

Resolution No. 8: Improving the Consultative and Decision Making Process (S.O.4)

8.1 In view of the rapid growth in the membership of ICOM, and considering that the Advisory Committee is the representative body of ICOM with National and International Committees, Affiliated Organisations, and Regional Alliances, the ICOM General Assembly urges

- the Executive Council and the Advisory Committee to continue the reform, including the revision of ICOM's Statutes and Operating Policies, to enhance the substantive role of the Advisory Committee by utilizing the more efficient means available in our contemporary information society; and, that the results of such reform be discussed among both Executive Council and the Advisory Committee and made available for review and acceptance by the members of the Advisory Committee.

8.2 The General Conference is ICOM's major event and a unique knowledge-sharing experience. It is a networking opportunity that consumes considerable time and money for all members.

The ICOM General Assembly recommends :

- that ICOM improve the organisation, structure, and content of the General Assembly and the General Conference to gain in effectiveness, efficiency, and relevance to ICOM members worldwide, and to call on all ICOM bodies to designate representatives to work on better means to do so;
- to encourage governments responsible for museum personnel to support full participation of their staff who are members of ICOM in ICOM meetings and the General Conference as this participation should be recognised as a professional activity with benefits for museum development in their respective countries, regions and internationally;
- that the Executive Council provide information on the activities of the Executive Council and the Secretariat, to the Advisory Committee for review on a regular basis and for consideration in advance of meetings; and
- that ICOM and the host countries organising General Conferences and other constituent meetings make every effort to harness new technologies in order to best engage with and ensure the more democratic involvement of our global membership and better functioning of our Organisation.

There might be some turbulence on our flight to Shanghai 2010...

Knut Wik, *Chairperson, Advisory Committee*

How shall we create a world where the importance of the natural and cultural heritage is universally valued, or how shall we fulfil "Our Global Vision"? Looking back to Vienna 2007 and forward to Shanghai 2010, these are the main questions.

> By taking part in a global network such as ICOM, each of us has the possibility to promote and understand the core values of our daily work. As newly elected chairperson of ICOM's Advisory Committee, I'm trying to look at the job from different perspectives. What can ICOM do to strengthen the quality of the museum work in all corners of the world, and how can we learn from and support each other? What can I as an ICOM member do to fulfil the purpose of a museum, which should be in service of society and of its development, and with respect for Cultural and Natural Diversity? I, of course, have to stay focused on the job to develop the Advisory Committee into an effective and at the same time democratic tool to fulfil adopted decisions, such as our Strategic Plan, and the public policy statements in the Resolutions from the General Assembly in Vienna 2007.

> The Advisory Committee consists of the presidents of 117 National Committees and 30 International Committees, the Regional Alliances and 15 affiliated international associations. ICOM now has more than 25,000 members from 150 countries. That is a challenge and of course a great opportunity. It's important to listen to the needs, demands and suggestions coming in from the different parts of the organisation, but every member of the Advisory Committee should be aware of the silent voices. How are we getting those voices to be heard? How can we create "safe" environments for debate and communication? I think we have to organise our meetings in new ways, and of course, not forgetting all those who are not speaking English, French or Spanish as their first language. The use of Spanish as ICOM's third official language, must also be taken more seriously in the future. The decision that Spanish is one of ICOM's official languages is a matter that must never again be turned into a question of money and budget.

> I cannot now give you concrete answers indicating how we shall meet the challenges indicated above, but I'm sure that among the members there are many excellent ideas. Please send them to me! The Advisory Committee's working group on content and organisation needs your involvement in this matter.

> One key matter is the role of the Advisory Committee within ICOM. Some indicate that they want to turn the Advisory Committee into ICOM's parliament. The function of the Advisory Committee is in its name – it is a body that advises. The General Assembly is in a way the closest body that can be compared to a parliament, but it's not a parliament in proper or exact terms. Let's start with the change in our new Statutes; an ordinary session of the General Assembly shall be called once a year at the time of the meeting of the Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee is the representative body of ICOM, and must take an active part in creating and preparing policies for the coming General Assembly in cooperation with the Executive Council and the Secretariat. That's an important role.

> The activity level, energy and effort on the part of our members are great. For instance, the quality and quantity of projects, and programmes of many of the International Committees are tremendous, and they deliver important professional output to the museum world. Among these, the largest ICOM International Committee, ICOM-CC, ICOM's Conservation Committee, is really impressive given the number of active members and specialised sub-committees. A new funding system for the International Committees is, of course, crucial when discussing ICOM's Strategic Budget (2008-2010), not only how much money, but also how it is used. Projects and other activities must be an indicator.

> ICOM is a very ambitious organisation. That's necessary if you want to be "THE international non-governmental organisation of museums and professional museum workers...". Our new Strategic Plan is also an ambitious one. It indicates in which direction we are moving. The budget indicates the speed.

> The budgeting process within ICOM is really improving, and I think we are in a process that opens up several important discussions. Discussions provide involvement from members and bodies, and, of course, hard work. The main indicated improvement is how the budget must reflect our Strategic Plan and indicate the resources we are going to use on each objective. Take part in the ongoing process and debate on ICOM-L and in other forums! Let the Strategic Plan be an important discussion within the National Committees and in the International Committees!

> Let's keep on working in a friendly but sharp and critical atmosphere, an atmosphere that is supportive, giving, and full of creativity. I am aware that for most of us, this is hard work, mainly voluntarily, and usually means staying up late at night! Most of this takes place between the meetings. Let us keep this in mind as we start on our triennial trip to Shanghai 2010. We know the direction, let's pick up some speed and I'm sure we will have a successful journey. But be aware; there might be some turbulence during the flight...

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