3

The Officers informed the EC members of the reply made to AAS, and of their disappointment not to have been given the possibility to reply in the same or following issue to the article: IAU "Undemocratic" (cf. Annex 1)

NASA'S CANCELING OF SERVICE MISSIONS TO HST

The Officers thought that it was not appropriate that the IAU make any statement concerning the decision taken by NASA. However, as may co-operations were involved, an action might have been useful. The EC is of the opinion that it is too late for the IAU to react. However, concerned Presidents of Divisions may do so.

PETER GRUBER FOUNDATION (PGF) PRIZE AND FELLOWSHIP

The Executive Committee considers the Gruber Prize and Fellowships to be a great success.

COSMOLOGY ADVISORY BOARD OF THE PGF

The Executive Committee of the IAU has recommend to the Peter Gruber Foundation a staggered renewal of its three members on the Advisory Board which would ensure transfer of knowledge and experience. For this reason the EC has recommended that R. Williams be-appointed for a second two-year term, and that L. Woltjer be replaced by J. Bell-Burnell (UK). It asks furthermore that V. Radhakrishnan remains on the Advisory Board for one extra year:

V. Radakrishnan	(2003-04)
R.E. Williams	(2003-05)
J. Bell Burnell	(2003-05)

The following names are suggested, in replacement of V. Radahrishnan, whose term expires end of 2004 (names given in order of preference):

J.E. Peebles	USA
S.M. Faber	USA
M. Harwit	USA

A sub-committee, consisting of R.E. Williams, R. Ekers and F. Pacini will contact the above nominees in order to get their agreement to serve on the Advisory Board.

It is recommended that an EC member should always be member of this Board.

FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM ADVISORY BOARD OF THE PGF

The Advisory Board for the Fellowship program for the next triennium will be:

J. Andersen	S. Torres-Peimbert
O. Engvold	R. Wil liams

FINANCIAL MATTER

STATUS OF PAYMENT OF DUES

- Chile

No dues have been paid by Chile since 2001. The acceptance of the 11th Latin-American Regional Meeting is conditioned by the payment of these dues before September 1, 2004.

- Brazil

B. Barbuy reports that the responsibility for the payment of the dues has been shifted from the Foreign Affairs to the Science Foundation, which explains the difficulties encountered in their payment.

- Bulgaria, Georgia and Uzbekistan

These three countries will be asked for an explanation concerning the lack of payment of the dues.

- Algeria and Macedonia

Due to lack of payment of the dues for 5 consecutive years, the membership of these two countries is suspended (article 9 of the Statutes).

- Latvia

The waiver of the fees for the years 2000, 2002 and 2003 is agreed.

- Uruguay

Contact will be made by Hans Rickman via Julio A. Fernandez concerning the lack of payment of the dues for 2001, 2002, 2003 & 2004.

- Uzbekistan

No dues have been paid since 2000. In 1999, the EC has agreed for a waiver of the dues. Contact will be made by Oddbjorn Engvold via Prof. Shurat Ehgamberdiev from Ulugh Beg Astronomical Institute.

DRAFT ACCOUNTS 2003

The difference in the expenditure compared to the budget comes mainly from the fact that IAU had to pay to the 2 recipients of the PGF fellowship CHF 37000, while the payment from PGF had not yet been received.

The report of the Finance Sub-Committee, when available, will be sent to the EC Members.

DISCUSSIONS ON IAU STRATEGIES

The EC was invited to discuss strategic issues for a well functioning IAU.

- The new Statutes and Bye-Laws allows the EC to handle urgent matters between GAs, such as, e.g., the creation of the Working Group of Communication with the Public.
- The EC advises that Divisions, Commissions and Working Groups shall have the freedom to express their opinion on relevant scientific issues.
- R. Ekers, O. Engvold and H. Rickman are asked to prepare the framework for an official agreement between IAU and potential host countries for General Assemblies to be concluded as a basis for the decision by the GA. Legal advice will be sought from ESO and ICSU.
- In order to ensure a broad information to and between the membership, it is decided to start issuing a semi-regular electronic IAU Newsletter. Presidents of Divisions shall be encouraged to make use of this Newsletter.

STATUTES, BYE-LAWS & WORKING RULES

The Draft of the Working Rules is reviewed by the Executive Committee. In view of the numerous comments the text will be updated by R. Williams and O. Engvold, then submitted to the Division Presidents before being posted on the Web, for inputs from the membership. The EC takes note of D. McNally request to allow members of the Union to take part in the voting on scientific issues at General Assemblies.

NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP

The EC welcomes the expression of interest for Membership within the IAU of Mongolia and mandates the General Secretary to further the process.

SCIENTIFIC BODIES

EC WORKING GROUPS

F. Pacini, Chairman of the Working Group on "2009, Year of Astronomy" reports on the contact he had in Italy at the governmental level. The next step will be to ask the government to contact UNESCO. A circular letter will be sent to UNESCO National Members, a letter which could be supported by each EC member in her/his respective country.

The EC proposes also that, in addition to the President of Commission 41 (History of the Astronomy) and representatives by regions, some individuals accustomed to the work of big agencies be involved in the preparation of this event. The following names are considered:

E. Chaisson	North America	R. West	ESO
J. Fiero	South America	S. Isobe	Asia
A. Gurshtein	Pt C 41	S. Maran	NASA

The following steps are proposed:

- Diffusion of pictures in real time;
- Some activities related to Astronomy in relation with particular parts of the world
- Identify some people who would like to work on this issue

- Focus on one day or one week (some magic day, magic night)
- etc...

DIVISIONS & DIVISION WORKING GROUPS

Division I

As regards the IAU Resolutions concerning Coordinates and Time Resolutions adopted by the IAU in 1997 & 2000, the IAU will be given the possibility to present them at a Special Meeting of the AAS organized by USNO on May 2004 on "The Reference Frames Resolutions of the IAU"

Division III

The proposal to create a Working Group on the Definition of a Planet is accepted, with the following Organizing Committee:

Kaare Aksnes, Chair of the Planetary Nomenclature Working Group, G. Jana Ticha, Chair of the Committee on Small Body Nomenclature, Brian Marsden, Minor Planet Centre, and Alan Stern, Member, Commission 16.

Division XII

The Working Group on Communicating Astronomy with the Public has been accepted through e-mail by the Executive Committee, with D. Crabtree and I. Robson as Co-Chairs.

COMMISSIONS & COMMISSION WORKING GROUPS

Status of contract negotiations on the running of the MPC

The background is that new Terms of Reference (ToR) for the IAU Minor Planet Center (MPC) were approved at EC 78 with the aim of securing a future MPC that acts as an efficient and open gateway of positional and orbital information on minor planets, with IAU imprimatur. These should be followed up by a new contract with the current MPC host, the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory (SAO), to be signed soon in order to monitor the MPC activities under the new contract more than a year before GA 26 in Prague.

Due to the impending retirement of both MPC and SAO Directors, it had been realized that focussed efforts to establish the new contract are urgently needed, and an ad-hoc group chaired by Hans Rickman had been nominated by the IAU GS. The other members are Giovanni Valsecchi (Pres. of Comm. 20), Steven Chesley, and Michael A'Hearn. The work of this group has led to a positive development, identifying the need for some further modifications of the ToR and noting that agreement on these is likely to be reached.

The major stumbling block has been the fact that the main search program for Near Earth Objects, with the acronym LINEAR, is partly funded by the USAF, and their unidentified moving objects may contain a fraction in geocentric orbits that are military satellites, the information on which is classified. Thus much of the data handled by the MPC is not made publicly available, contrary to the IAU demand for an open data policy. Recent progress has however been made thanks to the NASA administration, which funds both LINEAR and some MPC staff, such that a screening procedure against Earth satellites may be installed by LINEAR within six months. Before the end of 2004, the way should hence be open for a MPC that function in accordance with the IAU rules and satisfies the terms of the new contract.

Negotiations on finalizing the modifications of the ToR, and the drafting of the new contract, are continuing in a positive spirit, and are expected to be finished soon.

OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

OECD Global Science Forum

Ron Ekers reports on the meeting held in München last December on "Large Scale Programmes and Projects in Astronomy and Astrophysics" for the next 30 years and commented on the usefulness of such meetings.

He also mentioned the Report by the "Task Force on Radio Astronomy and the Radio Spectrum" . This task force included representatives of the satellite communications industry, navigation and Earth observation, and the proliferation of new, high-power broadcasting and telecommunication satellites in geostationary (GSO) orbits.

Berlin Meeting

A meeting "Exploring the Cosmic Frontier" was held in Berlin in May 2004. This symposium was dedicated to presenting and discussing the fundamental problems that will be addressed by major future astrophysical facilities in the next few decades. The possibility to organize such type of meetings at (or between) the General Assemblies was discussed.

ICSU

IAU representative to ICSU (O. Engvold) reported from the interunion meeting in Paris 9-10 February 2004. A number of issues of relevance to IAU were discussed.

Capacity building programs remain high priority for both IAU and ICSU and one took special note of that the earlier ICSU Committee on Science and Technology in Developing Countries (COSTED) is being replaced by ICSU Regional Offices with the aim to promote the further development and strengthening of science of developing countries. Mexico and South Africa have already been selected as host countries, and it is advised that the Unions establish close links with these offices.

Several delegates of the ICSU interunion meeting expressed concern by the severe problem that Chinese scientists have great difficulties obtaining visa for attending meetings in USA. This problem has also been noted for Chinese astronomers and the EC resolved that the following steps should be taken:

- to warn organizers of IAU meetings about the lengthy procedures in getting visa to USA for scientists from Asian countries and to start the application process as soon as possible;
- to write to the US National Academy of Sciences to express the concern of the EC and the possible consequences on the decisions regarding the IAU sponsorship of scientific meetings in the States, with a copy to ICSU.

UN-COPUOS

Past-GS Johannes Andersen and AGS Karel A. van der Hucht participated in the 41st Session of the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS), in particular its Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, in Vienna, Austria, 16-27 February 2004. The IAU welcomes the progress in the implementation of the recommendations of UNI-SPACE III. The IAU contributes to three issues:

- Near Earth Objects;
- Preservation of the Space Environment; and
- Education and Capacity Building.

ITU-R

The results of studies undertaken within ITU-R Task Group 1/7 for the last 3 years concerning regulatory measures to protect radio astronomy from unwanted emissions, in particular from transmissions from space, were summarized in Recommendation ITU-R SM.1633 of the World Radiocommunications Conference 2003 (WRC 2003). The WRC has placed the issue of allocations between 275GHz and 1 THz on the agenda of the 2010 WRC.

FAGS

Following the recommendation of the CSPR Assessment Panel on Environment and its Relation to Sustainable Development, ICSU recommends that IUGG, IAU, and URSI take responsibility for "Federation of Astronomical and Geophysical Data Analysis Services" (FAGS), which would then cease to be an ICSU Interdisciplinary Body. The representatives of these three Unions reviewed and discussed the new situation and formulated alternative scenarios forwarded to their respective liaisons to the FAGS Council for consideration at its meeting last April. The EC encourages them to continue to search for a legal niche funded by URSI, IGGU and IAU..

IERS

The EC approves the nomination of N. Capitaine as IAU representative to the IERS starting 2005.

PUBLISHING

CONTRACT WITH NEW IAU PUBLISHER

Starting in January 2004 and until December 31, 2008, Cambridge University Press is the new Publisher of the IAU

ESTABLISHMENT OF AN IAU EDITORIAL BOARD

The first IAU Editorial Board is composed of:

Chair: Karel A. van der Hucht, IAU Assistant General Secretary

Members: Oddbjørn Engvold, IAU General Secretary

Eugene de Geus	Term ends Dec. 31, 2007
Michelle Storey	Term ends Dec. 31, 2008
Patricia A. Whitelock	Term ends Dec. 31, 2006

The Chief-Editors of IAU Symposium and Colloquium Proceedings from meetings in 2004 who are:

Thaisa Storchi Bergmann	S222
Alexander V. Stepanov	S223
Juraj Zverko	S224
Yannick Mellier	S225
Kenneth P. Dere	S226
Antonaldo Diaferio	C195
Donald W. Kurtz	C196
Zoran Knezevic	C197

STATUS OF IAU PUBLICATIONS

The Proceedings of IAU Symposia (14) published in 2003 (8) and 2004 (6) are of the Symposia S199, S202, S206, S208, S209, S210, S211, S212, S213, S214, S217, S219, S220, and S221:

IAUS 199 - The Universe at Low Radio Frequencies

30 November - 4 December 1999, Pune, India

Eds. A. Pramesh Rao, G. Swarup & Gopal-Krishna
(San Francisco: ASP) ISBN 1-58381-121-4, 2003

IAUS 202 - Planetary Systems in the Universe

7-11 August 2000, Manchester, United Kingdom

Eds. A.J. Penny, P. Artymowicz, A.-M. Lagrange & S.S. Russell
(San Francisco: ASP) ISBN: 1-58381-176-1, (August) 2004

- IAUS 206 - Cosmic Masers: from Protostars to Blackholes**
5-10 March 2001, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
Eds. V. Migenes & M.J. Reid
(San Francisco: ASP) ISBN 1-58381-112-5, 2003
- IAUS 208 - Astrophysical Supercomputing Using Particle Simulations**
10-13 July 2001, Tokyo, Japan
Eds. J. Makino & P. Hut
(San Francisco: ASP) ISBN: 1-58381-139-7, 2003
- IAUS 209 - Planetary Nebulae: their Evolution and Role in the Universe**
19-23 November 2001, Canberra, Australia
Eds. S. Kwok, M. Dopita & R. Sutherland
(San Francisco: ASP) ISBN: 1-58381-148-6, 2003
- IAUS 210 - Modelling of Stellar Atmospheres**
17-21 June 2002, Uppsala, Sweden
Eds. N. Piskunov, W.W. Weis & D.F. Gray
(San Francisco: ASP) ISBN: 1-58381-160-5, 2003
- IAUS 211 - Brown Dwarfs**
20-24 May 2002, Honolulu, Hawai'i, USA
Ed. E. Martín
(San Francisco: ASP) ISBN: 1-58381-132-X, 2003
- IAUS 212 - A Massive Star Odyssey: from Main Sequence to Supernova**
24-28 June 2002, Lanzarote, Canary Island, Spain
Eds. K.A. van der Hucht, A. Herrero & C. Esteban
(San Francisco: ASP) ISBN: 1-58381-133-8, 2003
- IAUS 213 - Bioastronomy 2002: Life Among the Stars**
8-12 July 2002, Hamilton Island, Great Barrier Reef, Australia
Eds. R.P. Norris & F. Stootman
(San Francisco: ASP) ISBN: 1-58381-171-0, (July) 2004
- IAUS 214 - High Energy Processes and Phenomena in Astrophysics**
5-10 August 2002, Suzhou, China
Eds. X.D. Li, V.L. Trimble & Z.R. Wang
(San Francisco: ASP) ISBN: 1-58381-157-5, 2003
- IAUS 217 - Recycling Intergalactic and Interstellar Matter**
14-17 July 2003, Sydney, Australia
Eds. P.-A. Duc, J. Braine & E. Brinks
(San Francisco: ASP) ISBN: 1-58381-166-4, (June) 2004
- IAUS 219 - Stars as Suns: Activity, Evolution and Planets**
21-25 July 2003, Sydney, Australia
Eds. A.K. Dupree & A.O. Benz
(San Francisco: ASP) ISBN: 1-58381-163-X, (April) 2004
- IAUS 220 - Dark Matter in Galaxies**
21-25 July 2003, Sydney, Australia
Eds. S.D. Ryder, D.J. Pisano, M.A. Walker & K.C. Freeman
(San Francisco: ASP) ISBN: 1-58381-167-2, (June) 2004

IAUS 221 - Star Formation at High Angular Resolution

22-25 July 2003, Sydney, Australia

Eds. M. Burton, R. Jayawardhana & T. Bourke

Expected publication date: April 2004

(San Francisco: ASP) ISBN: 1-58381-161-3, (April) 2004

The attached table gives the production time of IAU Symposium Proceedings since 1998.

SALES STATISTICS OF IAU PUBLICATIONS

This information will be updated as soon as the corresponding information is received from ASP.

SELECTION OF IAU MEETINGS IN 2005

SYMPOSIA

IAUS 227 Massive Star Birth: A Crossroads of Astrophysics

15-19 May 2005, Catania, Sicily, Italia

IAUS 228 From Lithium to Uranium: Elemental Tracers of Early Cosmic Evolution

23-27 May 2005, Paris, France

IAUS 229 Asteroids, Comets, Meteors - ACM 2005

8-12 August 2005, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

IAUS 230 Populations of High-Energy Sources in Galaxies

15-19 August 2005, Dublin, Ireland

IAUS 231 Astrochemistry throughout the Universe: Recent Successes and Current Challenges

29 August-2 September 2005, Monterey, CA, USA

IAUS 232 Scientific Requirements for Extremely Large Telescopes (ELTs)

14-18 November 2005, Cape Town, South Africa

COLLOQUIA

IAUC 198 Near-Field Cosmology with Dwarf Elliptical Galaxies

14-18 March 2005, Les Diablerets, Switzerland

IAUC 199 Probing Galaxies through Quasar Absorption Lines

14-18 March 2005, Shanghai, China

IAUC 200 Direct Imaging of Exoplanets: Science and Techniques

3-7 October 2005, Nice, France

ASIAN-PACIFIC REGIONAL IAU MEETING

9th Asian-Pacific Regional IAU Meeting (APRIM 2005)

26-29 July 2005, Nusa Dua, Bali, Indonesia

LATIN-AMERICAN REGIONAL IAU MEETING

10th Asian-Pacific Regional IAU Meeting (LARIM 2005)

11-16 December 2004, Pucon, Chile

This meeting is scheduled provided the fees due by Chile are paid by September 2005.

REGISTRATION FEE FOR IAU SYMPOSIA AND COLLOQUIA

The EC decided that as of 2004, the maximum registration fee for IAU Symposia and Colloquia is USD 250, including the price of the Proceedings.

MAXIMUM NUMBER OF SOC MEMBERS FOR IAU SYMPOSIA AND COLLOQUIA

The EC decided that as of 2004, the maximum number of SOC members is 16.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES

PG TEACHING FOR ASTRONOMY DEVELOPMENT (TAD)

TAD has current operations in Vietnam, Costa Rica, El Salvador, and Honduras, and Morocco, a mature program which will be expanded this summer to include a second university: the memorandum of understanding will be signed in Ifrane on the same day the 2004 ISYA begins there.

New TAD operations are already being considered in the following: Nigeria, which submitted a proposal for TAD assistance last year, Mongolia, which was visited just weeks ago by John Hearnshaw, Chair of the Program Group for the World-Wide Development of Astronomy (also Commission 46), and Rwanda, following a recommendation to TAD from Charles McGruder (USA) for consideration of a new operation there. Unfortunately TAD cannot support all countries that approach it, so careful consideration based upon reports and analyses submitted to TAD by visiting astronomers, is always given to the likelihood of good outcomes in a given country.

PG INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS FOR YOUNG ASTRONOMERS (ISYAs)

The 27th ISYA will be held in Ifrane, Morocco, July 2-23, 2004.

The 28th ISYA will be held in Tonantzintla, Puebla, México, July 25-August 12, 2005

A Workshop on National Telescopes of Iran as been held in January 2004, under the auspices of the IAU. This workshop is a follow up of the ISYA held in Iran in 1997.

An ISYA in Croatia (Zagreb University Dubrovnik and Hvar Island) is considered.

Also under consideration is an ISYA at Hong Kong, under the impulsion of the Chinese-Hong Kong faculty members of the 2001 ISYA in ChangMai (Thailand).

PG WORLDWIDE DEVELOPMENT OF ASTRONOMY (WWDA)

1. COSPAR Capacity Building Workshop

Commission 46, as in 2003, sponsors the third workshop of the series:

COSPAR/IAU Regional Workshop for African Astronomers and Space Scientists
28 June-9 July 2004, Durban, South Africa.

2. Mongolia

J. Hearnshaw reported from a trip he made to Mongolia. His recommendations are the following:

- that Mongolia join the IAU through the Mongolian Academy of Sciences this application being submitted to the vote of the General Assembly in Prague, in 2006;
- that the TAD program group of IAU Commission 46 send an expert astronomer to Mongolia in 2005;
- that an ISYA be organized in Ulaanbaatar at an early opportunity, possibly in 2006, or perhaps 2007. Students coming to this ISYA would almost certainly come from neighboring countries, such as China, Russia, Korea and Japan;
- that the Exchange of Astronomers programme be used for Dr T. Galbaatar or Dr R. Tzolmon who would clearly benefit from such an exchange;
- if the above developments take place, then Mongolia will become a country with a viable and even a strong future for astronomy, and it will then be an obvious place for a future IAU Asian-Pacific Regional Meeting. The next Asia-Pacific Regional Meeting (no. 9) will be in Indonesia in 2005; Mongolia (Ulaanbaatar) should be considered for the tenth IAU APRM 2008;

- that the IAU should promote collaborations between Mongolia and nearby countries such as Japan or South Korea, which have significantly less good observing conditions, but which have substantially greater means of funding new projects.

REPORTS FROM GA XXV:

REPORTS FROM SYMPOSIUM ORGANIZERS AT GA XXV

Upon invitation, the organizers of symposia reported about the problems encountered. First, there were some discrepancies concerning the deadlines announced. Second, the submission of proposals, applications, of abstracts was very difficult, due to problems with the Web servers. The highest attention shall be given to this process.

STATUS OF FUTURE GENERAL ASSEMBLIES

A visit has been paid to our Czech colleagues by R. Ekers, O. Engvold and M. Orine.

The main EC comments and concerns were:

- although very much motivated, the Czech Organizing Committee is understaffed. On the other hand, they are very enthusiastic;
- one is worried by the fact that contracts have been signed with 2 different PCOs:
CBT, who will handle registration, hotel reservations, tours, etc... and who signed with the Convention Center, and ICARUS, in charge of the handling of submission of abstracts and of the production of the scientific programme booklet and the abstract book.
CBT has been asked to precise all the points of the contract with the Convention Center, concerning the equipment of the rooms and signposting.
ICARUS has not yet been in a position to reply to questions concerning submission of abstracts. IAU is investigating possibilities of submission of abstracts them via the manuscript server of the new IAU Publisher. The abstracts will then be made accessible to the meeting organizers event by event, and globally to the IAU office;
- there is no national funding; In order to raise extra funding, the IAU secretariat is supplying a list of Exhibitors and Sponsors.
- also, a draft of memorandum of understanding should be prepared for further submission of invitation for General Assemblies, in order to enforce the commitment of national funding;
- the registration fee should not be more than USD 500. Different levels of registration fees should be studied (students, teachers, etc...).

Following a suggestion made at GA XXV, a Young Astronomers Meeting is schedule for GA XXVI.

ANY OTHER MATTER

The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be held April 18-20, 2005, either in Firenze or in Roma (Italy), depending upon the availability of rooms upon invitation of Franco Pacini.