

**MINUTES
OF THE MEETING OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE INTERNATIONAL STATISTICAL INSTITUTE**

held August 18, 2003
in Berlin, Germany

1. WELCOME AND MINUTE OF SILENCE

1.1 ISI President and General Assembly Chairman Dennis Trewin opened the meeting, and welcomed all members to the General Assembly meeting. The President introduced the various ISI Executive Committee and Permanent Office representatives to the General Assembly. He informed the General Assembly that ISI Vice President Jef Teugels was unfortunately unable to attend the meeting due to a death in the family.

1.2 The Agenda of the meeting as adopted on the basis of the provisional Agenda, as published in issues 3 (August 15, 2003, page 5) and 5 (August 18, 2003, page 2) of the daily bulletin. The President referred to the Procedural Guidelines published in the August 18 edition of the daily bulletin. Although the sequential order of Agenda items was changed to accommodate the participation of invited visitors and time restrictions, these Minutes reflect discussions in the order that appears in the Agenda, as discussed over the course of the meeting

1.3 The President announced that the following ISI elected members had died since the previous Session: Richard L. Anderson, Kensei Araya, Mohammed Atiqullah, Kali S. Banerjee, Ishver S. Bangdiwala, Maurice S. Bartlett, Bernard Benjamin, Jerzy Berent, George A. Barnard, Vasant P. Bhapkar, Ralph A. Bradley, Indra Chakravati, Tore Elon Dalenius, Barrie Nicholas Davies, Ingeborg Esenwein-Rothe, Jean Pierre Fenelon, Jeanne E. Griffith, Shanti S. Gupta, Bela Gyires, Chikio Hayashi, Jerzy Z. Holzer, Rob Kempton, Henry O. Lancaster, Nathan Mantel, Marco Martini, Sigeiti Moriguti, Andi Hakim Nasoetion, Tadakazu Okuno, Burton T. Onate, Herbert E. Robbins, Harold Ruben, Justus F. Seely, C.A.B. Smith, Milton Sobel, Pierre Thionet, Richard L. Tweedie, Silvio Vianelli and Jacques A. Zighera. The President asked to the Assembly to observe a minute of silence in memory of their deceased colleagues.

1.4 The President expressed his appreciation to all those who had worked to make the Berlin ISI Session a success, with particular thanks to Gerhard Schröder and the German Government, the members of the German honorary committee, the German National Organising Committee, the ISI Programme and Programme Co-ordinating Committees and their Chair Mrs. Susan Linacre, and to the special efforts of Dr. Hans Günther Merk, Prof. Peter Wilrich, Mr. Johan Hahlen and Mr. Bernd Störtzbach. The General Assembly expressed their appreciation with applause.

2. ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE MEMBER AUDITORS

2.1 The President announced the appointment of Mr. Olav Ljones (Chairman) and Mr. Marius van Nieuwkerk as ISI member auditors.

3. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

3.1 The President outlined the key activities that had taken place over the course of the last two years. Regarding ISI Sessions, he indicated that plans are in the works for the 2005 Session in Sydney. Efforts are being taken to reduce costs for hosting the Session. Regarding ISI publications, he observed that the ISI Publications Programme was healthy. He informed the General Assembly of plans to introduce electronic web versions of the Bernoulli journal and the International Statistical Review via Project Euclid. He indicated that the ISI Dictionary of Statistical Terms had been published by Oxford University Press. He thanked its editor, Prof. Yadolah Dodge for his contributions to this effort under difficult personal circumstances. The President expressed his concern that membership numbers are declining and that the average age of members was increasing. The President announced that the ISI Professional Ethics Committee will be aiming to revise the code of professional ethics. The President provided the General Assembly with information regarding the ISI Development Fund, indicating that the application criteria have been revised. The President conceded that services to developing country members have not yet been significantly improved. A meeting has been scheduled during the ISI Session to discuss this issue with senior representatives from several developing countries. The General Assembly formally adopted the Report of the ISI EC to the General Assembly.

4. REPORT BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE FOR MEMBERSHIP EXPANSION AND RENEWAL

4.1 The President indicated that as David Moore could not attend to present an update about the report, he would outline the highlights of the report, and the steps that had already been taken, or were planned, in reaction to the report's proposals. The President noted that particular attention is being focussed on improvements to the ISI website, to services that are available to members, and to improving the benefits available to members. The President thanked the Committee for their valuable suggestions, many of which had already been actioned.

5. FINANCIAL REPORT

5.1 The President invited Vice President Jae Chang Lee to present the financial report. Prof. Lee provided an overview of ISI accounts, indicating that the ISI's financial position was in healthy condition. He noted that the level of ISI's financial reserves was at a satisfactory level, and would allow for a continuation of existing activities. He indicated that the ISI EC recommends that a cautious financial policy be continued, in particular given the present international economic climate. Prof. Lee recommended that the financial report be approved. The General Assembly expressed their approval for the report.

5.2 The President explained that according to Dutch law, a financial report was required to be presented at a meeting of members within six months of the end of each fiscal year, unless the General Assembly agreed to extend the period. He noted that the Dutch Notary Public had suggested that a General Assembly meeting be held every year, but noted that it was not possible to realise this proposal on practical grounds. Alternatively, the President invited the General Assembly to extend the period until the next ordinary Session. The General Assembly agreed to the extension.

6. MEMBER AUDITORS REPORT

6.1 Member Auditor Olav Ljones provided the General Assembly with a summary of the

Member Auditors Report (see Annex 1). On the basis of the Member Auditors findings, the President recommended that the General Assembly approve the Auditors Report. The General Assembly expressed their approval of the Member Auditors Report with applause. The President observed that the ISI must develop a financial strategy for publications and other services it provides, and incorporate this in its budget plans.

7. ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND COUNCIL

7.1 The President announced the results of the elections for the binding nominations for ISI Executive Committee and Council positions for the term 2003-2005, as described in Volume 27, no. 1 (issue 79 – page 8-9), 2003 of the *ISI Newsletter*. The General Assembly officially accepted the results and confirmed these nominations with applause.

8. COMPOSITION OF THE NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

8.1 The President informed the General Assembly that the Council had appointed the following members to serve on the Nominations Committee as announced in the Berlin ISI Daily Bulletin (issue 1 on August 13); Michel Euriat (France), Mary Chamie (USA), Yutaka Tanaka (Japan), Carmem Feijo, Carlo Malaguerra (Switzerland), Brian Phillips (Australia). This committee would propose candidates for the election of Officers and Council to serve from the end of the 2005 Sydney Session. The General Assembly approved of the list of members for this committee. The President urged the membership to submit their proposals to the members of this Committee.

9. ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE MEMBERSHIP ELECTIONS

9.1 The General Assembly welcomed the 32 ISI members who were elected in the first round of the 2003 ISI elections, as announced by the President, and listed in the August 18th (issue 5, page 12) edition of the Berlin daily bulletin. He urged the General Assembly to continue efforts to nominate new qualified members for the second round of 2003 elections.

10. PRESENTATION OF ISI SERVICE AWARDS

10.1 The President indicated that the ISI Service Awards Committee, Chaired by Prof. Ivan Fellegi, had selected the following persons as the winners of the first ISI service awards; Constance van Eeden, Agnes Herzberg, Chris Heyde and David Moore. The President presented the awards to each of the winners [as C. van Eeden, C. Heyde and D. Moore were unable to attend, their awards were presented to Chris Klaassen, Peter Hall and Carmen Batanero, who received the awards on their behalf]. The General Assembly expressed their appreciation for the contributions of the ISI Service Award winners with applause. The President thanked the Committee for their work.

11. PRESENTATION OF THE ISI MAHALANOBIS AWARD

11.1 The President invited the Chairman of the ISI Mahalanobis Committee, Mr. Jean-Louis Bodin, to announce the winner of the prize. Mr. Bodin informed the General Assembly about the origins of the prize, which was funded by the Indian government. From the various nominees, the five members of the Mahalanobis Committee nominated Prof. C.R. Rao as the winner, recognising his considerable lifetime contributions to statistics in developing countries,

particularly in India. Dr. A.C. Kulshreshtha, Additional Director General of the Indian Central Statistical Office, announced that it was his honour to confer the Mahalanobis Prize to Prof. Rao, observing that he was a true disciple of Prof. Mahalanobis, mentioning his contributions to the Indian Statistical Institute and the International Statistical Education Centre. Dr. Kulshreshtha presented the prize to Prof. Rao. Prof. Rao stated that it was a great honour to receive this award. He indicated that in the course of his career, he had observed Prof. Mahalanobis' suggestion that statistics should be applied. The President thanked Prof. Rao, and also thanked Mr. Bodin for his Committee's work.

12. PRESENTATION OF THE WINNERS OF THE JAN TINBERGEN AND COCHRAN-HANSEN PRIZES

12.1 Representing the Stichting Internationaal Statistisch Studiefonds, the agency funding the prize, Marius van Nieuwkerk presented the Jan Tinbergen Award to C.G.B. Burgos (Philippines) and A. Toma (Romania). These awards, previously known as the ISI Awards for Young Statisticians from Developing Countries, were renamed in honour of the late ISI member and world-renowned econometrician Jan Tinbergen. The President thanked the "Stichting Internationaal Statistisch Studiefonds" for providing each winner with a 2,269 euro prize in addition to the all expense paid trip to the ISI Session. Mr. van Nieuwkerk thanked Prof. Klaus Krickeberg and his Committee for their work in selecting the winning papers.

12.2 Representing the IASS, Xavier Charoy presented the Cochran-Hansen prize to Mr. Palipudi Krishna Mohan (India). The prize includes an all expense paid trip to the Berlin Session.

12.3 The President reminded the General Assembly participants that the papers produced by the winners of these two Prizes had been presented during a special meeting organised on Saturday, August 16.

13. PROPOSAL TO GRANT TRANSITIONAL SECTION STATUS TO THE IRVING FISHER SOCIETY ON MONETARY AND FINANCIAL STATISTICS

13.1 The President informed the General Assembly that the ISI Executive Committee was aware of several proposals to establish new ISI Sections. The first complete proposal has been received from the Irving Fisher Committee for a Section to be called the Irving Fisher Society on Financial and Monetary Statistics. He observed that while there is some overlap in the subject matter of the proposed Section and other existing ISI Sections, if managed properly, this could serve as an advantage. He informed the General Assembly that the Council had agreed to granting transitional ISI Section status, such that the definitive decision regarding Section status would be considered during the ISI Session in Sydney. The President invited Irving Fisher Committee Chair Dr. Almut Steger to address the General Assembly. Dr. Steger provided an overview of the prospective Irving Fisher Section objectives, indicating that these domains were not the priorities of existing ISI Sections. She observed that the new Section would broaden the ISI's focus. She announced that the new Section would be prepared to co-operate with other existing ISI Sections and Committees. The President thanked Dr. Steger and invited comments from the floor. L. Biggeri stated that the objectives of the proposal were not clear, and if the new Section would be applying statistics to a specific field, he would not support the creation of the new Section. President Elect Stigler observed that the opportunity to create a new Section in this exciting field of

statistics was an opportunity that should not be missed. I. Fellegi observed that the ISI should be clear regarding the creation of new ISI Sections. Consideration should be given regarding the various implications of new Sections on matters such as the development of the ISI Session scientific programme. I. Krizman suggested that the ISI should be receptive to data users and those providing statistics. Akihiko Ito observed that the ISI should be cautious regarding the establishment of new institutions. R. Padieu observed that the general principle regarding the establishment of new ISI Sections should not be based upon one case. P. Cheung stated that the decision of the ISI Council would be respected, and the new Section could indeed be a valuable contribution to the ISI, however he expressed concern about the proliferation of ISI Sections, suggesting that the addition of new Sections was not a workable strategy. N. Fisher commented that the interests of Irving Fisher Society are poorly represented in the ISI, and if the needs of unrepresented members are not addressed, the ISI will not grow. O. Ljones emphasised that the economic links between the ISI and Sections must be considered. The establishment of a new Section should be considered as a part of the strategy to enlarge the ISI. He urged that steps should be taken to improve communication between the Sections. H. Jeskanen-Sundström observed that while the IAOS shared the responsibility of covering financial statistics and balance of payments, there are several other topics not covered by the IAOS that could be profiled by the new Section. She noted that the transition period could be used to review the policy of considering the addition of new ISI Sections. N. Keiding indicated that the Moore report stated that new ISI Sections should be created. The Irving Fisher Committee proposal is an example of integrating statistics in a particular area. He observed that the new Section would help to rejuvenate the ISI, and he supported its creation. R. Stäglin expressed his support for the creation of the new Section, noting that it would serve to increase the breadth of the ISI. L. Cook commented that while the ISI focuses attention on the philosophical basis for the expansion of the organisation in the coming biennium, no time should be wasted by not establishing the new Section now. C. Carson indicated that while she was initially critical, she now strongly supported the establishment of the new Section. She noted that an effort should be made to bring together national statistical office and financial statisticians. She commented that a number of groups are beginning to think of themselves as statisticians, and the ISI should welcome them. The President reminded the gathering that there are formal criteria for the establishment of new ISI Sections, and that these criteria had been circulated to those organisations considering Section status. He noted that the Ad Hoc Committee on Membership Expansion and Renewal supported the establishment of the new Section. He informed the General Assembly that the Irving Fisher Committee had many more areas of interest than those that may overlap with the IAOS. He warned that a rejection of the Irving Fisher Committee proposal would serve to turn away a very strong group of active statisticians. The President requested that the General Assembly indicate via a show of hands its support or rejection of the motion to accept the Council proposal to obtain transitional ISI Section status. The President observed that as there were many more persons expressing their support for the proposal, the motion would be carried.

14. FUTURE ISI SESSIONS

14.1 The President informed the General Assembly that an invitation has been received from Portugal to host the 56th ISI Session in Lisboa in 2007. H. E. Mr. João de Vallera, Portuguese Ambassador to Germany, presented the official invitation for ISI and Section members to attend the 56th ISI Session in Portugal. The General Assembly expressed with applause their warm acceptance of the invitation. The President informed the General Assembly that the

Portuguese Session Organisers had a booth in the exhibition area with promotional information about the future Session.

14.2 The President informed the General Assembly that South Africa has officially offered to host the 57th Session in Durban in 2009. The ISI Council had approved this proposal, such that during the Sydney Session in 2005, the ISI General Assembly will be presented with a formal invitation.

15. VIDEO PRESENTED BY THE 55th SESSION HOSTS

15.1 The President in his function as the chairman of the 55th Session NOC presented a brief statement welcoming all to attend the 55th ISI Session in Sydney. The General Assembly viewed a multimedia slide demonstration, illustrating the many attractions in store for the participants of the 55th Session. N. Fisher informed the General Assembly that plans had been made to organise satellite meetings in Cairns, Noumea, and Wellington.

16. REPORTS BY THE PRESIDENTS OF SECTIONS

16.1 The President invited each of the five Section Presidents to make a two-minute report covering the highlights of their administration. Bernoulli Society President Peter Hall, IASS President Xavier Charoy, IASC President Jae Chang Lee, IASE President Camen Batanero and IAOS President Paul Cheung each addressed the General Assembly, providing an overview of the numerous past activities and future plans for each of their respective ISI Sections. The President expressed his appreciation for the achievements that they and their Section members had realised in the course of the last two years. P. Hall thanked the ISI Director for his help to the Sections.

17. REPORT OF PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

17.1 The President invited ISI Publications Committee Chairman Chris Klaassen, to present the General Assembly with the Publications Committee report. Prof. Klaassen chronicled the developments that had taken place in the ISI's publication programme during the 2001-2003 period:

- A new editor, Klaas van Harn, had replaced Fred Steutel as co-editor of STMA. Efforts are being made to identify an additional editor as well. He noted that STMA was now available in CD-ROM and on-line formats;
- A new editor, Eugene Seneta, had replaced Elja Arjas as co-editor of the International Statistical Review;
- Efforts were being taken to identify new editors of the Bernoulli journal, to replace retiring editors W. van Zwet and S. van de Geer;
- The Oxford Dictionary of Statistical Terms had been published. Appreciation was due to the editor Yadolah Dodge and the associate editors;
- A historical membership directory had been published by the ISI, edited by G. Stemerding. Appreciation was due to the editor and Statistics Norway for printing this volume;
- The biennial ISI membership directory was published by the ISI. Appreciation was due to INSEE for printing this reference volume;

- The Publications Committee chairman informed the General Assembly that both the Bernoulli journal and the International Statistical Review would be available on-line via the Euclid Project website.

The President Elect observed that Short Book Reviews continues as a highly valued ISI publication. As there were no questions, the President thanked the Publications Committee chairman for his report, and thanked all editors for their work on ISI publications.

18. REPORT OF PROGRAMME COMMITTEE OF THE 53rd SESSION

18.1 Programme Committee Chair Susan Linacre provided an overview of the work of the Programme Committee. She described her Committee's efforts to obtain a balanced list of invited paper meetings. Mrs. Linacre thanked the Programme Co-ordinating and Programme Committees for their work, as well as the Local Programme Committee and National Organising Committee, in particular Prof. Peter Wilrich, and the ISI Permanent Office. She indicated that this Session included 85 invited pre-scheduled paper topics plus 2 emerging topics for a total of 87 invited paper meetings (with 285 presentations), and 4 poster sessions. Mrs. Linacre presented the General Assembly with several statistics regarding the scientific programme, especially noting that the geographical distribution of invited paper meetings could be broadened. The President expressed his appreciation to Susan Linacre and Peter Wilrich for their successful work.

19. PROPOSAL TO CHANGE THE ISI BY-LAWS ANNOUNCEMENT

19.1 The President indicated that four proposals had been made to change the ISI By-Laws:

- Eliminate the annual quota for new elected members;
- Eliminate the limit of one-fifth of total membership from any one state or confederation;
- Reduce the number of supporting signatures for nomination from 5 to 3
- Eliminate the 'at least one from the candidate's state' requirement for members supporting a nomination.

The President noted that the one-fifth restriction had already been met with respect to members from the United States of America. He informed the General Assembly that the ISI Council had approved the changes, and a voting ballot had been sent to all ISI members, and the resulting responses supported all four of the proposals. The President moved that the 4 proposals be officially voted upon by the General Assembly. As no General Assembly participants expressed their opposition to the proposed changes, and as the General Assembly applauded in support of the proposals, the proposals were officially adopted and the By-Laws would consequently be amended.

20. CLOSING

20.1 The President announced that the ISI Director, Dr. Marcel Van den Broecke, will retire as Director of the ISI Permanent Office. He thanked him for his efforts to improve the ISI. Dr. Van den Broecke thanked the President, indicating that it was an honour to have served as Director. The President announced that Mr. Daniel Berze would assume the post of ISI Director effective August 21, 2003.

20.2 The ISI President thanked all members of the ISI Executive Committee and Council and the ISI Sections for their contributions.

20.3 ISI President Elect Stephen Stigler thanked ISI President Mr. Dennis Trewin for his excellent leadership and dedicated contributions to the ISI. The General Assembly expressed their appreciation with applause.

20.4 The General Assembly meeting was closed.

ANNEX I

Report of the member-Auditors to the General Assembly on the Financial Report for the years 2001 – 2003.

(54th Session Berlin, General Assembly Monday August 18, 2003)

We have examined and investigated the Financial Report, delivered to the 54th Session as introduced by the Vice President for Finance. The Member Auditors are pleased to note that the financial situation of the ISI continues to be in good shape. The Balance sheet as at December 31 shows a healthy picture. Liquidity is good and the investments are generating a satisfactory level of income. The fair value of the investments is substantially higher than the value shown in the Balance Sheet (2.1 versus 1,6 millions Euro). Current liabilities are rather erratic because of prepayments etc. total assets have increased.

It has been noted that invoices for services provided do not always correspond to the calendar year in which they were provided. This may lead to apparent imbalances or distortions in the income /expenditure relationship.

The profit and loss account shows for both years a positive result, a modest positive for 2001 and with a significantly better result for year 2002. The results before financial income have for some years been negative. This situation was commented on in the previous Report of the Member-Auditors (2001). The Members Auditors recognize that the financial statement from the ISI Executive Committee points out that, "Financial income is an indispensable part of income and may be expected to diminish as interest rates are approaching historical lows". The Members Auditors fully support this opinion and accordingly we will mention that it is important for ISI to establish a clear financial strategy. Such a financial strategy can be used as a base for the various scientific strategies.

The Members Auditors are pleased to observe that it is obvious that measures has been taken to reduce costs and to secure the various income elements. The Members Auditors will use this opportunity to point out the importance of the ongoing efforts to secure the member situation. These efforts are important, both as a base for the scientific activities and as a measure to secure the member contributions. The Members Auditors are pleased to see the report from the ISI Ad hoc Committee on Membership and Renewal and the response given to this report. Several measures are discussed in the report, but we will use this opportunity to recommend that this report and measures that are decided by the Executive Committee will be discussed also from a financial point.

The generous contributions both in cash and in kind from several governments, governmental institutions and intergovernmental institutions are still an important part of the revenues and the members auditors will underline how grateful ISI should be to all these institutions. It is also important for us to point out to the General Assembly, that this part of revenues are managed in a very respectful manner by the ISI administration.

The Members Auditors would also like to acknowledge the good cooperation and support we got from the Director of the ISI Permanent Office. The financial statement has been improved since the last General assembly, with fewer details. The work of the Members auditors has been supported by very clear and informative background material.

Berlin August 18. 2003

Olav Ljones and Marius van Nieuwkerk