

INTERNATIONAL BALINT FEDERATION

Officers of the Council (since September 2011)

President: Henry Jablonski (Sweden)
Vice-presidents: Kristiina Toivola (Finland)
Donald Nease (United States of

America)

General Secretary: Paul Sackin (United Kingdom)
Treasurer: Michel Delbrouck (Belgium)

www.balintinternational.com

**Minutes of the meeting of the Council of the International Balint Federation
held on Saturday 9th June 2012 at 14.00 at the Thracia Best Western Hotel, Sofia**

Belgium

Christian Linclau
Michele Parea

Bulgaria

Georgi Cigarovski
Gergana Foreva
Vesselka Hristova
Vivian Pramaratoff

Denmark:

Tove Mathiesen
Helena Nielsen

Finland:

Kristiina Toivola

France:

Marie-Anne Puel
Louis Velluet

Germany:

Guenther Bergman

Israel:

Mark Budow

Netherlands

Marieke van Schie

Poland

Bohdan Wasilewski

Portugal:

Jorge Brandao

Romania:

Tunde Baka

Eniko-Eva Butyka

Albert Veress

Eva Veress

Sweden:

Henry Jablonski

UK:

Andrew Elder

Paul Sackin

John Salinsky

David Watt

- **Welcome** Henry welcomed everyone to the meeting
- 2. Apologies.** *Board members:* Michel Delbrouck and Don Nease. *Societies:* Austria, Croatia, AIPB, Italy, Russia, USA, Australia and NZ, Switzerland

Henry informed the council delegates that prominent members of the Federation Benjamin Maoz and Sanja Blazekovic-Milakovic were struggling with illness and that Heather Suckling was recovering from a recent operation. We sent them all our very best wishes

3. Minutes of previous meeting. These were accepted

4. Matters arising. None

5. Report from the Board a) Kristiina began by saying how interesting she had found the reports from member societies and urged members to let us have details of national meetings and events. b) Paul then gave his secretary's report:

- There remain 23 Societies who are members of the IBF – no change since Bulgaria joined in 2012. We have individual members in Norway and Venezuela, and members in Iceland, Canada and Brazil who are members of other national

societies. I understand that Brazil is hoping to form a national society and join the IBF soon.

- As of mid-May all societies except Bulgaria, Italy, Hungary and Croatia had paid their annual fees. They have all had a recent reminder.
- I recently circulated reports from national societies. Most societies produced a report. I have just received reports from the USA and Poland. These will be on the website with the others
- Heather is proving a very hard act to follow. I am most grateful to Henry and the other Board members for all their guidance and support to the new boy.
- Henry pointed out that the essential work of improving the structure of the IBF and formalising its state as an idealistic non-profit organization were primarily meant to provide a platform for the friendly informal good relationships between us all in the IBF global village. He would like to see more attention paid to regional cooperation and to increased participation in IBF events such as the Congress and Leadership conferences. He emphasised the importance of improving links between the 'Anglophone' and 'Francophone' world. To that end Henry had attended the SMB meeting in Strasbourg in 2010 from which came an invitation to the conference on 'Mort et Medicine' organised by the department of psychology at the University of Strasbourg in November 2011. There were two plenary Balint presentations by Henry and by Jean Maclouf and two Balint group sessions led by Jean and Francoise Auger that functioned really well despite quite a few inexperienced participants. Henry went on to report that he, Dorte Kjeldmand and John Salinsky had written two chapters in a book on Uncertainty in Primary Care edited by John Launer and Lucia Summers to be published later this year at Springer New York. The editors were delighted with the chapters. Heide Otten earlier this year published a well written book on Balint work "Professionalle Beziehungen" at Springer Berlin. Paul will circulate further details.

6. Reports from National Societies Kristiina thanked members for interesting contributions. Reports will all be on the IBF website including USA and Poland that arrived after the others had been circulated.

7. Secretary's Report See above

8. Treasurer's Report and asset management In Michel's absence, Henry reported that the decision of the General Assembly at Philadelphia had now been implemented. Since December 2011 the IBF is an international non-profit idealistic organisation based in Sweden. Bank accounts have been opened in Sweden and about half the assets have been transferred there. Originally the assets had been in Michel's name until he formed an 'Association du fait' with Jean Flechet. Henry pointed out that thanks to Michel's integrity the IBF assets had been in the best of hands. The Swedish arrangement ensures that IBF assets stay as such regardless of the individuals dealing with them. Many international organisations are registered in this way. Some restructuring is necessary with this new arrangement and Michel felt that it was time to step down especially as he has had some medical problems and is very busy. Michel will withdraw when the transfer

of the assets has been completed. A Euro 'pocket' will still exist so that transactions can take place in Euros. In the interim, Henry, Don and Kristiina will handle the finances until a new Treasurer is elected in 2013. Some felt that the election should happen sooner; the statutes may need to be reviewed as they don't make clear what should happen if a Board member retires early. It was agreed that the Board could co-opt an interim Deputy Treasurer if necessary. The Council thanked Michel in his absence for all his hard work for the last 15 years. This was greeted with acclaim.

Michel's balance sheet for 2011/12 was agreed and the assets of over 60,000 Euros noted, though some expenses such as WONCA are still to come. Henry explained that these assets arose both because of Michel's care and also minimal reimbursement being sought by Board members and others. This means that there is a useful amount of money available for projects in the future. Also we will be prepared if our successors expect greater reimbursement.

Avanza and Nordea are guaranteed for 1m SEK (about 100,000 Euros). There was some discussion about the assets and draft guidelines discussed. Some delegates felt that investment in stocks and shares was not a good idea but Henry pointed out that guaranteed bank accounts may offer interest well below the rate of inflation. Tove points out that any decisions taken by the Board would need to be agreed by the Council.

9. China and other possible new members. China had not yet responded to our request for clarification and amendment of their statutes. Heide is in China to lead a workshop again as she did in 2011, see previous GA minutes. No doubt the interest in Balint work in Beijing is significant

Marieke and Bohdan mentioned there is a psychosomatic society in Japan. The contact is Professor Scheufl. Guenther agreed to contact him. Guenther also mentioned Norbert Guenzl's contact in Iran. The late Sigmar Scheerer had planned contacts in the Ukraine. The Polish Society is well connected with Ukraine and a discussion about this was postponed till later in the day (see below). Henry also pointed out that IBF non-members and societies whose membership is pending are most welcome to attend IBF congresses, which provide a good opportunity to get to know one another.

10. WONCA WONCA meetings were now very expensive and Henry felt that we should carefully evaluate the Vienna meeting in July 2012 and probably not attend the Prague meeting in 2013. However in 2014 in Lisbon the organisers have indicated that Balint will be given a good presence.

11. Leadership Conference in Charleroi Andrew Elder and Michelle Parée gave a report. The conferences will be about the role of theory in leadership. Only 32 participants have registered so far including ten from Sweden, eight of whom are not very experienced. The work of the conference will mainly be in small groups. Paul will send out a reminder to IBF members, pointing out that the 'early bird' rate closes at the end of June. The Task Force was thanked for all its hard work.

12. Guideline Proposals 1. Leadership conferences. These were agreed with the proviso

that it should be clarified that task force members can also be reimbursed for one night of 'freestanding' meetings. 2. World Congresses. One typing error was noted and will be corrected. It was agreed by a qualified majority that sponsorship would be acceptable provided that it did **not** interfere with the work of the Congress. Otherwise the guidelines were agreed. 3. Council meetings. There was some discussion about these. Mark felt that a two-session meeting was too short for those coming a long way. Andrew felt that the guidelines could be more welcoming and supportive of national societies. Bohdan wondered if more discussion could take place online and one Council meeting per year might be enough. Marieke suggested that groups of nearby countries could meet and give ideas to the Board. David W thought that it was good to meet as long as most countries could come. Kristiina suggested that Skype etc. could be used so that those not present could play a part in the meetings. The Board agreed to look at these guidelines again. 4. Ascona. An amendment was agreed. One jury member will be chair and have a casting vote. Paul will circulate details of the 2013 prize and will also put the advert on the website. Members were asked to send details to all medical universities in their countries. Guenther mentioned that two Ascona Board members have retired. Five remain. The headquarters are being transferred to Basel, as it works better in German speaking Switzerland. It is hoped to have one IBF member on the Ascona Board. The economic situation means that the prize is decreasing in value.

13. Translation Board In Don's absence Paul reported that the Translation Board recommended an award of 1000 Euros for the translation into English of 'Lire Michael Balint' by Helene Oppenheim Gluckman. This recommendation was approved by the IBF Board in March 2012 and the money has been paid. The book is a short account of Balint's writings in the field both of psychoanalysis and of Balint groups. Perhaps the subtitle 'un clinicien pragmatique' sums Balint up well.

We have just received another request for support, this time from Bohdan Wasilewski. We shall be considering this in the coming weeks.

Henry suggested that we could consider arranging the translation of part of Helene Gluckmann's book if she can't find a translator. If it is translated and she cannot find a publisher we could consider printing it and selling it at cost price to interested Balinters and others.

14. Website Deadline for submissions is 27th June. Societies who have not paid by then will be removed from the website.

15. Comprehensive list of Balint literature Andrew has been trying to digitalise out of print Balint titles. However lots of difficulties were pointed out by a very helpful Bodleian librarian, not least copyright. Andrew will continue to work on it.

16. Balint film There was no progress to report.

17. 18th International Congress Heidelberg Guenther reported that the organisers were looking for cheaper accommodation to help those from poorer countries. The theme of the congress is 'attachment and relationships'. Guenther asked for approval to have 3

keynote speakers who were from outside the Balint movement and this was agreed. It was expected that the congress website would be running from September 2012 and the last date to receive papers would be end of February 2013. Guenther mentioned that there would be several post-congress tours organised.

18. Council meeting first half of 2013. Bids to host this, based on the guidelines, were invited. A decision would be made at the Council meeting in Charleroi.

By this time it was 17.10 and it was agreed to defer AOB until after Vivian Pramataroff's lecture. Henry thanked everybody for a constructive discussion, and valuable suggestions – and for their patience. He then closed the meeting.

19. Any other business

After Vivian Pramataroff's interesting and challenging lecture on the changes of the medical structure in Bulgaria after the fall of communism the following matters were presented:

1. The Council of the Bulgarian society had met at lunchtime and a new board elected. The new members were congratulated and their details will be added to the member societies list to be posted on the website. 2. Bohdan outlined the very complicated situation in Ukraine with Polish speaking, Russian speaking and Ukrainian speaking areas. The Poles were cooperating with all areas and it was hoped that a suitable bid for IBF membership could be submitted by Ukraine soon. 3. Albert advertised the Romanian society's 20th anniversary congress from May 16 to May 19 2013. All are welcome. There will be international participation and some interesting trips provided.