

Minutes of the Assembly, 2002 Cairns

1) Approval of Last Minutes

2) Report of the President

Ifor Ffowcs-Williams' President's Report covered the advancements TCI made over the course of 2002. He revealed that there was a greater investment in the newsletter and that it has been greatly improved in quality and distribution. He also reemphasized the hopes that the newsletter would continue to evolve into an integral part of TCI's main objectives and the possible development of a TCI Journal – being investigated by Prof. Mike Enright of Hong Kong University.

At the headquarters in Barcelona, the Government of Catalonia agreed to continue to supplement TCI development with 18,000 Euro. Outside of Barcelona, the president commented on how the development of TCI chapters in the Americas, Europe/Middle East/Africa (EMEA), and Asia/Pacific will continue to improve networking and communication between members. In the Americas, this networking is already working. David Dodd, a TCI member in Louisiana, introduced the Institute to Conway Data in Atlanta, Georgia, in hopes of developing a U.S. membership base through the circulation capabilities of their magazine. Talks between TCI and Conway Data are underway.

In one of the more exciting possible developments, Canada's National Research Council generously offered to provide accommodation and facilities in Ottawa. This is hoped to create a more permanent executive capacity within TCI and talks are hoped to conclude soon with the Canadian Government. The overall tone of the report was positive and stressed that TCI continues to grow and the outlook for reaching future objectives is encouraging.

3) Report of the Secretary

As acting secretary, Emiliano Duch covered information covering what the Competitiveness Institute is and its mission: to improve living standards and local competitiveness of regions across the world by enhancing cluster-based development initiatives. This was broken down further into objectives that stressed promotion of cluster based strategies, professional development and improving methodologies.

The secretary continued the presentation by reviewing TCI's activities in 2002. The annual conference took place in Cairns in cooperation with Cairn Region Economic Development Corporation (CREDC), promoting networking through EMEA, Asia/Pacific, and Americas, renewing the newsletter and updating the web page. This activity produced positive results, as TCI new members increased.

4) Report of the Treasurer

Continuing on with the Treasurer's report, Emiliano discussed how 2002 was the best year for memberships collected pre-conference, best year for income (even with conference income was decreased), and better overall management (newsletter, chapters, advertising, administration.) The subsidies for 2002/2003 composed 35% percent of the operating budget, but there were higher operating costs and there will not be a surplus of activities.

5) Report from the Board of Advisors

The message from the Board of Advisors was to have conferences focus on policy output. The theme for the 2003 conference in Sweden was, innovation/competitiveness policies for new entrants in economic unions. For 2004, focusing on the results of cluster-based policies in macro unstable countries. It is the hope of the board that this focus will improve the effectiveness of the conferences and TCI's overall value to present and future members.

6) Election of New Members of the Executive Committee

The President advised the changes that have occurred in the composition of the Executive Committee since last General Assembly held in Tucson last October 31, 2001. Both the Secretary, Mr. Alberto Pezzi, and the VP for the Asia Pacific region presented their resignations for professional reasons. The former President Mr. Emiliano Duch, has performed the Secretary's function, following a decision of the Executive Committee held in Paris last January 28, 2002.

The President invited nominations to fill two vacancies on the Executive Committee, ideally one to reinforce the EMEA region, in view of the 2003 conference in Sweden, and a second to give a particular attention to the Central and South American members.

Members John Dean and Dianne Jones propose Mr. Lars Eklund, from the Swedish Innovation Agency VINOVA, and Mr. Bob Breault, proposes Mr. Alec Hansen for the Central and South American area. Both were approved by acclamation.

NOTE FROM THE SECRETARY: Further to the General Assembly, the Secretary realized that the election of Mr. Hansen could not be sustained, since it would break the TCI Charter rule that limits the nationals of one country to no more than 1/3 of the positions in the Executive Board (now composed of 7 positions, of which 2 are already USA nationals.)

7) Questions

The President opened the floor for questions from the members.

Mr. Bob Breault presented a proposal from the PRONACOM in Guatemala to held a TCI Regional Conference in November. This would be the first regional event being organized with TCI's support. The Executive Committee will follow the initiative. He mentions as well his interest to use Conway Data, editors of Site Selection magazine, as a support in the USA market.

Mr. Steve Arwort, from W. Australia Government, questioned the format of this conference's workshops, with limited time available following presentations for discussions.

Following a suggestion from Mr. Ray Conder, of the Queensland Dept. of State Development, a discussion was generated on the possibility of distributing the list of addresses of all members. The Secretary responded that there was a difficulty due to the Information Act that regulates TCI databases, but offered to circulate to all members any information that a member wants to divulge.

A general request was presented to the organizers of next year's conference to try to get more business leaders to participate in the presentations.

With no more items or questions from the members, the President closed the General Assembly.