

**Minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee (ExCom) of the
International Association of Theatre Critics,
held in Sofia, 18th April 2008**

1. Attendance

Those present: Yun-Cheol Kim (President), Michel Vaïs (General Secretary), Margareta Sörenson (Sweden), Jean-Pierre Han (France), Ian Herbert (Great Britain), Paulo Eduardo Carvalho (Portugal), Don Rubin (Canada), Katayoun Hosseinzadeh Salmasy (Iran), Akiko Tachiki (Japan), Kerri Allen (USA), Tomasz Milkowski (Poland), Ivan Medenica (Adjunct Secretary General, Serbia).

Three observers were also present: Jonathan Abarbanel, Irène Sadowska-Guillon and Kalina Stefanova.

2. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted unanimously and is as appears below.

3. Approval of Minutes of the ExCom meeting in Thessaloniki, 12 April 2008

A working version of the minutes, summarized verbally by Ivan, was adopted; the final one would be adopted at the next meeting.

4. Matters arising from the minutes

None.

5. Reports:

5.1. President

Yun-Cheol, the new elected President, welcomed all those present and suggested the first part of the Meeting (administrative issues) to be led by Michel, and the second part (projects) by him.

Immediately after, Yun-Cheol suggested Kalina to be re-appointed as Director of colloquia / Cultural Bridges. His suggestion started a short debate and Kalina left the meeting in order to wait for the final decision. The main issue of the debate was the question of whether there is a need to have somebody who is not a member of ExCom to deal with the job in question. Don reminded us that Kalina has been doing a very good job and has been representing the IATC at many international symposiums. Ian reminded us that, if needed, the President may choose non Excom members as his collaborators in certain fields. Yun-Cheol suggested the decision be made by consensus, since he does not want to act as a dictator, referring to article IV.1 e, and put the decision to vote. Kalina was unanimously re-appointed and called back to the meeting.

5.2. General Secretary

Michel confirmed all members of the new ExCom representing their national sections. Also present, Jonathan Abarbanel was here as a guest, as well as Irène Sadowska-Guillon who was the only candidate for treasurer. He reminded us that the

President and General Secretary had to give reports at the beginning of each Excom meeting.

Yun-Cheol declared not having any report since he was elected as new President. Yun-Cheol proposed Margareta and Jean-Pierre for the new Vice-Presidents. Margareta and Jean-Pierre were elected unanimously according to the procedure.

Michel opened the discussion concerning the Adjunct General Secretary position. Ivan explained that the Adjunct General Secretary is elected by the ExCom when there are existing needs for such a position, pointing out that this person does not have the right to vote as such; on the other side, there is no regulation stating that an elected member of the ExCom can not be at the same time Adjunct General Secretary. Paulo Eduardo proposed Ivan for Adjunct General Secretary and Akiko supported him. Ivan was elected unanimously as Adjunct General Secretary.

Michel opened the discussion concerning the Treasurer and informed us that Irène agreed to continue in this position. Paulo Eduardo proposed Irène and Tomasz supported him. Irène was unanimously elected for Treasurer.

6. Programme

6.1. Congress

Kerri asked if there is a need for approval by the ExCom for the Congress to be held in Chicago in the year 2010. Don explained that the issue has already been approved by the general assembly.

Jonathan pointed out two possible dates for the Congress: from 22nd September to 2nd October and from 26th to 31st October. A short discussion followed about the dates regarding the theatre and academic seasons. The question remains open.

Jonathan asked if there is a possibility that the Congress be helped by sponsors. Kerri promised that there will be nothing compromising about it. Don explained that most events in North America need to be sponsored. Jonathan also informed us about having initiated negotiations with other associations (like the Humana Festival) that might be interested in "co-producing" the Congress. The Congress needs to be present in Chicago's life. He also stated that the other associations would not supersede the IATC. Organizing a New Critics Seminar would help finding new financial sources. Yun-Cheol supported the proposition, Margareta and Paulo Eduardo, after being given certain explanations, also supported it. Jonathan explained that they just needed to know what the possibilities were, since they need to search for sponsors for each project; there are also some other groups that might be included in the project: the Dramaturges and Literary Managers' Association. Don was reserved concerning this proposal, being of the opinion that their interests are quite different from ours, although he supports each attempt for sponsors to be found. Jonathan explained that this suggestion came from the American Theatre Critics Association (ATCA), and in the event of a cooperation, the dramaturges and literary managers would be our guests.

Jonathan opened the visa problem, asking how much earlier the invitation letters should be sent. After a short discussion, it was agreed that six months earlier is sufficient time for the visas and travelling grants.

Paulo Eduardo asked about the symposium's subject, and Jonathan replied that for now there is no subject. Margareta reminded us that there had been some suggestions – i. e., postcolonial theatre – and asked who should decide about it. Ian explained that the

organizers are usually the ones who propose a subject, and the ExCom approves it; he also claimed to be sorry that Margareta had not been informed in due course about the Congress subject in Sofia. Paulo Eduardo asked to make sure that the subject will be approved by the ExCom.

Although being too early to discuss the Congress in 2012, Don's proposal to register Warsaw as the first offer received was accepted unanimously.

6.2. Executive Committee Meetings

Michel confirmed the next ExCom meeting to be in Toronto, Stratford and Niagara, Canada, probably in the period of 6th to 13th October. Don asked what our preferences were for the meeting itself: Toronto, Stratford or Niagara waterfalls. Paulo Eduardo pointed out that the most important is to have enough time for a meeting, and that for all other issues it is up to Don to decide. Ivan reminded us about the visa issues. Don promised to send the official invitations by the end of May.

Numerous suggestions followed for the ExCom meetings in 2009: Warsaw (April), Amsterdam (June), during the Premio Europa Prize (Spring time) once it will be known where it will be organized (the suggestions hitherto: Thessaloniki, Wroclaw). There was an opinion that ExCom Meetings should not always be connected with the Europe Prize in order not to be "hidden" by the bigger event. Ian reminded us that that logic is effective for an IATC Congress, not for an ExCom. It was agreed that the next ExCom meeting would be confirmed in Canada.

6.3. New Critics' Seminars

In agreement with Margareta, Yun-Cheol recommended Paulo Eduardo for the Director of the New Critics' Seminars. Ivan officially suggested it and Katayoun supported it. It was unanimously accepted. Paulo Eduardo accepted.

Margareta announced the confirmation of the following seminars: Wiesbaden, June 2008; Saguenay (Quebec, Canada), September 2008 (moderator Jean-Pierre). Other suggestions: Sfântu Gheorghe, Romania, March 2009; Amsterdam, together with a Symposium for Experienced Critics (June, 2009).

6.4. Cultural Bridges/Experienced Critics' Meetings

Kalina announced the confirmation of the following seminars: Craiova, Romania, May, 2008; Grahamstown, South Africa, July 2008; Pilsen, Czech Republic, September 2008; Toronto, Canada, October, 2008. She stressed that during the meeting in Grahamstown, a national IATC section for South Africa may be inaugurated.

Paulo Eduardo invited some ten people to the Symposium during the Festival in Almada, Portugal (from 4th to 18th July 2008, 3 nights, 4 days).

Ivan announced the traditional Tri-annual Symposium in Novi Sad, Serbia, May 2009 (Moderator Dragan Klaić; Subject: International Festivals) and reminded us about the great Symposium which is planned to be held in Amsterdam in June 2009, within the Holland Festival.

Kerri asked what the difference was between Cultural Bridges and Experienced Critics' Meetings. Kalina explained that actually there is no more difference now.

7. Projects

7. 1. Thalia Award

Yun-Cheol, as previously planned, chaired this part of the meeting. He stated that he had heard many opinions and critiques about the Thalia Prize laureate's election procedure, but nothing about the two former laureates. If it continues like this we will have either Francophone or Anglophone laureates, and the Thalia Prize will become a lifetime award. In order to stimulate ourselves, we need to discover new names and some geo-political criteria need to be taken into consideration.

Margareta is of the opinion that the award needs to be better defined, as well as the election procedure. In Saint Petersburg, we had candidates, and at once new names came up.

Kerri reminded us that there were written criteria, although they are unclear. It is too early to claim that the award will be only Anglophone or Francophone; if the laureate needs to be somebody who has influenced the critics, then it is logical that he/she is experienced, and already has a literary work behind him/her.

Don reminded us that many national sections sent nominations, but we were not taking them into consideration, and we were introducing new proposals which many had never heard of. There were no remarks about the current laureates, but if nominations are sent, we must respect them.

It was unanimously accepted that the President and two Vice-Presidents will prepare the nominations for the next Thalia Prize laureate.

7. 2. Journals Exchange

Yun-Cheol pointed out having many problems with the journals exchange (there are only seven participants and they are not updating their editions regularly). He suggested us to take part in this project, since all of us were connected to some journals, and to invite others to join us. Also, he suggested the following: to publish a theatre journal on our website which will be edited by the IATC (ExCom members, together with some experts from outside the ExCom).

There were many reserves concerning his suggestion: it demands a lot of work, something like that has never been functioning. Ivan pointed out that the Secretariat (Michel and himself) who, together with their colleagues from Novi Sad, maintain the IATC website, would hardly be able to undertake the maintenance of such a web journal. Kerri also had some dilemmas about the idea.

Yun-Cheol suggested the web journal be maintained completely separately from the IATC website and pointed out that he may find assets in South Korea for such a project.

Ian proposed that Yun-Cheol's suggestion be developed for the next ExCom meeting. Approved by all.

8. Date and place of next meeting

Toronto, 6-13 October 2008.

Michel Vaïs, General Secretary
Ivan Medenica, Adjunct General Secretary