

# Minutes of the EMS General Assembly



held during the 13th European Microscopy Congress on Thursday August 26, 2004 at 17 hrs in Room U025 of the University of Antwerpen, Groenenborgerlaan, Antwerpen, Belgium

The following members of the Executive Board were present: Carrascosa (President, Madrid), Ginsel (Treasurer, Nijmegen), Wisse (Secretary, Keerbergen), Frank (Brno), Hebert (Huddinge), Hutchison (Oxford), Hax (Eindhoven), Schryvers (Antwerpen), Vittori Antisari (Rome).

Excused: Hawkes (Toulouse)

In addition, the following EMS members registered their name on the attendance list: Aebi, Arancia, Quaglino, Catalano, Carazo, Czyrska, Frank, Hozak, Schauer, Kovacs, Carlino, Otte-Höller, Koerten, Reichelt, Dürrenberger, Pulfer, Kohl, Zweck, Mayer, Hertsens, Romih, Pavelka, Hofer, Mader, Schmid, Milat, Cockayne (President of IFSM), Gonzalez-Calbet, Haider, Matienco, Hovnanyan, Lai Kee Him, Serin, Cheynet, Timmermans, Carter (Secretary of IFSM), Fraternali, Battistelli, Charai, Bals, Hadermann, Van Ginderen, Eysermans, Lebedev.

Many members did not register their names while joining and leaving the meeting.

Chair: Carrascosa

Report: Wisse

## Agenda

1. Confirmation of the agenda of the General Assembly
2. Minutes of the General Assembly held during the EMS extension in Pula (2003), distributed by the EMS Newsletter and available at the EMS web site
3. Report on the organization of the Brno meeting
4. Report of the President, describing the activities of the Executive Board, the committees and the EMS in the period 2000 - 2004
5. Report of the Treasurer and the auditors for the period 2000 - 2004
6. Election of two auditors for the years 2004 - 2008
7. Proposal and improvement of the budget for the period 2004 – 2008
8. Proposal and improvement of the annual fee for EMS members and corporate members
9. Approval of the statutes (changes need a 2/3 majority of votes)
10. Approval of the by-laws (need a simple majority of the votes)
11. Proposal of new candidates for the Executive Board of EMS
12. Election of the new Executive Board
13. Prospect on EMS activities
14. Any further matter to be discussed
15. Closing of the meeting

1. The members accept the agenda and the order of points for the General Assembly.
2. The minutes of the General Assembly in Pula 2003 were distributed by EMS Newsletter, have been printed in Imaging & Microscopy and have been posted at the EMS website. These minutes are approved.
3. Ludek Frank presents a short report on EMC 2000 in Brno. There were 820 scientists present, coming from 44 countries. 263 company participants registered. In total there were 785 scientific contributions, among which 12 plenary lectures, 115 invited lectures and 451 posters. The president and the audience complement Ludek Frank for his accomplishments in organizing this successful meeting.
4. The President, Jose Carrascosa presents a short survey of the activities of EMS during the period 2000 – 2004. He mentions the organisation of three EMS extensions in Lecce, Lille and Pula, all in conjunction with multinational meetings for microscopy involving many national societies. A major difficulty concerned the transfer of EMC 2004 from Jerusalem to Antwerpen. Considering the situation in Israel it was believed that a transfer was necessary. We are all grateful to the Israeli colleagues for

their offer and preparations to organize EMC 2004, and we also thank the Belgian Society for Microscopy and the colleagues in Antwerpen for taking over this task at such short notice. EMS supported several microscopy meetings and EMS extensions by paying for invited speakers and offering to place announcements on the EMS website and in the EMS Newsletter. EMS also supported courses and workshops, be it not in great numbers.

We succeeded in writing a Constitution and By Laws, which were posted on the EMS website in the year 2000.

With the help of 22 national societies, an effort was made to improve the membership list of EMS. This list has been published in the EMS Yearbook 2004. The Yearbook has successfully been published in four successive years under the directorship of the past president Peter Hawkes. The Yearbook is produced at no cost to the society.

Periodically, EMS Newsletters have been sent out to the membership by email. Over the years the success rate of sending collective emails to the members has increased, the present circulation concerns about 2500 email addresses with a failure rate of 14%. Fortunately, the EMS Newsletter is also printed by GIT Verlag in the journal *Imaging & Microscopy*, including about 18,000 microscopists in Europe and abroad receive this journal with the printed version of the EMS Newsletter.

The financial situation has improved considerably (vide infra). The legal status of EMS has been secured by establishing the European Microscopy Foundation (EMF), for which an official act according to Dutch law was written and passed by a notary in Nijmegen (The Netherlands) and for which an official registration at the Chamber of Commerce was performed.

Trade representatives were engaged to produce a structure giving industry a voice and a face within EMS. ECMA (European Corporate Microscope Association) members are now registered and a first meeting of trade representatives was held during EMC 2004.

After the withdrawal of the Ernst Ruska Prize from the European platform, the Executive Board was pleased to find a new sponsor for the present FEI-EMA awards. These awards include all sub-disciplines in microscopy. The procedure for selecting two candidates was successfully conducted by the (non-voting) President of EMS. The two FEI-EMA award lectures were presented during the opening session of EMC 2004.

The report by the President does not elicit any comments.

5. The Treasurer Leo Ginsel explains the financial documents, details of which were sent around in the EMS Newsletter 10. The number of societies cooperating with EMS in collecting the EMS annual fee of € 5 has increased from 8 to 22 societies. The surplus of the bank account in 2000 was € 1,400, the present amount in the bank is € 37,683 after all costs have been paid. The main expenses concerned the support of multinational congresses, workshops and symposia, a server for the EMS website, costs for the notary and official registration of EMF, costs to correct the membership list for the Yearbook, and travel expenses of members of the EB. Some societies have not yet contributed the EMS membership fee for the year 2003 (3) and 2004 (9). No question were put to the Treasurer concerning his report.
6. The report of the auditors Sergio Marco (France) and Christian Grandfils (Belgium) is discussed, they have made several remarks. The members appreciate their technical remarks and approve the balance and the budget produced by the Treasurer. Auditors proposed for the period 2004 – 2008 will be W. Mader (Bonn) and H.P. Karthaler (Wien).
7. The budget for 2004 – 2008 is discussed, but the uncertainty about the future plans of EMS make it difficult to compose a firm financial planning. The yearly income from the membership fees is about € 15,000 (3,000 members x €5). The income from meetings and industry is difficult to estimate. The expenses for a permanent secretariat are largely unknown.
8. It is proposed to maintain the annual membership fee at the level of €5. It is accepted that all EMS members will be charged the same annual fee. Exceptions can be applied for, but since many of the countries with a difficult financial situation have become members of the EEC, it is supposed that there will be no more difficulties in paying €5 as an annual fee.
9. There have been some points raised by Helmut Kohl concerning the Statutes and the By Laws. The points concern small differences between the text on the website and that in the Yearbook. They concern the frequency of the General Assembly (Art IV 1a and Art VI, during an EMC and the annual EMS extensions). In D6 the incoming president is missing. Does D7 also apply to members of the EB? The deadline for membership fees is different in E1 and E3: March 1 or April 1? Art V7 is missing in the Yearbook. It is accepted to deal with these points as technical corrections to the texts of the Constitution and the By Laws.

10. see 9.
11. The candidates of the new Executive Board present themselves to the meeting and are approved by applause. No other candidates have been proposed. The candidates for the new Executive Board are: Aebi (President, Basel), Cheynet (Grenoble), Hertsens (ECMA representative, Brussels), Hozak (Prague), Mayer (Aachen). An incoming president is not yet elected.
12. The President Jose Carrascosa asks for approval of the decision not to organise a secret vote concerning the election of the new Executive Board, which is approved by 57 EMS members, 0 against, no abstentions.
13. Prospect on future EMS activities. Given the absence of a bid by a national society to organize EMC 2008, Secretary Wisse gives a prospect of possible future EMS activities and organisation of EMC's, which is discussed. The different points can be summarized as follows:
  - a. The Executive Board (EB) of EMS is taking the initiative to organize an EMC. We no longer call for a bid by one of the national societies to organize such meeting. In this case, the EB defines the tasks to be performed. This includes what is to be done by the EB, by a local organizing committee, by an international scientific advisory board and what functions can be outsourced to firms on a cost effective basis, such as abstract handling, registration, congress bags, lecture halls and audiovisuals, accommodation, transport, exhibition, proceedings, catering, social programme, pre- and post congress tours etc.
  - b. Establishing a permanent secretariat taking care of a central database of the names and addresses of the members, serving EMC's, EMS extensions, workshops and multinational meetings, providing standardised arrangements for the organisation of scientific meetings and exhibitions, also taking care of organising scientific programmes, advisory committees, sessions, chairs, invited speakers, working groups, workshops and website facilities.
  - c. Supporting European national societies for microscopy with membership administration, abstract handling, website and other online facilities (registration) and conference announcements.
  - d. The role of industry should be prominent in organizing ECMA (the European Corporate Microscopy Assembly), a structure giving a voice and face to industry within EMS. This is supported by delegating a representative to the Executive Board of EMS, securing the communication and cooperation. Presently, industry is complaining about a number of issues, such as the choice of exotic and eccentric places for meetings, inadequacy of exhibition facilities, lack of synchrony in choosing the dates of different microscopy meetings, the ever-increasing prices per square metre of exhibition space and different approaches by committees organizing the exhibition. For these reasons industry wants more consistency in the organization of microscopy meetings and is therefore willing to support EMS in establishing a permanent secretariat.
  - e. Also important is the intention to give the sessions of EMC a longer life and organize related workgroups and workshops, extending the scientific communication taking place at EMC. As a consequence, in this plan the national society or the local organizing team of an EMC is assured of the help of a permanent secretariat and different groups within EMS. The task of organizing a large scale meeting can be shared by many scientific groups and working groups all over Europe, including different firms for logistic support. This spreading involves many different sub-disciplines in microscopy and specialized firms. This approach could result in enhancing the frequency of the meeting after EMC 2008 to EMC 2010, EMC 2012 etc.

The members extensively discuss the different aspects of the present proposal. They are anxious to know what the financial consequences are, specially regarding the permanent secretary. Some members point out that organising a meeting at the university is much cheaper, others adhere to the opposite view. It seems that the time when university personnel could be used freely to organise international scientific meetings is over. Universities also charge for using their lecture halls and spaces for the exhibition. On the other hand, some companies and congress centres are very helpful in organising the logistics of scientific congresses on a cost effective basis. It is the intention of the EB not to raise the annual fee of €5 and to pay for the permanent secretary with money from other sources. Several members emphasize the importance of the participation of young people in EMS meetings. At the end of the discussion it is obvious that all members present want to go ahead with the proposal, two members abstain.

14. After this, with no further points raised, the President Jose Carrascosa closes the meeting.

Keerbergen, August 31, 2004