



PLENARY MEETING OF SECTION FOR ARCHIVES OF PARLIAMENTS AND POLITICAL PARTIES OF THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON ARCHIVES (SPP/ICA)

Vienna, Monday 23rd August 2004

PARTICIPANTS

President: María Ángeles VALLE DE JUAN

Acting Secretary: Mateo MACIÁ

Section Members

The meeting (see Agenda under Attachment 1) began at 2:45 pm with a welcome address by Ms. VALLE DE JUAN, Section President, who then read a Report on her management between 2000 and 2004 (see Attachment 2).

Ms. LIMITI, Honorary President, then made use of the floor to underline the outgoing President's outstanding efforts in expanding the Section, as well as the general climate of enthusiasm and the Spanish team's drive within the Section. She asked her to continue to lend a helping hand and mentioned her appointment to the Royal Academy of History. In conclusion, she declared the outgoing President's reputation and work are a cornerstone and essential foundation for the Section.

The President then presented the two works published by the Section during her mandate (<http://www.ica.org/biblio.php?pdocid=177> and <http://www.ica.org/biblio.php?pdocid=178>). She stressed the fact that, in its professional zeal, the ICA Secretariat in Paris had decided to post them on the International Council on Archives, under the ICA Studies Series, numbers 14 and 15.

She then gave the floor to Mr. MACIÁ, acting Secretary, who would moderate the debate for the election of a new Committee, after explaining that she would not be standing for re-election, both for professional reasons and in adherence to the principle of alternation and so as to allow other members of the Section to participate.

The floor was open for proposals for the following four years.

Mr. PAUL, non member, suggested Mr. Michael SCHNEIDER, of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, be elected Vice-president and that the new Committee have three Vice-presidents. Mr. SCHEFBECK, of the Austrian Parliament, candidate to the Presidency, said he believed in the future there should be only two Vice-presidents, and therefore it would be best if there were only two candidates.

Mr. Christian OPPETIT, Head of the Archives of the Seine-Saint Denis Department (France), who is in charge of the archives of the French Communist Party, then made use of the floor. He declared his interest in contributing to the Section's work over the following four years and joining as a Member.

The President, Ms. VALLE DE JUAN, stressed that Parliaments and Political Party foundations should be represented on the Committee in a percentage reflecting their affiliation.

Mr. SCHEFBECK, in turn, stated in his presentation as candidate to the Presidency, that Parliaments and Political Party foundations had shared interests, transparency being one of them, and that networking allows for closer and more effective cooperation.

A vote was then held for the election of the Section Committee President. With a total of 23 votes cast in favour of Mr. SCHEFBECK and none against, he was proclaimed President.

Ms. Valle de Juan then invited Mr. SCHEFBECK to take the Chair.

Three candidates to the Vice-presidency came forth: Ms. Mariona COROMINAS, of the Catalan Parliament, Ms. Marietta MINOTOS, of the Konstantinos G. Karamanlis Foundation and Mr. Michael SCHNEIDER, of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation. In their presentations, they all referred to document digitisation, the extension of Section membership and the transition from paper to digital Archives.

The President, Mr. SCHEFBECK, stated there were three candidates for two posts, so only the two receiving the highest number of votes would be elected. In the event, they were Ms. Mariona COROMINAS (19 votes) and Ms. Marietta MINOTOS (19 votes), while Mr. Michael SCHNEIDER won 15. Ms. COROMINAS and Ms. MINOTOS were proclaimed Vice-presidents.

Mr. Reinder H. VAN DER HEIDE was then elected Secretary to the Committee by consensus. Next, a vote was held to elect the members of the Committee. The following people were elected:

Vincenzo ARISTA (Camera dei Deputati - Italy)
France BELISLE (Sénat - Canada)
Claus BRUGMANN (independent member - Germany)
Mateo MACIÁ (Congreso de los Diputados - Spain)
Inaldo Barbosa MARINHO JUNIOR (Camara dos Deputados - Brasil)
Bela PALMANY (National Assembly - Hungary)
Michael SCHNEIDER (Friedrich Ebert Foundation- Germany)
Reinhard SCHREINER (Konrad Adenauer Foundation - Germany)
Mario TONELOTTO (European Parliament - Luxembuorg)

The President, Mr. SCHEFBECK, then stated that electronic votes would not be counted, since they would not alter the results. The meeting then moved on to the next point on the agenda: proposals for the new period and debate.

The first to make use of the floor was Ms. Vigdis JONSDOTTIR, of the Parliament of Iceland. She pointed out that she had been a member of the Section for 22 years and that she preferred to discuss procedures in the Section's plenary meetings. Speakers should introduce themselves, a list of participants should be provided and there should be rules of procedure.

Next there was a round of questions: Ms. Renate HOEPFINGER, of the Hans Seidel Foundation (Germany), raised a question related to the Honorary Presidency. She stated that in the plenary meeting in Seville, two people were suggested as Honorary President: Ms. LIMITI and former President Mr. BUCHSTAB, who had not yet been invited to exercise his appointment.

The by then former President, Ms. VALLE DE JUAN, clarified that this was not done because the proposal was not written into the Seville Minutes nor was it questioned later, and that this issue, which has been a source of conflict in the Section for many years, was agreed upon at the Committee Meeting in Rome in 2002, which resolved that there would be only one Honorary President, and that, in compliance with the CIA's general criteria for the appointment of honorary members, these must be Section members, upon their retirement from their respective institutions, as had been done up to the present.

The President, Mr. SCHEFBECK, then expressed his opposition to inflating the number of honorary presidencies and stated there was no need for this debate and that there should be only one Honorary President. Practical solutions needed to be found, and not contribute to worsening the conflict created in the Section with the German Foundations' insistence on appointing Mr. BUCHSTAB.

Mr. PALMANY then stressed that the past should be left behind, that he backed Ms. HOEPFINGER's proposal and that its approval was essential for the Section's future. He ended by saying that justice was due to everyone.

The President, Mr. SCHEFBECK, despite considering the possibility of a proposal for a formal resolution, was not in favour of tabling it, since it would further estrange the Section.

Mr. SCHNEIDER stated there had been two proposals and one vote by acclamation and that there could be further motions to appoint other honorary Presidents.

The former President, Ms. VALLE DE JUAN, opposed voting on the proposal, since the meeting was under the point "questions and suggestions", where votes were not in order, and suggested, given certain member's insistence, that they be included in the agenda for the Section's following meeting. The President, Mr. SCHEFBECK once again stressed the importance of this issue for upholding a good working environment.

The meeting was briefly suspended for conferral among Section members.

Once the meeting was resumed, Mr. SCHEFBECK, President, again made use of the floor once again. He said he was not satisfied with the way the issue had been resolved. He also said he had already seen the problem in 2002 but that he did not consider it important. In his opinion, it was an emotional issue. He would have preferred to hold a vote that same day, at that very meeting. These were problems from the past. He pledged to have this issue as the first point on the agenda at the following Section meeting.

Ms. LIMITI then made use of the floor. She pointed out that, in her time as Director of the Camera dei Deputati Archives, she had held a number of meetings with Political Party foundation representatives, but that she believed that Parliamentary archivists, as civil servants, are neutral, whereas Political Party archivists naturally share their institution's ideology. If we were together in the Section, it was on the suggestion of the CIA's Secretary General, but there was a conflict between Parliamentary and Political Party archives. Rules of Procedure were needed. The elected Committee was too large. She stressed that she had voted against PALMANY and SCHREINER as Committee members because they had held the position for a long time and were involved in conflicts from the past. In conclusion, she stated she was not clearly aware of what the majority was nor of how many votes were needed to be elected. She said she considered the Congress inscription fee was too high, that this was an obstacle for many members and that e-voting could contribute to making the Section's work more democratic.

Mr. BRUGMANN said he had not understood the speech (given in French) and asked for it to be translated.

The President, Mr. SCHEFBECK, acknowledged the language problem and said interpretation would be available in the future.

Mr. PALMANY suggested points that had to be resolved at that moment: the future of the e-Parliament should be looked into, and there should be a resolution regarding what documents should be kept in original form. He was satisfied with the presence of new members on the Committee from other continents.

The meeting closed with a speech by the President, Mr. SCHEFBECK. He declared that plenary meetings had to be better organised. The CIA had not forwarded a list of Section participants and meetings organised internally would be more effective, as had been the case under the previous President. Voting should also be regulated if it was going to become more frequent in the future. Contributions from all members should be accepted. Even though our organisation is strictly professional, the issue of procedures should be taken into consideration. Interpretation services should also be made available.

Regarding the contents of meetings for the next few years, they should include the issue of e-Parliament and e-political parties.

To sum up, over the next four years, questions of procedure would be important, and a more positive and friendly working environment should be fostered.

He had a warm word of recognition for the Section Secretary elected at the previous meeting in Seville who passed away in 2003, Mr. Anders NORBERG, an intelligent man, great colleague and close friend.

He pointed out that he intended to publish a Section Yearbook and devote a monographic issue to Mr. NORBERG.

His speech brought the Section plenary meeting to a close. The outgoing President, Ms. VALLE DE JUAN, handed the new President, Mr. SCHEFBECK, a CD with the SPP website software so he could continue to update and extend it, and stressed her support and co-operation in the future.

The outgoing President

María Ángeles VALLE DE JUAN

The President

Günter SCHEFBECK

The acting Secretary

Mateo MACIÁ

ATTACHMENT 1

Agenda

Plenary meeting of the Section of Parliamentary Archives and Political Parties Archives of the International Council
on Archives

Vienna, 23, August, 2004
09'00 hours

- 1.- Chairwoman's report
- 2.- Activities report
- 3.- Execution of the program approved in Seville in September 2000
- 4.- Presentation of the new publications of the Section
- 5.- Proposals for the period 2004-2008
- 6.- Questions and debate
- 7.- Election of the new Standing Committee of the Section

ATTACHMENT 2

REPORT ON ACTIVITIES

When I presented my candidature to the Presidency at the 14th International Archives Congress in Seville in 2000, I presented a programme of activities for the period from 2000 to 2004. You all received this information and I would now like to inform you on the progress made.

The first task was to make the SPP known throughout the world in order to enhance the presence of parliament and political party archivists. My first activity was therefore to write to all the world's parliaments and all the political party foundations, encouraging them to participate with us in our work. More than one thousand letters were written, some through Embassies, and the result, as I stated during the first Committee meeting in Brussels, was that we received 30% more members. At that meeting, Mr Palmany suggested we might send them all a questionnaire in order to collect detailed information on all of them, including those which were not members of the SPP. This was done.

Another of my main commitments was to draw up standards for basic archive tasks: description, classification, selection and expurgation. Over these years, we have worked on establishing a table for first-level classification for parliamentary archives for both documentation on actual parliamentary business and that relating to internal administration. This was presented during the Madrid meeting. Since this is an essential tool, I hope we will be able to continue developing it over the next few years until we can find a standard model that will be of use to all of us. Such a classification system amounts to an irreplaceable information modeller which, since it is based on the functions of the organisation, offers the advantage of standardising the naming of files. Since all our parliaments have similar functions, I would like to be optimistic and think that this will become a reality in the short term.

We also began work on the archives of political foundations. Although these involve a greater variety of documents, we have seen that they share common features with regard to parties' organic structures, functions and institutional relations.

Another important line of work was to establish criteria for selection and valuation of series of documents. This project was proposed by the Spanish group and approved at the annual meeting held in Madrid in 2003, as a possible working tool.

At the suggestion of our colleague Madame Laureys, during the Committee meeting held in Stockholm, we decided to work on the Regulation for Archives of Parliaments and Political Parties. During the Rome meeting in 2002, the Spanish group presented a draft Parliamentary Regulation, applying the new archive theories, which was unanimously approved. With slight amendments, especially with regard to the Qualification Commission, this will undoubtedly be of use for political party archives.

My initial proposals also included the production of a website for the SPP, giving as much information as possible on our Archives and activities. This website was up and running in a period of six months, financed by the Spanish Senate, and has been constantly updated. I shall be handing the hosting data to the next President, as well as a CD including all the software.

Also presented in Seville were two draft recommendations on the documentation of Parliamentary Groups and on access to documentation in Archives on Parliaments and Political Parties. These were also included in the documentation of the Madrid meeting but, because of time pressures, were not discussed. I am therefore presenting them again today because this Presidency considers that it is very important for them to be approved.

I would like to add that our Section participated in joint meetings with the SIO, at the instigation of our honorary member Mr Schouller. We were represented at these meetings by the Committee delegates Mrs Laureys and Mr Mas-sai, whom I would like to thank for their work, and who duly informed us on progress at our annual meetings.

Although these four years have not been easy, I believe we have made great professional progress for our Section which is now recognised even by the CIA Secretariat in Paris to the extent that publications resulting from our work will be included on the institutional website, within the series of Studies, under numbers 14 and 15 respectively.

However, the greatest success for me, as President, has been to have your support, assistance and trust. There is still plenty to do, but I am sure that professional rigour and collaboration amongst all of us are guaranteed. The new stage which begins today presents new challenges for us, especially with regard to the use of electronic archives. Parliamentary Regulations now note the importance of the archivist throughout the process of documentary management

so, with the appearance and obligatory application of the Moreq (Model Requirements for the Management of Electronic Records), which requires prior documentary classification, the time has come for us to ensure archivists' relevance as the people who are in charge of the historical memory of the institution for which they work.

I would like to thank the many colleagues who have collaborated with me. Some have moved to different positions, such as Mr Jansen, Mr Ronning and Mr Massai, others have retired such as Mr Johnson. And many others have collaborated intensely in the life of the SPP and I think we are all very grateful to them.

Finally, I would like to make a special mention of our much-loved colleague and Secretary, Mr Norberg, whose kindness and good nature were greatly appreciated by all those who knew him. I wrote a brief obituary which was included on the CIA website, expressing not only our sadness but also that of all the members of the International Archive Council.

I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to our honorary President, Mrs Limiti, without whose confidence and unconditional support my tasks would have been impossible, and to the members of the Spanish group who have worked tirelessly in all our projects. I shall now close by thanking you once again and stating that, although I have taken the decision to not stand for re-election as President, I shall continue to work with all of you on the SPP with the same interest that I have shown to date and shall be happy to collaborate as required with the new President elected today.