

General Assembly Minutes

Minutes of the EPA/UNEPSA General Assembly Meeting, August 27th, 2007,

Athens, Greece

The UNEPSA General Assembly is convened by the President Armido Rubino and starts at 13.00 p.m. on 27th August, 2007 in Athens, Conference Centre, M.C.2 Meeting Room.

A quorum is declared with the following 26 voting National Presidents or Delegates present:

Banicevic Milos (President for Serbia), Baranov Alexander (President for Russia), Böhles Hansjosef (President for Germany), Constantopoulos Andreas (President for Greece), Conter Camille (President for Luxembourg), Davydova Iullia (Delegate for Ukraine), Evrard Philippe (Delegate for France, he joined the GA at hrs. 4.00 pm), Ghenev Evgheniy (President for Bulgaria), Grguric Josip (President for Croatia), Janda Jan (Delegate for Czech Republic), Kandelaki Nino (President for Georgia), Kaulfersch Wilhelm (President for Austria), Lanning Marjatta (President for Finland), Lito-Kuli Georgina (President for Albania), Nordheim Alme Tomas (Delegate for Norway), Ormisson Anne (President for Estonia), Roncevic Zeljko (President for Bosnia and Herzegovina), Rumba Ingrida (Delegate for Latvia), Saggese Giuseppe (Delegate for Italy), Sajkovski Alexander (Delegate for Macedonia), Sargsyan Sergey (Delegate for Armenia), Solomon Maria (President for Cyprus), Szabò Laszlò (President for Hungary), Tal Asher (Delegate for Israel), Valiulis Arunas (President for Lithuania), Vural Mehmet (Delegate for Turkey).

The following Executive Committee officers attend the Assembly as non voting persons: David Branski (Secretary General), Gerhard Gaedicke (Treasurer), Eva Oláh (Vice-President), Leila Namazova. The representative of UNEPSA in the Standing Committee of IPA: Manuel Katz was invited by the President and he attends the Assembly meeting without voting.

The Assembly is chaired by the President Armido Rubino.

- 1. Agenda Item 1. – Approval of the Agenda.** The Agenda is unanimously approved as written (Appendix 1A).
- 2. Agenda Item 2. – Approval of the Minutes of the previous General Assembly Meeting.** The Minutes of the General Assembly Meeting held in Rome on September 28th, 2006 are unanimously approved.
- 3. Agenda Item 3. – Amendment to the Constitution (art. 1).** the President notes that the following proposal is submitted as an amendment to the Constitution (art. 1), as communicated to the GA Membership on May 21st 2007:

In the paragraph 1 last line the words *“shall be located at the place of work of the President”* are replaced by ***“seat is located in Berlin, Germany”***.

The amendment is voted and is unanimously approved.

- 4. Agenda Item 4. – Relation with EAP/CESP.** The President gives a report on the relation with EAP/CESP emphasizing that the atmosphere of the relation between the

Presidents and Secretary Generals of the two organizations has recently changed for the best. Both the correspondence among the Presidents and the Secretary Generals and a Meeting taking place on August 26th 2007 in Athens were very positive.

The President Rubino read the following personal position document:

“CESP and UNEPSA have their own individual histories and traditions and have evolved along separate pathways, independently from each other, until recently.

CESP has been transformed into EAP/CESP. And more recently, UNEPSA has approved a new constitution involving some substantial changes including a new name: “European Paediatric Association/UNEPSA”.

While the general aims of both associations are largely analogous (which is obvious since the mission of both focuses on protecting child health), they differ in several aspects as regards their constitutions and actual activities. The point now is: let’s consider the “differences” as “opportunities”. “Different” can be “beautiful” if we think and act in cooperation and coordination, with mutual help in the forefront in our minds.

First, the composition of EAP/CESP reflects the European Union thus providing an efficient connection with the political and administrative institutions of the EU. At the same time, EPA/UNEPSA membership includes the paediatric societies of Eastern European countries (not –or not yet– members of the EU), which gives EPA/UNEPSA a strong potential to develop interrelations in the paediatric field in all the countries in the European region, in the perspective of building a larger if not geographically complete Europe.

Second, the composition of EAP/CESP reflects both national scientific paediatric societies and national paediatric professional organizations, whereas EPA/UNEPSA is constituted by national scientific paediatric societies. Bearing in mind that the production and evaluation of new knowledge on a sound scientific basis is the first link of a chain that culminates in the transmission of new knowledge to professional paediatricians in the educational setting and its application to child care activities, EAP/CESP and EPA/UNEPSA may well take advantage of this difference in their composition to optimise the “knowledge chain”: production – transmission – application.

Third, EAP/CESP is a section of UEMS, which limits its degree of freedom. But, looking at the same aspect in a positive way, in its constitution EAP/CESP has paved the way for positive interactions with all specialities of the biomedical community. EPA/UNEPSA does not have such a limit, but at the same time does not have such a potential advantage. Given the importance of the specific identities but also the need for interactions within the scientific-biomedical community, it is clear how these two associations may be complementary and may enhance their efficiency by positive cooperation.

Finally, EAP/CESP has been very successful in the field of paediatric education and training as well as in establishing guidelines in such paediatric areas as ethics, medicines for children, vaccination, whereas EPA/UNEPSA has traditionally focused mainly on the organization of paediatric care in European countries. Furthermore, EAP/CESP has been successful in its relations with the European scientific societies devoted to paediatric tertiary care, and has thus become very much involved in this

field too, whereas EPA/UNEPSA is more focused on general paediatrics in primary and/or secondary care. Again, "different" may mean "beautiful" if we view the differences as being complementary and requiring a cooperative attitude.

With the above considerations in mind some steps (to be eventually approved by the governing bodies of the two associations) appear appropriate:

- Establishing a Joint EAP/CESP and EPA/UNEPSA Committee (Presidents, Secretary Generals and maybe a third representative to be identified by the Councils) as a permanent body.
- A representative of each association attends (without voting rights) the annual meeting of the other association.
- Identifying the editorial activities of both associations as a common problem to be handled in a shared uniform way.
- Programming a gradual change in the web sites of the two organizations whereby links between the two sites are gradually increased until the two sites are merged into one.
- Establishing firmly that after 2008 there will be only one Europaediatrics, which will be organized jointly by the two associations.
- Coordinating the organization of scientific and/or educational meetings by sharing information with a view to complementing not duplicating activities.
- Integrating the committees/coordinators of the ongoing activities of each association with at least one representative indicated by the other association.
- Defining a joint proposal to include EAP/CESP within the IPA decision bodies and activities. Given the IPA Constitution, one possibility might be to include EAP/CESP among the list of scientific societies from which the IPA CD elects five members for the Standing Committee (see point 4.9 of the IPA Constitution), of course giving for granted that the representative role of EPA/UNEPSA for the European Region is safeguarded."

At the meeting of the Presidents and the Secretary Generals of the two organizations on August 26th 2007 an agreement was reached on several points which are illustrated by the President.

The report is followed by a broad discussion. The participants express their satisfaction and feel happy to find the common language.

The following resolution is voted on and is approved unanimously (with one abstention) by the General Assembly:

"The general attitude in the relations among EPA/UNEPSA and EAP/CESP shall be cooperative, synergistic, not duplicating and not competitive. Particularly it is stated that:

1. A permanent coordinating Body will be constituted, formed by the Presidents and the Secretary Generals of the two Associations, meeting at

least twice a year, with the aim of discussing together the main actions and initiatives and with the purpose of preventing conflicts and maximizing cooperation.

2. Each Association will invite a representative of the other one to take part at its annual meeting (for EPA/UNEPSA this is meant to be the annual General Assembly Meeting, for EAP/CESP this is meant to be either the Spring or the December Meeting).

3. Each Association will accept Colleagues indicated by the other one as joining its working groups: one for each working group.

4. The two Presidents and the two Secretary Generals will address a combined letter to the President and the Executive Director of IPA expressing the wish that in addition to the representative role of EPA/UNEPSA in the Standing Committee of IPA as defined by the IPA Constitution, a representative role is also established for EAP/CESP in the IPA Bodies, calling for finding the way in agreement with the IPA Constitution."

Afterwards the following resolution is voted on and is unanimously approved:

"1. Each Association maintains its European Congress. The one organized by EPA/UNEPSA will be named Europaediatrics.

2. After 2008, never the two Associations will have their European Congresses in the same year.

3. EPA/UNEPSA is ready to contribute to the EAP/CESP Congress in the ways that will be proposed by the organizers.

4. EPA/UNEPSA will organize a Europaediatrics 2009 in Moscow and will not organize any European Congress in 2010."

- 5. Agenda Item 5. – Relation with the International Paediatric Association.** Manuel Katz, a representative of UNEPSA in the SC of IPA gives a short report about his work. He informs the Delegates that he is a candidate as president of IPA at the IPA Council of delegates to be held in Athens. He asks for everybody's support among the Presidents of National European Paediatric Societies and their delegates.
- 6. Agenda Item 6. – Admission of new members.** There are no applications for new Membership.
- 7. Agenda Item 7. – Treasurer report.** The Treasurer Gerhard Gaedicke gives the Treasurer report which is approved unanimously.
- 8. Agenda Item 8. – Annual member fees.** The annual member fees presently established are maintained.
- 9. Agenda Item 9. – Europaediatrics 2008.** Mehmet Vural the president of Europaediatrics 2008 reports on the preparation of the Congress that will be held in Istanbul on 14th-17th June, 2008. His report is unanimously approved.

10. Agenda Item 10. – Ongoing activities.

- A. *Neonatal Health Project:* E. Olàh presents the results of assessment on neonatal care in various European countries carried out by using a questionnaire. Fifteen, out of the 40 countries addressed, filled and sent back the questionnaire. The data presented proved a great heterogeneity in neonatal care in various European countries. There are several interesting points worth of further analysis.

The presentation is discussed and several participants offered their contribution.

A. Rubino proposes that the preliminary results are submitted to European J. of Pediatrics.

- B. *Adolescent Health Project:* Mehmet Vural summarizes the results of the adolescent project. The analysis of data is ready to be published.
- C. *Dental Care Project:* Jan Janda presents the points of a questionnaire that he developed asking all the Delegates to fill it. The questionnaire can be found on the UNEPSA website.
- D. *Hemato-oncology Project:* Gerhard Gaedicke reports the issue. The data have been collected using Internet. Nineteen countries replied so far. The plan is to evaluate and publish the results at the beginning of 2008.
- E. *Working Group of Chronological Limits of paediatric competence and definition of paediatrics:* At the General Assembly held in Rome in 2006 a Working Committee was established in order to prepare a proposal concerning the chronological limits of the paediatric competence.

The members of the Working Group led by Eva Olàh: Shimon Barak (Israel), Josip Grguric (Croatia), Evgheniy Ghenev (Bulgaria).

The arguments are presented supporting the extending of paediatric competency towards the prenatal life on the one hand and including the adolescent age on the other.

The presentation generates a broad discussion and debate.

A. Rubino suggests including an obstetrician into the Working Group. He asks Eva Olàh for preparing a report to be presented at Europediatrics 2008 in Istanbul.

- F. *Collaboration with the "European Agency for the evaluation of Medicinal Products" (EMA):* The "state of art" of this collaboration is reported by A. Rubino. The composition of the UNEPSA Group is mentioned and it is emphasized that the Group is open to other possible inclusions and the Presidents of the National Paediatric Societies should be stimulated again to propose other participants.

11. Agenda Item 11. – Website. Jan Janda calls the attention to the website problems. There are several pieces of useful information. Nevertheless it is not widely used.

12. 13. 14. – Election of President, one Vice-President and one Council

Member. The President Rubino reminds that according to the Constitution the mandates of the President, one Vice-President and one Council Member reached their term next September. As far the Vice-President is concerned, the one to be elected now has to be a component of the General Assembly (either a President of a National Paediatric Society/Association or an endorsed representative).

Nominations have been called and given according to the Constitution.

The candidates nominated are as follows:

- President: Andreas Constantopoulos (Greece)
- Vice-President: Alexander Baranov (Russia)
- Council Member: Laszlò Szabò (Hungary)

The votes are expressed by secret ballot.

All are elected unanimously (one abstention for each election).

Therefore Andreas Constantopoulos is elected as President for two years starting on October 1st 2007; Alexander Baranov and Laszlò Szabò are elected Vice-President and Council Member respectively since the same date. The newly elected officers are congratulated and applauded.

A. Constantopoulos expresses his feelings of being honored and willing to do the best following the way paved by A. Rubino.

David Branski and Gerhard Gaedicke: On behalf of the Council Members they give thanks Armido for his excellent work made during the last few years for the UNEPSA and hand to him a dedicated book with photos taken in Berlin during the last Council Meeting in April, 2007.

A. Rubino is applauded and celebrated. He expresses his feelings of gratefulness, appreciation and estimation to the Council Membership.

15. Agenda Item 15. – Date and place of the next GA. June, 2008, Istanbul.
Precise date to be established.

16. Agenda Item 16. – Any other business. There is no other business.

The meeting is adjourned 6.00 p.m.

Prof. A. Rubino
UNEPSA President

Prof. D. Branski
UNEPSA Secretary General