

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON AUGUST 27, 1987 AT 17.15, WIRTSCHAFTSUNIVERSITÄT - AUDITORIUM MAXIMUM, AUGASSE 2-6, A-1090 WIEN

TOP 1, Welcome by the President

R. Bütler opens the General Assembly and welcomes the participants. He extends the thanks of the Executive Committee to W.R. Mayr, the Congress President, and to all persons who have contributed to the success of the Congress.

TOP 2, To Commemorate the Dead

The death of the following members has been brought to the attention of the Executive Committee since the last General Assembly:

Prof. Dr. Herbert Elbel, Bonn, West Germany
Prof. Dr. Srecko Koren, Maribor, Yugoslavia
Dr. Marc Metaxas, Zürich, Switzerland
Prof. Dr. Laurens Nijenhuis, Amsterdam, The Netherlands
Prof. Dr. Heinz Schweitzer, Düsseldorf, West Germany
Dr. Harry Suchalla, Stuttgart, West Germany

The President asked the Assembly to stand to commemorate.

TOP 3, Adoption of the Protocol of the General Assembly in Copenhagen, August 8, 1985

The Executive Committee has not received any comments regarding the minutes of the last General Assembly. Since nobody asks for discussion, the above-mentioned protocol is adopted.

TOP 4, Report of the Executive Committee and of the Auditors of the Account

4.1. Report of the President

R. Bütler reports that the Executive Committee has handled its business since the last Congress in not more than 4 sessions. It is only due to the excellent collaboration and the spirit of teamwork which are prevailing in the Executive Committee, that it was possible to achieve this work in such a low number of meetings, thus allowing financial economy.

The preparations for the forthcoming Congress was - as usual - the main topic of the discussions of the Executive Committee. Due to the fact that the Congress President is a member of the Board, many procedures could be significantly simplified and a large amount of money was saved.

R. Bütler thanks B. Brinkmann and K. Henningsen who published the proceedings of the Conference in 1985 in a first volume of a series entitled "Advances in Forensic Haemogenetics" and which will be continued. The publication of the proceedings of the Congresses will facilitate the citation of the papers presented at the meetings and help to spread the scientific work of the members of the Society.

The Executive Committee has also dealt with the problem of DNA genetics and some difficulties arising to the fact that probes are not available to all qualified and interested scientists; from these discussions resulted a proposal for a resolution and for the foundation of a DNA commission (see TOP 8).

Concerning the reference activities of some laboratories, R. Bütler remembers that the Executive Committee established some time ago a list of members who had offered their

collaboration for resolving problem cases in defined haemogenetic systems. The information concerning these possibilities should be again forwarded to all members of the Society. Two members of the Society have submitted a report on their work for the scientific prize of the Society. The Executive Committee has decided to award the prize to Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Dahr, Heidelberg, West Germany, for his paper "Immunochemistry of Sialoglycoproteins in Human Red Blood Cell Membranes". Finally, R. Büttler declares that he will retire next year due to the fact that he reached the age limit. For this reason, he also will leave the position of President of the Society to a younger colleague, but will continue to serve the Society as Vice-President.

4.2. Report of the Secretary

W. Mayr reports that the total number of members is presently 528 coming from 32 nations (compared with 513 members from 34 nations in August 1985). The number of German speaking members remained stationary. In any case, more publicity is required to increase the number of members. A new Register of Members is being prepared and will be sent out early in 1988.

4.3. Report of the Treasurer

B. Brinkmann gives the following report:

1. Development of the financial situation since 1985.

In Copenhagen, the total balance was 152.750,- DM (this included 5.000,- DM for the scientific award). Since Copenhagen, an additional income of 51.480,- DM was received (mainly from membership fees, bank interests and 7.250,- DM profit from the Conference in Copenhagen). Additionally, we had a backflow of 30.000,- DM which we had lend for the Copenhagen Congress. The outgoings amounted to 45.860,- DM, mainly due to the printing and mailing of the Proceedings (27.800,- DM) as well as to expenses of the Board (18.000,- DM). Another 8.000,- DM were put onto the fund for the scientific award. Due to these movements, the Society has now a total balance of 188.530,- DM (including 13.500,- DM for the fund of the award).

2. Development of the financial situation in the last 8 years (when B. Brinkmann took over the position of Treasurer).

Early in 1980, the Society had a balance of 56.661,- DM; this balance has been more than tripled. Considering the fact that the membership and congress fees of the Society are among the lowest ones of all international societies, this result is really impressive. Due to the good financial situation of the Society, there is no need for an increase of the membership fees.

4.4. Report of the Representative of all Working Parties

P. Lincoln gives a short summary of the activities of the Working Parties and mentions that a German speaking Working Party has been established (see TOP 6).

4.5. Report of the Auditors of the Account

P. Kühnl states that he checked the account together with S. Weidinger. The account was found to be in order and handled in a perfect way. Therefore, the Treasurer is relieved by the General Assembly.

4.6. Relief of the Executive Committee

On a motion proposed by H.H. Hoppe, the Executive Committee is relieved of its duties by the General Assembly.

TOP 5, Alterations of the Statutes of the Society

Two proposals by the Executive Committee have been sent out in time: change of the name of the Society and addition of a new paragraph in §7.

1. Change of the name of the Society into "International Society for Forensic Haemogenetics ISFH" ("Internationale Gesellschaft für Forensische Hämogenetik") e.V.

After a discussion, the vote produces the following result:

in favour: 68

against: 13

abstentions: 8.

As 3/4 of the total number of votes amount to 66,75, the proposal is accepted with a majority of three quarters of the members present.

2. New paragraph in §7:

§7 (5) Upon the decision of the executive committee or upon the request of at least 100 ordinary members or upon the decision of 2/3 of the members present at the general assembly a vote concerning business affairs may be carried out by letter.

The vote on the addition of this paragraph gives the following result:

in favour: 69

against: 15

abstentions: 5.

As 3/4 of the total number of votes amount to 66,75, the proposal is accepted with a majority of three quarters of the members present.

TOP 6, Validation of the German Speaking Working Party.

This Working Party, which has been established on October 17, 1986 in Mainz (President: H.H. Hoppe, Hamburg; Secretary: D. Kasulke, Baden-Baden; Treasurer: W. Martin, Berlin), is validated by the General Assembly with 87 votes in favour, one against and one abstention.

TOP 7, Honorary Membership

The President delivers documents to the new Honorary Members, M. Pereira and F. Schwarzfischer, who have been elected at the last General Assembly in Copenhagen. He then proposed on behalf of the Executive Committee, that C.P.Engelfriet and K. Henningsen be elected as Honorary Members. Both outstanding scientists are elected with acclamation.

TOP 8, Resolution on DNA Polymorphisms

The resolution elaborated by the Executive Committee which mainly points to the problems which can arise due to the insufficient knowledge of the formal genetics of the banding patterns observed and due to the fact that not all probes are available to all interested and qualified scientists is discussed in detail.

An informal vote shows that the resolution is acceptable in principle; it should, however, be rewritten to accommodate the observations made by the General Assembly.

TOP 9, Elections of Members of the Executive Committee

This business is performed by an election committee consisting of H.H. Hoppe (Chairman), A. Krüger and K. Püschel.

9.1. Election of the President

As R. Bütler decided to resign, the Executive Committee proposes B. Brinkmann, the present Treasurer, as President.

No alternative candidate is put forward by the General Assembly.

Result of the vote: for B. Brinkmann	74
against	13
abstentions	6
void	2

total ballot papers distributed 95

B. Brinkmann is elected new President.

9.2. Election of the Treasurer

The Executive Committee proposes P. Lincoln; W. Martin is put forward by the General Assembly as an alternative.

Result of the vote: Lincoln	69
Martin	19
abstentions	3

total ballot papers distributed 91

P. Lincoln is elected new Treasurer.

9.3. Election of the Representative of all Working Parties

The Executive Committee proposes U. Rossi; W. Martin is put forward by the General Assembly as an alternative.

Result of the vote: Rossi	69
Martin	18
abstentions	2

total ballot papers distributed 89

U. Rossi is elected new Representative of all Working Parties

9.4. Election of Two Auditors of the Account

P. Kühnl and S. Weidinger are elected with acclamation, D. Kasulke and W. Bär are elected as substitutes also with acclamation.

TOP 10, Place and President of the next International Congress in 1989

The only offer to organize the next International Congress of the Society was made by H. Polesky (October 18 - 20, 1989 in New Orleans). This offer was accepted with no objections from the members present.

TOP 11, Miscellaneous

Nobody asks for any discussion under this topic.

The President thanks all participants and closes the General Assembly.

STATEMENT OF THE SOCIETY FOR FORENSIC HAEMOGENETICS ON DNA-POLYMORPHISMS

A - RESOLUTION

1. The Society for Forensic Haemogenetics has attentively followed the latest developments in the field of DNA-analysis using molecular biological methods. The RFLPs (Restriction Fragment Length Polymorphisms) have potential use in forensic medicine for the analysis of genetically determined variation and to contribute to the extension of the possibilities of traditional examinations. These new molecular-biological methods will be useful in the identification of stain material in criminal cases and also for further examinations in contested parentage cases, in which no satisfactory conclusion can be reached by existing methods.

2. For decades it has been a basic principle that newly discovered polymorphisms must be extensively examined by the scientific community before they can be used in forensic problems. These analyses include, amongst others, the basic genetics of the polymorphisms and the reproducibility of the methods. Only after these evaluations can such new systems be applied in forensic casework. Furthermore, it must be emphasized that the possibility of a second opinion is a fundamental principle of forensic science. It must therefore be guaranteed that every system can be checked by an independent second expert for an opinion.

For these reasons it is absolutely necessary that all methods and reagents are available to the scientific community without restriction. If these requirements are not fulfilled, the use of such systems is unacceptable.

The Society therefore expects that the experts and companies who have, honourably, developed these tests and DNA-probes, fulfill the above mentioned conditions and make these reagents available.

3. The Society is of the opinion that at present the use of DNA-polymorphisms alone in parentage cases is premature. The continuing use of established blood group polymorphisms should at the present time be used to confirm the reliability of the results obtained with the new methodology.

4. The Society attaches great importance to the establishment of definite conditions in the field of DNA-testing. These include:

- a) definition of DNA-probe (mapping, stability, purity),
- b) definition of the basic genetics of the DNA-probe (extensive family studies),
- c) implementation of parallel-studies (when possible),
- d) investigations of the mutation rate for each allele.

The Society welcomes every initiative to national and international cooperation which can lead to quality control.

B - DNA-COMMISSION

Because of the present discussion over the use of DNA-polymorphisms in forensic haemogenetics the Society for Forensic Haemogenetics has resolved to form a commission on this subject. The commission has among other things the following functions:

- a) to collect and distribute information,
- b) to supply practical knowledge (e.g. workshops),
- c) to compile standards for the forensic application.

The Commission will consist of equal parts of members of the board and specially selected experts and will be convened by the board.