

**15th General Assembly
of ASSITEJ International
September 21st – 30th
2005
Montréal, Canada**

Centres present:

Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Botswana, Brazil, Cameroun, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, India, Iran, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Korea, Lichtenstein, Lithuania, Mexico, Namibia, New Zealand, Norway, Russia, Rwanda, Serbia and Montenegro, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, Uganda, United Kingdom, Uruguay, USA, Zambia.

By proxy:

Benin, Cyprus, Jordan, Latvia, Nepal

A) *Rémi Boucher*, President of ASSITEJ Canada, welcomed all participants of the Congress to Montreal and the 15th General Assembly of ASSITEJ. *Isabelle Gélinas* (Contact and International Relations Coordinator of ASSITEJ Canada) presented practical information on the Congress place and affiliated venues. *Rémi Boucher* expressed his wish for a rewarding Congress and hoped everyone would enjoy the *Festival Mondial des Artes pour la Jeunesse* and have a delightful stay in Montréal.

B) *Wolfgang Schneider*, President of ASSITEJ, opened the meeting by welcoming all the delegates, observers and guests. He thanked *Rémi Boucher* and ASSITEJ Canada for hosting the Congress. He also expressed his gratitude to the excellent work of Secretary General *Niclas Malmcrona*, the members of the Executive Committee and all centres. President *Wolfgang Schneider* wished for a successful outcome of the Congress, and hoped it would open up for enriching connections in the field of theatre for children and young people.

C) *Niclas Malmcrona*, Secretary General of ASSITEJ, presented some practical information on the procedures of the General Assembly. A compilation of material for the Congress, including an Agenda with enclosures, had been distributed to all delegates. *Niclas Malmcrona* expressed his joy with the high number of delegates attending the Assembly - the highest number in fact, in the history of ASSITEJ.

D) President *Wolfgang Schneider* presented the members and counsellors of the outgoing Executive Committee: *Tony Mack* (Vice President, Australia), *Luiza Monteiro* (Vice President, Brazil), *Rémi Boucher* (Vice President, Canada), *Stephan Rabl* (Austria), *Ivica Simic* (Croatia), *Hagit Rehavi Nikolayevski* (Israel), *Yuriko Kobayashi* (Japan), *Kim Woo Ok* (Korea), *Michail Bartenev* (Russia), *Peter Rinderknecht* (Switzerland), *Jeremy Turner* (United Kingdom), *Cheela Chilala* (Zambia), *Kim Peter Kovac* (Counsellor, USA), *Eckhard Mittelstädt* (Counsellor, Germany), *Jackson Ndawula* (Counsellor, Uganda), *Tülin Saglam* (Counsellor, Turkey) and *Klaus Eggert* (Treasurer, Denmark).

1. Nomination of Voting Commission. Verification of the centres' right to vote. Proxies

● Nomination of Voting Commission

On the recommendation of the Executive Committee, the General Assembly agreed to the following Voting Commission:

Eckhard Mittelstädt (Germany)

Michael Ramlose (Denmark)

Marina Medkova (Russia)

● Verification of the Centres' rights to vote

The total number of votes came to: 134

Simple majority: 67 votes

Total number of Centres: 41

● Proxies

Benin to Sweden (3 votes)

Cyprus to Denmark (3 votes)

Jordan to USA (3 votes)

Latvia to Estonia (3 votes)

Nepal to Norway (1 vote)

All centres were not present during all sessions of the General Assembly. The total numbers of votes are shown at each item where secret votes were requested.

2. Approval of the Minutes of the General Assembly 2002 in Seoul

The Minutes had been distributed to all centres in June of 2005.

Corrections (in italics)

Luiza Monteiro (Brazil) made a remark on Item #6, the 1st sentence of the 2nd paragraph: The sentence should read: "Luiza Monteiro (Brazil), stated that she in this discussion not only represents ASSITEJ Brazil, but also ASSITEJ Bolivia, and that a similar analysis of the proposals given by Myriam Reátegui (Peru) had been discussed during the Executive meeting in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil".

Michael Ramlose (Denmark), noted that his comment under Item #8, 2nd paragraph, had in fact been the contrary. The sentence should read: "Michael Ramløse (Denmark) commented that if a system does not work there are two options: either to change it or to make it work. Personally he was in favour of keeping the "system of solidarity" and make it work. Michael Ramløse strongly called upon the richer centres to live up to the words and ideas of solidarity as a basis in the organisation."

No further comments were made and the revised Minutes were adopted unanimously by the General Assembly.

3. Reports from the Executive Committee

a) President's Report

The President's Report had been handed out to all delegates. President *Wolfgang Schneider* commenced his report with calling for a silent moment in honour of *Zwejdana Ladika* (Croatia), *Zinovy Korogodsky* (Russia), *Tisa Chifunyise* (Zimbabwe) and *Lowell Swortzell* (USA), who had passed away during the last three years.

● Networking

President *Wolfgang Schneider* recommended the centres to cooperate with affiliated associations such as UNESCO, FIRT, and ITI. Regional networking had proved to be very rewarding, he noted, pointing to the inspiring examples of the African networks and the Epicentre's internet based network in Eastern Europe.

● ASSITEJ Activities

President *Wolfgang Schneider* urged all centres to take part in the World Day March 20th, and to apply for the Festival and Project Designations, as well as to supply nominations for the Honorary President's Award and the Honorary Member's Award. He also wished to see more submissions to the Web Catalogue of Scripts and to the Archives.

● Theatre for Children and Young people and the Education systems

President *Wolfgang Schneider* noted the link between theatre for children and the education systems, and wished for a more focused ASSITEJ work in this area. He emphasized the need to discuss what possibilities the uprise of new Theatre Houses might hold for the arts for children and young people.

"There's a lot to do in the field of theatre for children and young people", President *Schneider* concluded: "Let's do it together!"

b) Report from the General Secretariat.

The report had been distributed to all centres. Secretary General *Niclas Malmcrona* was happy to report that 9 new centres had joined ASSITEJ since the Congress in Seoul 2002. ASSITEJ now had a membership of 82 centres. *Niclas Malmcrona* welcomed the new centres and expressed gratitude to all centres for their support during the last term.

● Executive Committee meetings

Since the last Congress, the Executive Committee had held 8 meetings, all in connection to international events, such as festivals and symposiums. *Niclas Malmcrona* pointed out that it had been the policy of the Executive Committee to hold its meetings in places where the presence of ASSITEJ International might be especially useful for the regions.

● Communication between Centres and the General Secretariat

The General Secretariat had produced 7 Newsletters during the period of July 2002-September 2005. The Newsletters had been published on the ASSITEJ Website and had been sent to all centres in printed copies and by e-mail. Secretary General *Niclas Malmcrona* asked all centres to supply the General Secretariat with information on their activities and to update the Secretariat with their contact-persons and addresses.

● ASSITEJ Activities

Festival Guide

The *Festival Guide* had been updated 2003 and 2004, but the Festival Guide 2005 had not been updated due to lack of submissions from the centres. Secretary General *Niclas Malmcrona* raised the question of whether there was a need for a Festival Guide, at all, since there seemed to be so little interest for it among the centres. The future of the Festival Guide should be on the agenda of the new Executive Committee, he stated.

The International Theatre for Children and Young people World Day March 20th

Secretary General *Niclas Malmcrona* was delighted to notice the recognition and success of the World Day. An increasing number of centres were getting involved in the event at regional and international levels.

Catalogue of Scripts

The *Catalogue of Scripts*, launched in December of 2004, currently contained information on 50 scripts from 9 countries. Secretary General *Niclas Malmcrona* urged all centres to update the Catalogue with more scripts. Visit the Catalogue at: www.assitej.org/catalog

Honorary President's Award

The invitation for the 2005 Honorary President's Award had been sent to all centres in October of 2004, with application dead-line February 15th 2005.

Members of the Jury, appointed by the Executive Committee: *Klaus Eggert* (Chair, Denmark), *Ivica Simic* (Croatia) and *Yuriko Kobayashi* (Japan), *Etoundi Zeyang* (Cameroon) and *Rosemary Myers* (Australia).

The Jury had evaluated 5 nominees: *Peter Brosius* (USA), *János Nóvak* (Hungary), *Kim Woo Ok* (Korea), *Haluk Yuce* (Turkey) and the *Zeal Theatre* (Australia).

Recipients of the Award: Mr Kim Woo Ok and the Zeal Theatre.

The Award ceremony was held at the 40th ASSITEJ Anniversary Birthday Party on September 24th 2005 in Montreal, Canada.

Designations

The designation *Theatres of the World - ASSITEJ World Project* had been replaced by the following two designations:

ASSITEJ International Festival

This designation had been allotted to 8 festivals: *The Caravan-International Children's Theatre Biennial* (Denmark, 2003), *Theatre Festival for- Children and Young People* (Russia, 2003), *Bravo! - International Theatre Festival for Children* (Finland, 2004), *Bank of Scotland Children's International Theatre Festival* (United Kingdom, 2004), *The Seoul Performing Arts Festival for Young Audiences* (Korea, 2004), *Milk Tooth - the 4th International Theatre Festival for Children and Young People* (Croatia, 2004), *African Theatre Festival for Children and Young People* (Cameroon, 2004) and *Agor Drysau-Opening Doors and Wales International Festival of Theatre for Young Audiences* (United Kingdom, 2005)

ASSITEJ International Project

This designation had been allotted to 3 projects: *Welcome to the European Union - a Network for Children's and Young People's Theatre* (at the Triangel festival in Germany, 2004), *The Epicentre Director's Seminar* (at the Milk Tooth Festival in Croatia, 2004) and *Internationales Regieseminar für Kinder-und Jugendtheater* (International Director's Seminar, organized by ASSITEJ Germany and the Junges Ensemble, in Germany, 2005)

Niclas Malmerona invited all centres to apply for the designations.

Cooperation with ITI Playwright Competition

The "*Playwright Competition 2006, Plays for the Young*", was an ITI (International Theatre Institute) initiative in collaboration with ASSITEJ International and Epicentre. *Peter Rinderknecht* (Switzerland) and *Ivica Simic* (Croatia) represented ASSITEJ in the cooperation. A total of 125 plays had been submitted from 26 countries. The International Playwrights' Forum would publish two winning plays and help promote them to reach stages. The winners would be announced at the ITI Congress 2006 in Manila, Philippines. Visit www.playwrightsforum.com.

● Report on the Iraqi Statement

The Iraqi Statement had been posted on www.assitej.org with a message board, and had been sent to all centres. An account had been set up for contributions for the benefit of children and children's theatre in Iraq. By September of 2005, 7 countries had contributed a total of USD 6,434 or 8,683 EUR. Secretary General *Niclas Malmerona* reported that due to the situation in Iraq, no action had yet been taken regarding the collected money.

c) Reports from the Working Groups

● Policy

Members: *Niclas Malmerona* (Chair, Sweden), *Luiza Monteiro* (Brazil), *Kim Peter Kovac* (USA) and *Kim Woo-Ok* (Korea).

Niclas Malmerona reported that the group had focused their work on the following issues: the International Theatre for Children and Young People World Day, the Honorary President's Award, the Designations (*ASSITEJ International Festival* and *ASSITEJ International Project*) the Iraqi Statement and on the Web-site.

● Constitution, Subscription, Fundraising

Working Group: *Klaus Eggert* (Chair, Denmark), *Niclas Malmerona* (Sweden) and *Stephan Rabl* (Austria).

Klaus Eggert reported that the working group had focused on reviewing the subscription system, finding ways to raise finance for ASSITEJ and on re-viewing the Constitution.

● Catalogue of Scripts

Working Group: *Jeremy Turner* (Chair, United Kingdom), *Michael Bartenev* (Russia), *Cheela Chilala* (Zambia), *Hagit Rehavi Nikolayevski* (Israel) and *Tülin Saglam* (Turkey).

The catalogue of Scripts was created by the working group during the period and was officially launched on December 10, 2004. The Catalogue now contains 50 scripts from 9 countries.

The working group recommended that the new Executive Committee should maintain the web-catalogue and keep encouraging centres to submit scripts. The Committee could also organise workshops on translation of plays. Centres could create their own internal web-catalogues and establish partnerships by co-operating to translate and produce each other's plays. *Jeremy Turner* asked the Assembly for ideas on how to further develop the script database, and invited all centres to submit scripts.

● Archives

Working Group: *Luiza Monteiro* (Chair, Brazil) and *Eckhard Mittelstädt* (Germany).

Luiza Monteiro reported that the group had focused on the how to make the Archives accessible. The Archives should be a source for research, and could also be a tool for promoting the work of ASSITEJ. The digitilazation process should be maintained, and the possibility of producing a virtual/physical exhibition should be considered for the future. She encouraged all centres to use the Archives (situated in Kinder- und Jugendtheaterzentrum, Frankfurt am Main, Germany. Visit www.assitej.org for a link to the Archives).

● Networking

Working Group: *Wolfgang Schneider* (Chair, Germany), *Yuriko Kobayashi* (Japan), *Jackson Ndawula* (Uganda), *Stephan Rabl* (Austria), *Peter Rinderknecht* (Switzerland) and *Ivica Simic* (Croatia).

Wolfgang Schneider reported that the group had focused on ways to assist the centres in establishing regional and international networks. Also, the possibilities to co-operate with affiliated organisations had been investigated.

● Information

Working Group: *Tony Mack* (Chair, Australia), *Klaus Eggert* (Denmark) and *Eckhard Mittelstädt* (Counsellor, Germany).

Tony Mack reported that the group had focused on finding cost-efficient ways to produce the ASSITEJ Book and to boost income from the book (e.g by coming up with a presale strategy). Two books had been produced during the last term. *Wolfgang Schneider* called attention to the fact that production of the latest book had taken place in three continents. The book, he said, is important, as it markets the work of ASSITEJ. *Eckhard Mittelstädt* recommended the centres to order copies of the book.

Comments on the reports

Michael Ramlose (Denmark) congratulated the working groups on their excellent work.

Designations: ASSITEJ International Festival/ASSITEJ International Project

Hagit Rehavi Nikolayevski (Israel) asked for a clarification on the criteria for the new designations, as she found the criteria hard to meet. Secretary General *Niclas Malmcrona* explained that the administration of the original designation had been time-consuming, and its criteria unclear and hard to fulfil. The idea had been to create designations that would be easier to manage. The criteria, he continued, are important, as they set a standard for the work that ASSITEJ wishes to be recognised for. A project or festival could benefit greatly from an ASSITEJ designation, as governmental/commercial interests perceive that a designation ensures that the event measures up to a certain standard.

Tülin Saglam (Turkey) asked if there really was a need for the application deadline to be as early as 6 months before a project/festival takes place? Secretary General *Niclas Malmcrona* agreed that there might be a need for a change to this rule, and recommended that this should be taken into consideration by the new Executive Committee.

The International Theatre for Children and Young people World Day, March 20th

Katariina Metsälampi (Finland) said she had found the World Day to be very rewarding. She had noted that the insight of “right now, children all over the world are experiencing theatre, just like we are!” could be an eye-opening experience for children, and give them the sense of being part of something bigger than just their everyday life.

4) Accounts 2003-2004-2005

Copies of the Accounts and Membership Fees payment list were handed out to all centres. Treasurer *Klaus Eggert* reported on his work with the Accounts and made some observations:

● Funding for the General Secretariat

Funding for the General Secretariat had not been taken into the accounts. The General Secretariat had been funded with a yearly amount of approximately EUR 35,500 by the *Swedish National Council of Cultural Affairs*. Additional funding for projects and travels had been received from the *Swedish Institute*, the *Nordic Council of Ministers* and *SIDA (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency)*. The yearly funding received by *SIDA* amounted to approximately EUR 110,000. The funding from *SIDA* for networking in Eastern and Southern Africa would last until the end of 2007. As Congress had been postponed to autumn of 2005, an amount of USD 15,000 had been added to the budget for July-Oct 2005.

● The discrepancy in the Travel and Accommodation accounts

The costs for travels and accommodation had not met the budget. This was a result of the Executive Committee policy to hold its meetings in places where the presence of ASSITEJ International might be especially useful for the region. The centres of those regions had not always been able to cover the committee members' costs for travel and accommodation.

● ASSITEJ Book

The accounts for the Book would be put into the Accounts for the new Executive Committee.

● Membership Fees

Treasurer *Klaus Eggert* explained the variation in amounts: a centre can pay any amount between USD 100 - 500 each year. The Minimum fee is USD 100 per year, and the Full Standard fee is USD 500 per year. The fee for a Corresponding centre is USD 50 per year. Bank Charges: Treasurer *Klaus Eggert* urged all centres to please check what extra charges were in use at their local bank offices. In order for ASSITEJ to receive full payment, a centre must pay its fee plus the extra amount charged by their local bank office. (If a centre pays USD 100 into the ASSITEJ Accounts, the bank in many cases charges USD 25

out of that amount for their services, which means that ASSITEJ only receives a payment of USD 75).

Delayed subscription payments of USD 1,200 would be added to the Accounts.

● Auditor

Klaus Eggert reported that no final examination had been made of the financial records yet, due to the delayed payments of membership fees. ASSITEJ Finland had agreed to audit the Accounts.

The Accounts were unanimously adopted by the General Assembly.

5. Proposal for changes in the Constitution

The proposal had been distributed to all centres. *Kim Peter Kovac* (USA) explained that the major focus of the working group had been to make the Constitution easier to understand. The aim had also been to clarify the artistic, humanitarian and educational objectives of ASSITEJ, as well as to provide clarification to the practices of the organization.

Comments on the proposal:

Creation (page 1)

Maurice Yendt (France) pointed out that the French spelling of ASSITEJ should read: Association Internationale du Theatre pour l'Enfance et la Jeunesse.

Article 9, Functions of the General Assembly, Item # 10:

Tony Mack (Australia) suggested that the wordings “a plurality of the vote”(line 3) and “a plurality” (line 5) should be replaced by “the most votes”.

Article 10, Functions of the Executive Committee, Items # 1 and 3:

Item #1: The Constitution defines the number of Executive Committee members to a maximum of 17 (including the President and 3 Vice-Presidents, the Secretary General and the Treasurer). Item #3: The Constitution declares that the Executive Committee has the power to co-opt persons as members of the Committee.

A discussion arose on the subject of co-opting members to the Executive Committee: *Jeremy Turner* (United Kingdom) noted that a high number of candidates standing for the Executive Committee could result in the votes being spread very thinly. The end result of this could be that the General Assembly elected only 2 - 3 persons to the Executive Committee. *Katariina Metsälampi* (Finland) suggested that the Constitution should define a minimum number of members, e.g 10 persons. If a lower number than 10 was elected to the Committee, the General Assembly must vote again, until the minimum number was fulfilled. Secretary General *Niclas Malmerona* said that as this problem had not yet occurred, nor was likely to occur, a minimum number should not be necessary.

Maurice Yendt (France), said that as the situation might arise in which only three persons are elected to the Executive Committee, there should be a limitation to the number of persons that can be co-opted to the Executive Committee. This, he said, would ensure democracy. *Ivica Simic* (Croatia), suggested that such a limitation could be expressed in percentage. *Mikael Ramlose* (of the Voting Commission) did not agree, saying that the right percentage would be hard to determine and difficult to administrate. *Klaus Eggert* (Denmark), remarked that if the General Assembly was to elect only three persons to the

Executive Committee, ASSITEJ would have a much bigger problem on its hands than merely the matter of how many persons to co-opt.

Maurice Yendt (France) proposed a limitation to the number of persons that can be co-opted by the Executive Committee: No more than 3 persons.

The General Assembly voted on the proposal.

Result of the vote: 3 for. Against: Clear majority.

The proposal to limit the number of co-opted persons to 3 was not adopted.

The Constitution working group withdrew and brought back a revised constitution, based on the remarks from the floor.

The General Assembly voted on the revised constitution.

(Secret vote). Result of vote: Yes: 160. No: 1. Abstentions: 6. Invalid: 1

The new constitution was adopted.

6. The future of the ASSITEJ General Secretariat

Secretary General *Niclas Malmerona* called attention to the task of finding a long-term solution for the General Secretariat. The future of the General Secretariat should be placed high on the agenda of the new Executive Committee, he stated.

The current structure of the General Secretariat: The General Secretariat is connected to the office of the Secretary General. The Secretary General leads and coordinates the work of the General Secretariat. The host country or host centre of the General Secretariat provides finance for the salary, office expenses and travel costs of the Secretary General and his or her staff. Since 1999, the General

Secretariat has been placed with Secretary General *Niclas Malmerona* in Stockholm, Sweden. The Secretary General is employed by his/her ASSITEJ centre and works full time for ASSITEJ International.

Secretary General *Niclas Malmerona* brought forward some ideas for a future solution:

● Placing the General Secretariat in a permanent location (country):

Option A) The General Secretariat is located permanently in one country. The Secretary General, however, is stationed in his/her country of choice. The host country of the General Secretariat is the employer of the Secretary General and provides finance for his/her staff, office, and travel expenses.

Option B) The Secretary General is stationed in the country of the General Secretariat during his/her time in office. Expenses (salary, travel costs etc) for the Secretary General are covered by the country of the General Secretariat.

● Finding alternative ways of financing the General Secretariat:

Today's practice, Secretary General *Niclas Malmcrona* remarked, is unfair, since it means that only countries with healthy financial positions stand a chance to host the General Secretariat. There might be several alternative solutions to consider:

- Government funding
- Raising membership fees
- Sharing the costs between a number of countries (as practiced among the Nordic countries)
- Outsource the tasks of the General Secretariat to national centres, and thereby reduce the work load of the General Secretariat.

Secretary General *Niclas Malmcrona* asked the Assembly for comments and ideas.

Comments

President *Wolfgang Schneider* agreed that it was essential to find a solution for the General Secretariat. ASSITEJ must consider that the situation might arise, in which no country wished to/was able to finance the General Secretariat. *Tony Mack* (Australia) remarked that the Nordic countries and Germany currently carried a lot of the burden of running the organisation, and that it was in everybody's interest to find a solution for the future

Paul Harman (United Kingdom) stated that the office of the Secretary General was essential to hold activities together and to communicate the work of ASSITEJ. The idea to outsource the tasks of the Secretariat could be worth considering as this would open up for a more lateral way of administrating the organisation. The work of the Secretariat could be decentralized down to centres, companies and individuals; to a "network of ambassadors". President *Wolfgang Schneider* suggested that perhaps a solution could also be found by looking at the structures of other organisations: IBBY, for example, employs a full-time Secretary General, who is assisted by a person elected by the general assembly. Their salaries are paid by the country of the Secretary General. *Tony Mack* (Australia) feared that splitting the post of Secretary General from the office of the General Secretariat might prove difficult, with regard to the administrative challenge of various centres taking on the tasks of the Secretariat.

Kim Peter Kovac (USA) asked the Assembly for their experiences in fundraising. *Tony Mack* reported that ASSITEJ Australia had found it to be much easier to obtain fundraising for specific local projects than for international activities. As local government immediately can recognize the projects' benefits for their own regions, they are more easily motivated to provide finance for local projects. *Barbro Frambäck* (Sweden) suggested that ASSITEJ look into the possibility of hiring somebody to raise funding for the General Secretariat. This "funding-hunter" would make his/her own salary. President *Wolfgang Schneider* agreed that this could be part of a solution.

Stephan Rabl (Austria) said that the new Executive Committee should consider the financial benefits that could be derived from marketing ASSITEJ better. *Kim Peter Kovac* (USA) said that the U.S centre was discussing different ways to generate income, not only how to obtain money from funders. The Executive Committee could investigate ways to generate income for the ASSITEJ, e.g. by producing products to be sold (as is being done with the ASSITEJ Book). *Barbro Frambäck* (Sweden) agreed that ASSITEJ should broaden its perspectives in this area. The new Executive Committee should explore all possibilities regarding ways to finance the General Secretariat (and ASSITEJ activities), she said.

Kim Woo Ok (Korea) was in favour of financing the General Secretariat by raising the Subscription fees. Also, the centres could try to raise money from their governments, to be put into the accounts for the General Secretariat. To save money, the salary for the Secretary General could be cut and the number of trips undertaken by the Secretary General could be reduced. ASSITEJ should strive for self-sufficiency, *Kim Woo-Ok* stated.

President *Wolfgang Schneider* thanked the Assembly for their ideas and comments.

The future structure of the General Secretariat was put into the agenda of the new Executive Committee.

7. Issues submitted by centres

The reports had been handed out to all delegates.

a) Latin American Forum

A report with texts from Bolivia, Brazil and Uruguay had been submitted. *Luiza Monteiro* (Brazil) co-ordinated the presentation. She reported that ASSITEJ centres in Latin America were creating a network to support practitioners working in the field of theatre for young audiences. In most cases, children's theatre in Latin America was produced without government funding. The audiences that might be in the most need of theatre could not afford to buy tickets. These circumstances did not allow for equal opportunities to cultural participation and activity, as called for in the UNESCO Conference on Cultural Policy. *Luiza Monteiro* expressed a wish for ASSITEJ centres to support and take part in the Latin American network. She welcomed input, know-how and ideas from all centres.

Discussion

President *Wolfgang Schneider* said it was important to recognize the situation of the Latin American centres and that it was essential for the new Executive Committee to focus on this kind of networking. He asked the Assembly for ideas on intercultural and international networking. *Marcelo Diaz* (Spain) emphasized the importance to integrate new areas, such as the Latin American countries, into ASSITEJ. *Peter Rinderknecht* (Switzerland) suggested networking on the subject of quality, as it was of utmost importance what was actually put on the stages for young people.

b) Serbia

Anja Sousa (Serbia and Montenegro) reported on the landscape for children's and young people's theatre in her country. The children of Serbia and Montenegro had been faced with despair after the wars; they had lost their childhood and been surrounded by physical and mental violence. Theatre could have been a shelter for these children, but had turned superficial. However, there now seemed to emerge fresh approaches. Theatre was taking on a vital role in enriching and educating the children of this traumatized society. There was a lack of money, of course, but not of enthusiasm. The country's theatre makers were open to international collaborations, such as those made possible by a membership in ASSITEJ.

c) Israel

ASSITEJ Israel had perceived a tendency of ASSITEJ International to be influenced by political interests. The phrase "promote children for children", they found, was sometimes

used to disguise a political interest of the government behind a centre. Area co-operations could be productive, but not when used for making political statements. Such co-operations might also exclude some centres for reasons of language, culture or politics, or for lack of finances. Area co-operations could, in these cases, weaken the global structure of ASSITEJ.

ASSITEJ Israel wished to raise the following questions: What is the position of ASSITEJ in a case of a conflict or war between member countries? Should ASSITEJ approve of projects that are deliberately political? Should members of the Executive Committee be allowed to act according to political policies of their countries? How could ASSITEJ International avoid becoming a political organisation?

Discussion

Kim Peter Kovac (USA) remarked that the new, revised Constitution stated that no action or statement of ASSITEJ should be based on nationality, political conviction, cultural identity, ethnicity or religion. An ethic commission, he noted, could develop into a judgmental, negative force.

Peter Rinderknecht (Switzerland) agreed that it was important to discuss the political dimensions of ASSITEJ's field of work, but he found it impossible not to be political, as all actions, including artistic choices, were political by nature. An organisation such as ASSITEJ could hold a neutral position in conflicts, but one must not forget that the organisation was made up of individuals. Artists are constantly challenged by political decisions: upon receiving an invitation to a festival in a conflict area, was it expected by an artist of a neutral country (e.g Switzerland) to be neutral in his/her participation? Should an artist participate at all in a festival taking place in a conflict area? On the one hand, such a festival would be beneficial for the children of that area, so why hesitate to participate? On the other hand, the festival might be sponsored by a government that hopes to create goodwill for its political aims in a conflict with other countries. *Ivica Simic* (Croatia) said that as ASSITEJ was a body of individuals, and there was a constant flow of conflicts in the world, the organisation could not escape politics.

President *Wolfgang Schneider* stated that although made up of individuals with political views and sentiments, ASSITEJ International was not an official political organisation. ASSITEJ International was, however, a cultural political organisation, with an aim to integrate all countries of the world.

Hagit Rehavi Nikolayevski proposed the following items to be put into the agenda of the Executive Committee:

**Mutual language workshop
Ethics Commission**

The General Assembly voted on the proposal by a show of hands.

The proposal was not adopted.

President *Wolfgang Schneider* thanked the centres for their contributions to the agenda.

8. Working programme 2005-2008

Secretary General *Niclas Malmcrona* presented the proposals of the outgoing Executive Committee.

Jeremy Turner (United Kingdom) pointed out that the task of engaging young and new members into the organisation, as well as encouraging the women of ASSITEJ to make their voices heard, should be on the working programme. *Hagit Rehavi Nikolayevski's* (Israel) proposal to organise a mutual language workshop could also be added to the programme.

The additional proposals from the floor called for an ad hoc commission to meet and rework the draft for a Working Programme.

The General Assembly agreed to an ad hoc commission as follows:

María Inéz Falconi (Argentina), *Tony Mack* (Australia), *Wolfgang Schneider* (Germany), *Yuriko Kobayashi* (Japan), *Marina Medkova* (Russia), *Hope Azeda* (Rwanda), *Peter Rinderknecht* (Switzerland), *Vicky Ireland* (United Kingdom) and *Kim Peter Kovac* (U.S.A),

The ad hoc commission brought back a revised proposal for a Working Programme. (See attached).

The General Assembly voted on the proposal by show of hands.

The revised proposal for Working Programme 2005-2008 was unanimously adopted.

9. Subscription 2005-2006-2007

Treasurer *Klaus Eggert* reported that the Executive Committee recommended that ASSITEJ keep the current subscription system and fees. Raising the fee would, most likely, not generate more income for ASSITEJ. On the contrary, a raised fee would probably mean that even fewer centres would be able to afford to pay their fees. (About 25 percent of the centres had yet to pay their annual fee). The Executive Committee also recommended that the maximum fee stay at USD 500, but that it was not forbidden to pay more than USD 500.

Comments

Katariina Metsälampi (Finland) said raising the maximum fee would facilitate administration with governments when you wished to pay more than USD 500. *Tony Mack* (Australia) suggested that instead of raising the maximum fee, it should be made easier to make a personal contribution.

The General Assembly voted on the proposal to raise the maximum fee to USD 800.

Result of the Vote: Yes: Clear Majority. Abstention: 1

The proposal to raise the maximum fee to USD 800 was adopted.

10. Budget 2006-2008

Treasurer *Klaus Eggert* proposed that the budget for 2006-2008 should be made by the new Executive Committee, based upon the new working programme.

The General Assembly voted on the proposal.

The proposal was adopted unanimously

11. Place of Congress 2008

The candidacy of ASSITEJ United Kingdom had been withdrawn. *Jeremy Turner* (United Kingdom) regretted the withdrawal and explained the circumstances. He wished ASSITEJ Australia the best of luck in the elections.

● Adelaide, Australia

Tony Mack, Jessica Machin, Sally Chance and MP John Hill (Australia) presented the bid of ASSITEJ Australia to host the ASSITEJ World Congress in Adelaide: The Congress would take place in Adelaide, May 6-15th 2008. The program would be rich, contemporary and innovative, with a particular focus on the Asia-Pacific region. The International Festival would be co-ordinated by ASSITEJ Australia, the Come Out Festival, South Australian Youth Arts Board and the Australia Council for the Arts. About 30 productions from all parts of the world would be chosen for the festival program. Adelaide is an important centre of creation of theatre for young audiences in the Southern Hemisphere, and is renowned for hosting major international events. Australia is a meeting place of cultures, reflecting influences of all the continents of the world.

The General Assembly voted on place of Congress 2008.

The result of the vote: Yes: 124. Abstentions: 3. Invalid: 1

Adelaide, Australia, was elected to host the 2008 ASSITEJ World Congress.

12. Reports from Forum

The reports were included in Newsletter #40, which was sent to all centres and posted on the website in november of 2005. The Forums at the Congress had been organised by the outgoing Executive Committee in co-operation with ATEC, IATC, IBBY and ITI.

Forum A: Adapting literature into theatre

Cheela Chilala (Chair, Zambia), *Jeremy Turner* (United Kingdom), *Luiza Monteiro* (Brazil) and *Michail Bartenev* (Russia), with the participation of *Josiane Polidori*, President of *IBBY Canada - International Board on Books for Young People*.

Forum B: *How to build relationships between theatre arts and the educational system?*

Kim Peter Kovac (Chair, USA), *Hagit Rehavi Nikolayevski* (Russia), *Yuriko Kobayashi* (Japan), with the participation of *ATEQ - Association théâtre-éducation du Québec*.

Forum C: *How to expand the scope of criticism of theatre for young audiences?*

Wolfgang Schneider (Chair, Germany), *Tülin Saglam* (Turkey), *Tony Mack* (Australia), with the participation of *IATC - the International Association of Theatre Critics*.

Forum D: *The new role of theatre houses*

Stephan Rabl (Chair, Austria), *Peter Rinderknecht* (Switzerland), *Ivica Simic* (Croatia).

Forum E: *How to profile an artistic directorship of festivals?*

Kim Woo Ok (Chair, Korea), *Eckhard Mittelstädt* (Germany), *Rémi Boucher* (Canada), *Stephan Rabl* (Austria), with the participation of *ITI - the International Theatre Institute*.

Forum F: *How to network in theatre for young audiences?*

Niclas Malmerona (Chair, Sweden), *Klaus Eggert* (Denmark), *Jackson Ndawula* (Uganda).

13. Presentation of the candidates for the offices of the Secretary General, the Treasurer and for the Executive Committee.

The candidates presented themselves to the General Assembly.

a) Candidate for the office of Secretary General:

Niclas Malmerona (Sweden)

b) Candidate for the office of Treasurer:

Klaus Eggert (Denmark)

c) Candidates for the Executive Committee:

María Inés Falconi (Argentina)

Tony Mack (Australia)

Stephan Rabl (Austria)

Etoundi Zeayang (Cameroun)

Rémi Boucher (Canada)

Ivica Simic (Croatia)

Katariina Metsälampi (Finland)

Wolfgang Schneider (Germany)

Razi Amitai (Israel)

Yuriko Kobayashi (Japan)

Young Ai Choi (Korea)

Hope Azeda (Rwanda)

Anja Susa (Serbia and Montenegro)

Marcelo Diaz (Spain)

Peter Rinderknecht (Switzerland)

Tülin Saglam (Turkey)

Jackson Ndawula (Uganda)

Jeremy Turner (United Kingdom)
Kim Peter Kovac (USA)
Cheela Chilala (Zambia)

(Three candidacies had been withdrawn: *Antonio Carlos Bernardes* (Brasil), *Ricky Gitahi* (Kenya) and *Ralp Chimankire* (Zimbabwe).

14. Elections

Mikael Ramlose (Denmark) informed on the election procedures: Secret vote. A candidate needed a minimum of 77 votes to be elected to office. The Executive Committee is composed of a maximum of 17 members, including the President and three Vice-Presidents, the Secretary General and the Treasurer.

a) Election of Secretary General

The outgoing Executive Committee had nominated *Niclas Malmcrona* (Sweden) for the office of Secretary General 2006-2008.

The result of the vote: Yes: 128. No: 6. Abstentions: 3

Niclas Malmcrona was elected Secretary General for 2006 - 2008.

b) Election of Treasurer

The outgoing Executive Committee had nominated *Klaus Eggert* (Denmark) for the office of Treasurer 2006-2008.

The result of the vote: Yes: 134. No: 5. Abstentions: 4

Klaus Eggert was elected Treasurer for 2006-2008.

c) Election of the Executive Committee

The result of the vote:

María Inés Falconi	(Argentina)	123 votes	Elected
Tony Mack	(Australia)	128 votes	Elected
Stephan Rabl	(Austria)	85 votes	Elected
Etoundi Zeayang	(Cameroun)	61 votes	Not elected
Rémi Boucher	(Canada)	65 votes	Not elected
Ivica Simic	(Croatia)	120 votes	Elected
Katariina Metsälampi	(Finland)	87 votes	Elected
Wolfgang Schneider	(Germany)	142 votes	Elected
Razi Amitai	(Israel)	108 votes	Elected
Yuriko Kobayashi	(Japan)	130 votes	Elected
Young Ai Choi	(Korea)	91 votes	Elected
Hope Azeda	(Rwanda)	89 votes	Elected
Anja Susa	(Serbia and Montenegro)	68 votes	Not elected
Marcelo Diaz	(Spain)	58 votes	Not elected
Peter Rinderknecht	(Switzerland)	85 votes	Elected
Tülin Saglam	(Turkey)	86 votes	Elected

Jackson Ndawula	(Uganda)	35 votes	Not elected
Jeremy Turner	(United Kingdom)	100 votes	Elected
Kim Peter Kovac	(USA)	110 votes	Elected
Cheela Chilala	(Zambia)	130 votes	Elected

The following 15 candidates were elected members of the Executive Committee 2006-2008:

<i>María Inés Falconi</i>	<i>(Argentina)</i>
<i>Tony Mack</i>	<i>(Australia)</i>
<i>Stephan Rabl</i>	<i>(Austria)</i>
<i>Ivica Simic</i>	<i>(Croatia)</i>
<i>Katariina Metsälampi</i>	<i>(Finland)</i>
<i>Wolfgang Schneider</i>	<i>(Germany)</i>
<i>Razi Amitai</i>	<i>(Israel)</i>
<i>Yuriko Kobayashi</i>	<i>(Japan)</i>
<i>Young Ai Choi</i>	<i>(Korea)</i>
<i>Hope Azeda</i>	<i>(Rwanda)</i>
<i>Peter Rinderknecht</i>	<i>(Switzerland)</i>
<i>Tülin Saglam</i>	<i>(Turkey)</i>
<i>Jeremy Turner</i>	<i>(United Kingdom)</i>
<i>Kim Peter Kovac</i>	<i>(USA)</i>
<i>Cheela Chilala</i>	<i>(Zambia)</i>

d) Election of the President

The Executive Committee nominated *Wolfgang Schneider* (Germany) for the office of president of ASSITEJ.

The result of the vote: Yes: 143. No: 3. Invalid: 3

Wolfgang Schneider (Germany) was elected President of ASSITEJ for 2006-2008.

e) Election of Vice-Presidents

The Executive Committee nominated the following members for the three Vice-President posts: *Tony Mack* (Australia), *Yuriko Kobayashi* (Japan), *Kim Peter Kovac* (USA), *Jeremy Turner* (United Kingdom) and *Cheela Chilala* (Zambia).

The result of the vote:

Tony Mack	(Australia)	114 votes	Elected
Yuriko Kobayashi	(Japan)	115 votes	Elected
Jeremy Turner	(United Kingdom)	43 votes	Not elected
Kim Peter Kovac	(U.S.A)	57 votes	Not elected
Cheela Chilala	(Zambia)	87 votes	Elected

The General Assembly elected Vice-Presidents of ASSITEJ 2006-2008 as follows:

Tony Mack (Australia)
Yuriko Kobayashi (Japan)
Cheela Chilala (Zambia)

f) Election of auditor of the accounts

The Executive Committee nominated *Valdimir Hulec* (Czech Republic) for Auditor of the accounts.

The Assembly voted by a show of hands.

The Czech Centre was unanimously elected Auditor of the accounts.

15. Honorary Membership

No proposals were made for Honorary Membership.

16. Any other business

Paul Harman (United Kingdom) wished to advertise that a new network dealing with theatre in museums was emerging.

Jeremy Turner (United Kingdom) brought attention to the fact that five new books on Welsh theatre history had recently been published.

17. Closing

President *Wolfgang Schneider* expressed his gratitude to ASSITEJ Canada for organising the Congress. He thanked all centres for participating in the General Assembly and the congress activities, and for supporting ASSITEJ. He congratulated the new members of the Executive Committee and thanked the outgoing members for their work during the last term: *Michael Bartenev* (Russia), *Remi Boucher* (Canada), *Luiza Monteiro* (Brasil), *Jackson Ndawula* (Uganda), *Hagit Rehavi Nikolayevski* (Israel) and *Kim Woo Ok* (Korea).

President *Wolfgang Schneider* said he looked forward to meet everybody again in Adelaide, Australia, at the next World Congress in 2008. The General Assembly was closed.