

Minutes of the Meeting of the *Permanent Council for the Organisation of the International Congress of Phonetic Sciences*  
ICPhS Saarbrücken, 9 August 2007, 11.45 – 13.15; 10 August 2007, 11.45-14.00.

## **Present**

### *Members of PC as from 2007:*

Gösta Bruce (Sweden, President of IPA), Daniel Recasens (Spain, Vice-President of IPA), William J. Barry (Germany), Anne Cutler (Netherlands/Australia), Gerard J. Docherty (UK), John H. Esling (Canada), Björn Granström (Sweden), Nina Grønnum (Denmark), William J. Hardcastle (UK), Vincent van Heuven (Netherlands), Jens-Peter Köster (Germany), Ian Maddieson (USA), João Antônio de Moraes (Brazil), Francis J. Nolan (UK), John Ohala (USA), Louis Pols (Netherlands), Yoshinori Sagisaka (Japan), Maria-Josep Solé (Spain), Jaqueline Vaissière (France), John C. Wells (UK), Eric Zee (China).

### *Absent (with apologies):*

Shinji Maeda, Katerina Nicolaidis (Greece), Justus Roux (South Africa),

### *Absent:*

Ailbhe Ni Chasaide (Ireland)

### *Members of previous PC who are not members of new PC:*

Arthur S. Abramson (USA), Hiroya Fujisaki (Japan), Klaus Kohler (Germany).

### *Absent (with apologies):*

Gunnar Fant (Sweden), Bruce Millar (Australia)

### *Absent:*

Pier Marco Bertinetto (Italy), Björn Lindblom (Sweden), Tatiana Nicolaeva (Russia), Kenneth Stevens (USA)

## **Proposed agenda**

1. Opening
2. Approval of the agenda
3. Report by the President of the Permanent Council on activities since the 15th Congress in Barcelona
4. Discussion and decision on proposals for the 17th Congress  
Proposals will be distributed to PC members in their Congress folders on registration, and they will be presented on site. So far one proposal has been announced and is being finalised, by Eric Zee for Hong Kong.
5. Preliminary Report on the 16th Congress
6. Elections of PC President, Vice-President, and Secretary
7. Miscellanea, e.g. Congress Proceedings
8. Closing

## **1. Opening**

**Klaus Kohler** (KK) opens the meeting, as president of PC. He welcomes everyone to the statutory meeting of the PC, which according to the by-laws takes place at every

ICPhS. The invitation for the meeting was sent out by e-mail to all members elected for the period 2007 – 2011, as well as to nine members of the PC 2003 – 2007 who will not continue. The latter individuals will resign when voting starts at the present meeting. **KK** informs the PC that John Laver resigned from the PC earlier. He then commemorates Jørgen Rischel who sadly passed away.

## **2. Approval of agenda**

The proposed agenda is approved.

## **3. Report by the President of the Permanent Council**

**KK** reports on the composition of the PC since the 15<sup>th</sup> ICPHS in Barcelona 2003.

- As a result of the election 2003 Ian Maddieson (IM) joined the PC ex officio. Therefore Edda Farnetani (EF) moved into IM's seat among the six IPA-elected members. EF has since resigned for health reasons.
- In the 2007 election seven members were elected by the IPA, bringing the total of IPA-elected members up to the level stipulated in the by-laws. Nine more members were elected in the non-IPA section of the PC plus two successive ICPHS organisers.
- The election was conducted in three rounds
  - (1) Nominations of up to five candidates
  - (2) Voting for nine candidates from the list of nominees
  - (3) Candidates who received at least two votes in round (2) entered round (3); the first nine candidates were then elected
- Two ex-officio members: IPA president Gösta Bruce, IPA vice president Daniel Recasens

The PC now has its new composition as was negotiated between IPA and PC and laid down in the by-laws for the PC. In 2011 only the five remaining IPA-elected members of 2003 will be replaced by five new members in an IPA election. All other elected members will remain in office until 2015. This is a fruitful basis for consolidation.

## **4. Discussion and decision on proposals for the 17th Congress**

Only one bid has been received. The proposal was submitted by a consortium headed by Eric Zee (EZ) to hold the 2011 congress in Hong Kong. EZ automatically becomes a member of the PC. Since he was elected in the voting by the non-IPA section, his seat becomes available for the runner-up in the latter ballot. In the ballot, three candidates ended up with the same number of votes for two seats. Now all three can be members of the PC: Louis Pols, John Ohala and Maria-Josep Solé.

The text of the bid has been sent to PC members in advance. **EZ** summarizes the bid in a (Power Point) presentation. The bid is then opened for discussion.

**Björn Granström** wants to know how vulnerable the organisation is when attendance should be low. EZ expects 800 attendants but can accommodate well over 1,000 delegates. The costs are largely proportional to the number of attendants.

**Louis Pols** (LP) asks for a breakdown of estimates in terms of fixed and variable costs. He also would like to see a break-even point mentioned in the final version of the bid. He would like to see the organisers create a financial buffer, to identify risks, and secure back-up from the university. The definitive version of the bid should clearly specify financial and organisational responsibilities of the parties involved.

**Maria Josep Solé** thinks that the bid is too cheap. Are the costs of the CD production of the proceedings included in the estimates?

Action  
required  
from Eric  
Zee

**EZ** agrees to submit a definitive version of his bid with a breakdown into fixed and variable costs as requested. He also points out that the fixed costs are quite reasonable (only the rent of the congress centre). The production of the proceedings will be handled by Hong Kong University at no extra cost. Deposits and advances will be covered by the organising department (which, says **EZ**, has amply sufficient financial resources). **KK** suggests that the IPA may also help out if losses are incurred.

It is suggested that CD-ROM may not be the preferred medium for the distribution of the proceedings. On-line proceedings accessible through the internet (with protection from non-authorized users) should be considered.

Action  
required  
from Eric  
Zee

**Bill Hardcastle** wonders why no support and/or co-participation of the CUHK Department of Speech and Hearing is mentioned in the bid. **EZ** suggests this might have been an oversight. He will contact the S&H department and possibly include them in the organising consortium.

**LP** points out that the consortium is of special importance. The fact that **EZ** has been able to make Hong Kong (City University), Beijing (Academy of Sciences) and Taiwan join efforts, shows that détente is immanent, certainly in the academic world in China.

Action  
required  
from Eric  
Zee

**Gerry Docherty** asks whether the congress can be held at an earlier date in the summer. He is afraid that the proposed dates will interfere with the teaching obligations of attendants from the USA. **EZ** will inquire if this is still an option.

**Nina Grønnum** would like to see plenary presentations on every day of the congress. Everyone agrees.

**Hiroya Fujisaki** suggests that the congress cut down on the number of parallel sessions. He would like to see the organisation decide on special sessions on fairly broadly defined issues so that each session will potentially attract a large audience.

**KK** would like to see the present set-up of the poster sessions continued in the next congress. He considers the poster format (long corridors, ample space) at the Saarbrücken conference exemplary. This idea is generally carried.

**Ian Maddieson** inquires what arrangement will be adopted for the review procedure for the acceptance/rejection of contributions at the next conference. **EZ** does not know yet, but says he has another three-and-a-half years to come up with a solution. **LP** states that the PC has the prerogative to prescribe the review procedure. **Arthur Abramson** disagrees: the PC may advise on such matters but the decision on the reviewing procedure resides with the local congress organizers. **KK** thinks that further discussion on this matter by the PC is needed. A general policy is needed here, which should not be dictated by the PC but which would serve as a default.

After this discussion suggests that, given that only one bid has been received, **EZ** may remain in the meeting room while a vote is being taken. **KK** then moves that the bid be accepted. This is done by acclamation. **EZ**, as organiser of the next congress, will be an executive of the PC

## 5. Preliminary report on the 16<sup>th</sup> ICPHS

Bill Barry itemizes a number of points as a preview of his written report (in progress) on the Saarbrücken congress.

- The internet submission system that was made available by Copenhagen University has been adapted and improved.
- There will be a new award, viz. the Peter Ladefoged award for best student paper. Word has just come in from Peter's widow, Jenny Ladefoged, that she allows the reward to carry Peter's name.
- Seventy students from all over Germany have been brought to Saarbrücken in order to assist in all possible ways during the conference. The students were put up in private accommodation.
- Child care facilities have been made available to congress delegates. Only three families have used these facilities.
- The barbecue was a success, in spite of the inclement weather conditions. It is a cheap alternative to a congress diner and engenders social interaction much more than a static dinner.
- The program committee was consulted regularly.
- The congress asked for full-paper submissions and anonymous reviewing (double blind format: both authors and reviewers were anonymous). A total of 713 submissions were received; 66% were accepted so that a certain level of quality seems guaranteed.
- Prosody was the most popular subject area. To avoid such crowding, prosody should be split up into a number of more explicit sub-areas.
- Speech technology was clearly underrepresented at this congress. Better contact with the Interspeech organisers seems needed here.
- There were stubborn reviewers who refused to motivate their rejections. There should be a future obligation for reviewers to explicitly motivate their decisions and comment on the papers they review.
- A questionnaire was held among reviewers. Results of the questionnaire will be included in the final written report.
- The congress proceedings were produced in a relatively cheap fashion. Expensive firms (such as Causal Productions, who produced the proceedings and CD-ROM of the previous congress) were not hired. It took the organisers two weeks of hard

word, but then a CD-ROM production of quite decent quality was available. Only 20 hard copies of the proceedings were printed (12 were ordered).

- Grants were made available to would-be attendants of slender means (not for German students). Each grant was in the amount of € 100 plus a waiver of the registration fee. The German Research Council made a total of € 9,000 available for this purpose.
- Counter to what has been suggested, the organisers believe that topics for the special sessions were not too narrowly defined.

A short discussion follows the presentation of the preliminary report. **HF** reiterates that the next congress should be more selective in the number of special sessions. **LP** wants to know the exact number of registered and paying attendants. Was the financial break-even point reached? **BB** states that the number of registered participants is in excess of 800, so that the break-even point has been reached. **Anne Cutler** argues that the results of the questionnaire held among the reviewers are predictable: no-one who has just spent substantial time and effort on reviewing a number of papers, will admit that it was a waste of time.

## 6. Election of PC President, Vice-President and Secretary

*Agenda items #6 and higher were discussed on Friday, 10 August 2007.*

**KK** would like to see adopted as a general principle that VP of the IPA is automatically appointed as the president of the PC. This would intensify the link between the IPA and the PC. The secretary should have experience in the PC, and the ideal VP would be the organiser of the next congress. **KK** argues that it is better to incorporate the organiser of the next congress than to supervise the organiser. Accordingly **KK** nominates Daniel Recasens as president, Vincent van Heuven as Secretary and Eric Zee as VP.

Pros and cons of **KK**'s proposal are amply discussed. Several alternative candidates for executive offices are nominated; some candidates decline, other nominations are not seconded. A majority of the PC members feel that it is not a good policy to have the organiser of the next congress be a member of the PC. A more attractive alternative would be to appoint the organiser of the previous congress as VP of the PC. A number of PC members then nominate Bill Barry for the position of VP.

In the following voting procedure the positions of the president (Daniel Recasens) and secretary (Vincent van Heuven) are decided on by show of hands. No ballot is deemed necessary as there is just one candidate for each office. Since two candidates have been nominated for the position of VP a written ballot is taken. The count is:

Eric Zee:	8 votes
Bill Barry:	11 votes
Abstentions:	2

## 7. Miscellanea

### **Paper submission and reviewing process.**

**KK** gives a historical overview of submissions and review procedures. At the first congress in Amsterdam (1932) extended abstracts were submitted before the conference; full versions of selected presentations only were published, either in the congress proceedings or in thematic issues of professional journals. The same format was adopted at the Copenhagen congress (1979). This year, in Saarbrücken, only full papers were submitted before the conference; a double-blind review procedure was applied in order to select those papers that would be presented (and published in the proceedings). It is important that we should have a clear conception of what the congress (and its proceedings) are for. Is it primarily a publication platform or is it primarily an opportunity for (especially young) researchers to present and discuss ideas?

**Francis Nolan** remarks that published papers will be needed as long as the congress is organised in a large number of parallel sessions.

**Anne Cutler** is against proceedings. They do not count as serious publications (they only do so in the engineering world). Therefore young researchers' careers are harmed by forcing them to spend much time on proceedings. The congress may have been overly selective. Anybody should be allowed to come and present. Personal contact is all. All presentations and posters should be on the web. The congress should be open and inclusive.

**Bill Barry** supports AC's view but wants a restriction imposed such that the congress should cater for phonetic sciences only. Also, he thinks that a selection of the presenters should be allowed to submit 4-page abstracts (post hoc). This would be a hybrid model.

**Bill Hardcastle** thinks that full papers are easier to review. Also, writing a paper is a good exercise for young researchers.

**Jaqueline Vaissière** insists that reviewers should at least have a PhD degree. She has seen strange, if not stupid, comments from some reviewers.

**BB** objects that all reviewers at the present congress were recommended by the advisory committee. He is shocked to hear JV's negative experiences.

**Daniel Recasens** believes there were too many reviewer. He suggests that fewer reviewers should be invited and be given a larger case load each. Also, he would like to see higher acceptance rate.

**Louis Pols** wants to keep a filter in rubbish; there should be at least some quality check.

**John Esling** observes that lots of students made it to the congress. Apparently, for them the papers do count.

**KK** expects a large number of submissions for the Hong Kong congress in 2011. As a result some 200 to 400 reviewers will be needed to review the 4-page papers.

**Gerry Docherty** asks if any papers were rejected because they were written in poor English. **DD** answers that this did not happen, except when the English was so poor that the reviewers could not understand the contents.

Action  
required  
from PC  
executives

**KK** ends the discussion. The final solution for the submission and reviewing procedure will be negotiated over the internet. The PC will set up an e-mail panel. All PC members should fill out a questionnaire and present their views on the matter within three months.

### Other matters (KK)

Action  
required  
from PC  
executives

The bidding procedure for the 2015 congress (and beyond) should be addressed to the secretary of the PC. The bids will be solicited through an advertisement on the IPA webpage. When persons are approached for bids Eric Zee's bid and financial annex should be the model format. With EZ's permission the final version of his bid will be posted on the web.

An attempt should be made to integrate the Prosody Special Interest Group into the IPA, possibly with a representation on the PC.

Action  
required  
from PC  
executives

An effort will be made to publish all proceedings of all previous congresses on the web (Wolfgang Hess has successfully done the same for Interspeech). This will hopefully include also the proceedings of the eighth congress held in 1975 in Leeds. Regrettably these proceedings were never published. The PC will approach then organiser Celia Scully (possibly also Peter Roach) in order to find out if any of the Leeds manuscripts still exist.

Action  
required  
from all PC  
members

**Louis Pols** suggests that any further comments and/or criticisms on the present congress should be sent to Bill Barry within a month.

## 8. Closing

**KK** closes the meeting at 14.00 hours