

## Minutes of the 7<sup>th</sup> ICOM Europe Board Meeting

Friday, March 23, 2007

National Museum, Belgrade

Present: Udo Goesswald, Chairperson  
Ralf Ceplak, ICOM Croatia  
Agrita Ozola, ICOM Latvia  
Theresa Vella, ICOM Malta  
Damodar Frlan, prospective candidate for ICOM Europe

### **1. Welcome and Short Introduction by the Chairman**

Udo Goesswald (UG) thanked all members for joining the meeting in Belgrade, explaining the absence of Dominique Ferriot and Barbara Woroncow, who were unable to be there for personal reasons. UG also thanked Dr. Mila Popovic, Chairperson of ICOM Serbia, for hosting the meeting in the Gallery of Frescos as well as providing the accommodation and dinners.

### **2. Minutes of the last Board Meeting**

The last board meeting took place in Paris, in the course of the ICOM Advisory meeting in June 2006. These minutes had been distributed to all committee members and no comments were added.

### **3. Report on ICOM-Europe Tour and Conference Southeastern Europe**

UG reports on the first ICOM Europe Tour that took place in September 2006, that travelled from Ljubljana passing Zagreb (Museum of Ethnography), Banja Luka (Museum of Contemporary Art), Sarajevo (History Museum), to Dubrovnik. The tour ended with the attendance of the Best In Heritage Conference in Dubrovnik, including a speech by UG on behalf of ICOM Europe. One outcome of the tour was the agreement that ICOM Europe should support the Dubrovnik Best In Heritage Programme, as it provides a good European context in keeping with ICOM Europe's mission statement. UG also informed the meeting that a brief report on the tour was published in the Berlin Museum Journal, and that he has approached ICOM for its publication in ICOM News. A brief discussion was held on the very positive outcome of the tour, and that this initiative should be given all the support possible to ensure its continuation. Agrita Ozola (AO) spoke about a similar initiative that was undertaken amongst museums in the Baltic region for the first time and that after a number of times, this kind of programme can be evaluated and improved upon, but in the meantime there is no question as to whether such tours are of great benefit. A suggestion was made for the inclusion of photos of the tour to be included on the ICOM Europe website, that could be forwarded by the participants, who came from various European countries.

### **4. Paper : Aims and Missions of ICOM Europe**

UG had circulated the draft document to all committee members and is awaiting feedback. The document was read and a discussion followed on the role of ICOM Europe and its scope within the context of national and regional committees. UG

expanded on the mission statement, explaining his vision of Europe as an Open Project, and using museums and heritage to find new approaches to European politics, community and culture. UG also explained the need for a mission statement, and the attending Agenda (see further down), to give an identity to ICOM Europe and to provide direction.

AO spoke about opportunities to give some visibility to ICOM Europe. In a presentation that she gave to the Baltic Museology School, and on another occasion with the National Committee of Latvia, she explained the significance and role of ICOM Europe. Theresa Vella (TV) mentioned that in the ICFA international committee meeting that she attended in October 2006, she proposed that ICOM Europe be used as the channel for ICFA to improve its membership and its conference attendance from other regions and thus to open out to other ICOM museum communities.

UG gave a short note on the preamble to the mission statement, referring to the Berlin conference 'Giving Europe a Soul', a biannual meeting initiated by a group of intellectuals in Berlin, who want to put culture first in the EU's agenda. As a result of this initiative, Barroso (in his first speech as President of the EU) referred to this factor. UG referred to a paper by Prof. Kohalla from the Charles University in Prague where he defined the constituent elements of European culture:

- The importance that Europe lives in its history and understands it as permanent progress, that is part of our lives;
- European thought and ideas are essentially a search for truth, based in critical questioning, that we accept the search for truth not in ideology or singular frameworks
- A constant search for freedom as part of the democratic process started as a result of the French Revolution and a commitment to equality.

UG also spoke about Migration being a main issue in the EU and referred to the setting up of the Centre de l'Immigration in France this year. AO asked for a greater emphasis within the Mission Statement on ICOM Europe as an agent to link regions together.

The mission statement draft will be sent out to all national committees, for its final approval at the Vienna Triennial.

## **5. Agenda 2007-2010**

The agenda (copy attached) is to be viewed as a guiding document that will be updated or modified approximately every two months.

1a was achieved with the setting up of a website.

1b UG succeeded in getting ICOM funding 7,500E for the brochure

1c ICOM Europe supports the long night of museums, also because it is back-to-back with International Museum Day. UG has prepared a press release.

1d

2a Done

2b More info to be sought

c. Euromed dialogue – not much progress has been achieved yet owing to personal commitments by the ICOM Arab and ICOM Europe representatives. Udo is still to confirm with Chedlia whether the Alexandria Museum inauguration is still seen as a good

occasion. UG informed that the Anna Lindt Foundation, that is based in Egypt, may be able to help with resources.

2d more later

3. Udo has been approached to give ICOM Europe patronage to a training programme.

3e Ralf Ceplak (RC) informed of a curators' school set up in South Egypt

3f China is interested in new approaches to history. Europe has a responsibility to help. Possibility of working on a model exhibition together with communication via e-learning.

TV suggested interacting with existing academic programmes, such as the Cultural Heritage Management post-graduate programme that is run by Heritage Malta for the University of Malta.

4a No luck with this campaign. It is an ICOM issue, rather than an ICOM Europe one. Other regional representatives, such as Chedlia from ICOM Arab are also unable to attend the General Meeting in Vienna due to lack of funding.

AO informed about the Baltic Museology School, when the Latvia government will invite participants from Africa to the conference on 'Time Travel'. (More info on [www.bridgingages.com](http://www.bridgingages.com))

AO congratulated UG for the hard work put into the agenda. She suggested that in the next ICOM Europe committee, roles such as vice-President, PR, Secretary, etc be set up to assist UG in matters that he has so far had to tackle mostly on his own.

4b. Dubrovnik Best In Heritage was set up some five years ago and has proved very successful. ICOM Europe will endeavour to bring in participants from outside Europe. On the issue of restitution of artefacts, UG explained that he sees ICOM Europe as initiating dialogue, not merely mediating. He has discussed this idea and received positive feedback from Bernice Murphy (ICOM Ethics Committee) and Jack Lohman (ICOM UK). A discussion followed on possible participants in the conference such as the ViceChairman of ICOMOS, a representative from ICCROM, George Ubungu (ICOM Kenya), as well as representatives of 'universal museums'. UG requested reference material and footage that could help rope in support for this conference, including recent news footage of looting.

The agenda was unanimously approved and will be published on the ICOM Europe brochure and website.

## **6. Brochure**

UG presented the draft of the brochure that was put together with the assistance of Kulturprojekte Berlin. Compliments were expressed on the design. The brochure will include an essay by UG on "The New Face of Europe in Its Museums". The chair has asked for four or five lines of statements from each of ICOM Europe's national committees. The brochure was approved by the committee.

**7. Described in the ICOM Europe agenda**

**8. A discussion was held on the candidates**, and the election will be held at the Vienna General Meeting, on 18th August at 9.30 a.m. at the University of Vienna that will be attended by Chairpersons of National Committees or their representatives.

**9. Candidates so far are**

A representative from ICOM Finland proposed by Ebba Brannback. Damodar Frlan (Croatia), Isabelle Benoit (Switzerland), Margriet de Jong (Holland), Teti Hadjinicolaou (Greece) Alexander Kalbaska (Belorussia) and possibly Dominique Ferriot (France). Other candidates are expected to declare their candidacy by May 2007.

AO suggested keeping the former members of the ICOM Europe executive by nominating them as 'Ambassadors'.

UG expressed the need to establish the procedures for the election process.

10 Discussed above

11 ICOM Europe Tour 2008 (to be discussed at greater detail the next day with members of ICOM SEE

**12. Financial situation**

ICOM Germany is supporting UO in his travels on ICOM Europe business. UG has applied to ICOM for support but no reply has been received yet.

**13. Miscellaneous**

The board was informed of the recent dismissal of John Zvereff by Alissandra Cummins. The reasons for this dismissal are unclear and, to date, have not yet been communicated to ICOM members, nor it appears were the Advisory members even involved in this. This has occurred without any open discussion and is a matter of great concern to ICOM Europe Board members who expressed their disapproval.

A big Thank You was expressed for the hard work that has so clearly been put in by Udo Goeswald in his first year and a half as Chairman of ICOM Europe.