

**Meeting of the General Assembly**

Toulouse, France “Novotel Toulouse Centre Compans Caffarelli”

**Monday, July 10, 2017, rooms “Tangovivo+Milonga+Cumparista”**

Informal Get-Together at 12.30

**General Assembly Meeting at 1.30 p.m.**

**DRAFT MINUTES**

1. Welcome & Roll Call:

Janan Zaytoon welcomed all NMO representatives/delegates and observers and read the proposed agenda. He handed over the floor to Kurt Schlacher for the Roll Call. Absent: Cuba, Kosovo, and Tunisia (all three NMOs had submitted a name of a delegate to the IFAC Secretariat in advance of the meeting and had not communicated any absences, change in delegate info, or proxies).

2. Approval of Agenda:

Janan Zaytoon asked for a vote to approve the agenda as posted and presented. Moved by China, seconded by Belgium, all voted in favor and the agenda was unanimously approved.

3. Election of Scrutineers for the Minutes.

Denis Dochain (Belgium) and Jurek Sasiadek (Canada) agreed to serve as scrutineers.

4. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting (Cape Town, General Assembly 2014.)

The minutes had been checked by the designated scrutineers and were posted for NMOs in advance for review purposes. Moved by Korea, seconded by Austria the minutes from the previous General Assembly were unanimously approved.

5. Report by the President was presented by Janan Zaytoon.

The 2014-2017 triennium was a time of high quality technical activities and solid finances. Many projects continued that stemmed from Ian Craig’s presidential term and the strategic review process. One highlight was the introduction of the new membership categories (introductory and reduced-fee) in an effort to reach out to people from less favoured regions. IFAC is currently

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comprised of 49 NMOs. Over the course of this past triennium Malaysia joined as a new NMO and Hong Kong was terminated. Two new NMO applications have been received: Azerbaijan and Pakistan. There are currently around 4500 active affiliates listed in the database at the Secretariat. 94 technical events were held during this triennium. A pilot industry committee was established, and plans to include this committee permanently within the IFAC structure, including the necessary constitutional amendments, were made and on the GA agenda at a later point. New co-sponsorship agreements have been made. A control research agenda task force was chaired by Françoise Lamnabhi-Lagarrigue, with the results published in the IFAC journal *Annual Reviews in Control*. The Publications Ethics Committee was established to deal with plagiarism issues, and its chair reports to the Pubcom chair, NAHS, which had previously been in the portfolio of IFAC affiliated journals, became an IFAC journal. The *IFAC Journal of Systems and Control* was established as a new IFAC journal. A wine stopper with the logo of the *IFAC Journal of Systems and Control* was distributed in the conference bags in Toulouse as a means to advertise the new journal. The IFAC- Elsevier agreement was extended through the end of 2026. The January 2017 death of *Automatica* EiC Roberto Tempo came as a shock to the IFAC community on both a personal and professional level. A session in his memory was planned for the evening of 10 July, in place of a plenary that Roberto Tempo had planned to present in Toulouse. Andy Teel, who had previously served as deputy EiC, was appointed as the new EiC. The journal impact factors have increased for all IFAC journals. Publications income has also increased. It should be noted that there is not yet data available for *IFAC Journal of Systems and Control* so it is not included in the income and impact factor figures. A new PoL editorial board is in place. PoL was moved to the Science Direct platform in 2016. Around 140 of the legacy proceedings (the paper-based books from the Laxenburg archives) are not yet on Science Direct due to copyright issues. The current Papercept agreement is through 31 Dec 2019. The task force about journal pub of conference papers, chaired by Ian Craig, recommended that for now IFAC should do nothing concerning this topic but closely monitor such developments at IEEE for possible future action.

Awards: New to the awards portfolio this triennium is the Manfred Thoma Medal, which is bestowed on a younger member of the IFAC community in honor of the late IFAC President Manfred Thoma. This year Andrew Chestnut, son of the first IFAC president Harold Chestnut,

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was present in Toulouse to present the Harold Chestnut Textbook Prize. New young author awards will be presented at all IFAC events

IFAC Finances are comprised of 30% from membership/NMO fees, and 70% from publications.

The IFAC story e-book. Available on congress thumb drive and as a gift package to officials and is in the final version on the IFAC website. The 2014-2017 chapter will be written by the end of 2017 and will be added to the e-book (available on the IFAC website), then IFAC has to plan how to maintain the book in the future.

IFAC receives an association support subsidy from the Austrian government (BMVIT). Dr. Ingo Hegny from the BMVIT was present in Toulouse. IFAC is thankful to the Austrian government for their long time support since 1978. The Secretariat, located in Laxenburg, Austria, is performing well.

More than 3400 participants are attending IFAC 2017, making this IFAC World Congress the largest IFAC event ever. IFAC 2017 has over 4000 submissions, with a 66% acceptance rate of full papers on PoL, 75% on abstracts. There are eight panel sessions including history, industrial applications, and education. There were new safety issues due to the situation in France/Europe, but Janan Zaytoon and the IFAC 2017 team felt that the lines were flowing and the situation was well-handled.

2023 IFAC World Congress will be held in Yokohama, JP, with Hajime Asama as IFAC's president for 2020-2023. IFAC works well and a big thank you is extended to the NMOs, who are all a pleasure to work with all, and Janan Zaytoon is grateful for their support of IFAC activities, as well as to all of the volunteers who contribute to IFAC activities.

Janan Zaytoon opened the floor to comments. China (Fei-Yue Wang) stated that he had been instructed by CAA, the Chinese NMO, to make a statement: "We demand IFAC as a professional organization to respect its constitution in the future, and we don't want an issue like Hong Kong to happen to CAA or any NMO in the future. The Hong Kong issue slipped through the IFAC office,

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Council, and the General Assembly. CAA considers this a tragedy of organizational activity.” (The statement was referring to Hong Kong being admitted as an IFAC NMO in 2014, which was later terminated.) Janan Zaytoon thanked Fei-Yue Wang for his comments and stated that if anything hurt China he takes it personally and apologizes for that. Concerning the issue of Hong Kong at the time, the council member from China accepted the vote, so it went from Council to the GA, and afterwards when there were issues IFAC had discussions with CAA to find a solution. IFAC tried its best, and feels this situation was resolved well. Fei-Yue Wang added that he felt that it was not a personal issue. CAA (Chinese NMO) has suggested that IFAC change its constitution to allow Hong Kong, and IFAC has to follow its constitution. IFAC is an organization governed by its constitution. Kurt Schlacher thanked Fei-Yue Wang for his comments and added that IFAC had investigated the situation. According to IFAC’s findings there is a contract between China and Hong Kong that states that Hong Kong can act independently in cultural relationships.

Vote on President’s Report: Moved by Belgium, seconded by Bulgaria, the president’s report was unanimously approved.

6. Technical Board Report: was presented by Tariq Samad, TB vice-chair, on behalf of TB chair Frank Doyle. During the past triennium there were 96 total events, up from 86 (2011-2014) and 82 (2008-2011.) Events per country statistics demonstrate global participation, with events in 25 countries in 2016. The majority of downloads per event are coming from Asian countries, especially in East Asia.

There is geographical diversity of TC members. The raw numbers only show the totals per country but do not factor in the number of TC member numbers from a country divided by the country’s population so the figures may be slightly misleading. Key items are included in the full report that was prepared by Frank Doyle. The social media report was not submitted by the social media editor but Linda Bushnell is taking over this role and reinvigorating the social media activities.

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There were some issues with World Congress papers that did not receive three or more reviews, and more quality verification for co-sponsored events is needed. There could be a young reviewer program to help develop good reviewing skills in junior control engineers and researchers.

Fei-Yue Wang (China): asked which countries comprise the 'east Asia' category. Tariq Samad said that he understood it to comprise: China, Japan, and South Korea, although there may be others. None of the categories comprises only one country. Jurek Sasiadek (Canada): asked if NMOs can have this presentation. Katharina Willixhofer (IFAC Secretariat) explained that the full reports are all posted in the "Documents" section on the IFAC website which NMOs and officials can access.

Janan Zaytoon called for a vote to approve the TB report. Moved by the Czech Republic, seconded by Austria, all voted in favour to approve the Tb report.

7. Executive Board Report: was presented by Sergio Bittanti who explained that the Executive Board contains a set of committees. He then handed over the floor to Kurt Schlacher, IFAC Secretary.

- Secretary's Report was presented by Kurt Schlacher.

The IFAC Secretariat handles the formal NMO membership applications. 48 is the lowest number of NMOs to sustain the current number of council members (12 ordinary members). Policy Committee created the membership kit, which is now on the IFAC website. The personnel situation in the Secretariat is stable with three employees (Harald Albrecht, Elske Haberl, and Katharina Willixhofer) each working 30 hours per week, and a cleaning service cleans the Secretariat premises each week. The annual Secretariat audit was carried out and there were not any problems. Administrative work event has included overseeing event evaluations, awards, IFAC Newsletter text collection, editing and layout, as well as distributing the Newsletter. New this triennium was arranging the design and production of the new Manfred Thoma Medal, which was awarded for the first time in Toulouse. The IFAC Event Service was established. Instead of providing contact information to event organizers as in the past the organizers now provide the keywords and the Secretariat sends out the announcements. Also new this triennium is the IFAC

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Cloud which has been used by the IFAC officers. The Secretariat organized the packing and transport of the paper proceedings from the Laxenburg archives to Elsevier's facility in the Netherlands for the scanning project. Secretariat staff members continue to assist officials, update the database, issue membership fee invoices and confirmations, and perform all of the standard secretarial and administrative tasks. They are also responsible for the various meeting minutes, and preparation for the General Assembly.

The Secretariat has supported the work of task forces, namely the History and Pilot Industry Task Forces. The new IFAC website was launched in 2015. There were minor problems earlier this year due to the webpage editors not working, but this issue has now been resolved. There are two servers, one in Laxenburg and the other at the Austrian Academy of Sciences in Vienna which is an additional service of Austria to IFAC. IFAC email forwarding addresses for existing accounts are to be set up.

As in the past there is no charge for receiving the IFAC Newsletter, which is distributed via email to affiliates. Paper newsletter copies are distributed to NMOs and events. There is cooperation with the BMVIT, which provides IFAC with an association support subsidy. IFAC's permanent Secretariat has been located in Laxenburg, Austria since 1978. Technical lectures in Austria are presented each year in conjunction with the annual informal officers meeting by experts from IFAC, which provides the Austrian control community with the opportunity to hear from internationally-renowned experts. In the recent triennium they were given by Frank Doyle (Graz, 2015), Frank Allgöwer (Vienna, 2016), and Hajime Asama (Vienna, 2017).

IFAC is on social media. There is an IFAC Youtube channel, and the minor problems with the blog (when it could be found via search engines but was not visible from the IFAC website) were solved.

Janan Zaytoon thanked Kurt Schlacher and the Secretariat staff for their work over the course of the triennium and handed over the floor to Ian Craig for the Membership Report.

- Membership Report was presented by Ian Craig.

He summarized the membership activities over the past triennium which included formalizing the new categories (Reduced-fee and Introductory), handling enquiries, recruiting new members/NMOs, and averting terminations. IFAC currently has 49 NMOs, and one of these NMOs, Algeria, faces termination this year due to unpaid membership fees. There was thought to be a second NMO in termination danger, Argentina, although it seems they have now found a solution to pay. (Note from Secretariat: in July 2017 they paid one membership fee, so there will not be a termination this year.) There have been contacts with people/organizations in Albania, Azerbaijan, Bosnia, Cyprus, Iran, Malaysia, New Zealand, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia.

Ian Craig said that he would recommend that IFAC look into the ease of membership fee payments as several NMOs have asked over the course of years to be able to make payments via credit card (currently only possible with bank transfer) and this option is still not available. He also recommends consolidation of reporting. Members of the IFAC community should use their contacts to recruit NMOs. Additionally Ian Craig feels that IFAC should evaluate the impact of the new fee categories. At this point it is felt that the reduced fee category may have prevented some NMOs from having to be terminated due to membership fees. Ian Craig expressed his thanks to officers and officials and NMOs for their assistance over the course of the triennium, and to Dawn Tilbury and the Policy Committee for creating the membership toolkit.

Janan Zaytoon added that there were observers from non NMO countries in attendance. They were requested to contact himself, the Secretariat, or the Policy Committee if they had any questions about IFAC and the membership process. He then handed the floor over to John Lygeros for the Treasurer's Report.

- Treasurer's Report was presented by John Lygeros.

He explained that the IFAC finances are comprised about 30% from membership fees and 70% from publications, with a bit of investment income. The Secretariat is the biggest expense. IFAC is a Swiss-based organization, so IFAC must file the accounts in CHF but income is in GBP and EUR. IFAC covers the legal and banking fees for the IFAC Foundation (a separate entity from the

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federation). IFAC covered some of the expenses for the Council and Related Meetings in Istanbul (2016). Unpaid membership fees and prepaid membership fees are included in the books. There were write-offs last year of the back unpaid membership fees of terminated NMOs. The scanning project costs were significantly less than what was originally estimated and budgeted. Sergio Bittanti thanked John Lygeros for his management of IFAC's finances. Sergio Bittanti opened the floor for discussion but there were no questions or comments.

Sergio Bittanti said that as EB chair he has appreciated all of the work from the various Executive Committee chairs. He provided some highlights.

**Awards:** The new Manfred Thoma Medal has been created and was awarded in Toulouse. Paul Van den Hof updated the awards guidelines. All information concerning the awards is available there, and the guidelines are very useful.

**Policy:** The new membership toolkit was created and is available on the IFAC website. It contains a FAQ and a sample letter of intent template.

**Pubcom:** IFAC has a publications portfolio of very healthy journals, with high impact factors. Some journals have high rejection rates but some of these rejections happen when out of scope submissions are received. The "legacy" proceedings were sent to Elsevier to be scanned and included on PoL. Bob Bitmead is the EiC of the new journal *IFAC Journal of Systems and Control*.

The Youtube channel, edited by Paolo Bolzern, is fully operational. It currently contains 48 videos and hopefully there will be additional videos added.

Sergio Bittanti expressed his thanks to the EB members and the Secretariat for their work over the course of the triennium. He opened the floor to discussion but there were no questions or comments..

Moved by the Netherlands, seconded by India, all voted in favor of the Executive Board report.



8. Membership Fee Information was presented by John Lygeros.

John Lygeros explained that IFAC is currently in a comfortable financial situation, although there are some challenges ahead with some uncertainties. The proposal is to maintain the current membership fees. There was no discussion, and no vote, as the explanation that there will be no change in membership fees was provided for informational purposes.

9. Proposed Constitutional Changes to Article 30 (a) and Article 24 (a); new Article 35 (f), and new Article 24 (f) was presented by Tariq Samad, with input from Janan Zaytoon.

Janan Zaytoon explained that the changes were proposed by the Pilot Industry Task Force, which was chaired by Tariq Samad. Tariq Samad explained that this process started four years ago with a task force with recommendations that were accepted by council. Tariq's group was launched on a pilot basis, reporting to the IFAC Council, for the 2014-2017 triennium. Its main goal was to draft constitutional amendments to establish a permanent IFAC Industry Committee. Some of the issues are visibility and perception in industry, which he says that IFAC does not always well-promote.

Some examples of future committee activities could include: Articulating IFAC's value to industry, possibly promoting IFAC's economic benefits to industry and enhancing visibility of IFAC within the industrial community. The research community knows IFAC, but higher levels in industry don't know IFAC the way they know IEEE. One method would be by showing success stories, as some IFAC events have had good industry results. Increasing the number of good IAA nominations would also be desirable. The IFAC journals should be encouraged to publish content that appeals to industry. The proposed new Industry Committee should be constituted under the Technical Board, and represented on Council in ex officio non-voting capacity.

The information concerning the proposed constitutional changes and the constitutional text to be amended had been sent to the NMOs in advance of the GA. Tariq Samad read the proposed text aloud and handed over the floor to Janan Zaytoon to carry out the vote. Janan Zaytoon thanked Tariq Samad and his task force for their work. Janan Zaytoon explained that the proposed

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amendments went through Council who recommends the proposed amendments to the GA. Jurek Sasiadek (Canada) said that he feels that there is enthusiasm for industry activities but IFAC should proceed with a bit of caution. IFAC needs to ask industry what they expect and need. Industry wants conferences with only abstracts accepted. Jurek Sasiadek (Canada) said that he does not want to dampen enthusiasm for industry activities, but he is concerned that this might compromise the quality of IFAC events. Tariq Samad clarified that there are currently IFAC events with lots of industry participants. He feels that no one wants to turn IFAC into a trade show but IFAC needs industry input in the right way. Janan Zaytoon added that, for many IFAC events, papers from industry can be submitted as abstracts to be included in the preprints. Jurek Sasiadek said that North American universities don't consider papers that are submitted as an abstract. Kevin Brooks (South Africa) introduced himself as an industry member from the Pilot Industry Committee. He feels that the issue of industrial participation is not "Us" vs "Them"...We are all in this together. He feels that there are "huge opportunities but huge threats. The world thinks we (control community) will replace people with robots." Extended abstracts are ok, they are not on PoL, and it doesn't affect the university situation. IFAC must get rid of an "us vs. them approach to control." Kevin Brooks stated that he is in favour of the proposed amendments. Fei-Yue Wang (China) said that IFAC should "open the door, improve the quality and make our community bigger). Chile: What is the spirit behind the new IFAC journal and industry? Tariq Samad mentioned that he was an IEEE journal editor for six years, spent 30 years of his career in industry and it was theoretical. This requires more discussion and IFAC will make sure it does not become only a trade publication. Laszlo Keviczky (Hungary) said that over the course of his career he had worked to introduce academic issues to industry. IFAC cannot lose anything with this, so such efforts should be tried. Germany and Japan, homes of the next World Congresses and IFAC presidents, have strong industry connections.

All proposed IFAC constitutional amendments were voted on together. Janan Zaytoon reminded delegates that the new proposed items were the items presented in green text. 2/3 of the GA must vote in favour for the amendments to be implemented. Moved by Belgium, seconded by Croatia, all voted to implement the proposed constitutional amendments.

10. Election Committee Report/Election was presented by Frank Allgöwer.
- 10.1 IFAC Officers (ref. Art. 16a of the Constitution) and
  - 10.2 Ordinary Members of the Council (ref. Art. 24 + 25 of the Constitution)

Frank Allgöwer explained that it is the privilege of the GA to vote for the IFAC officers and the members of the Council. These names were assembled by the Election Committee comprised of Frank Allgöwer, Dan Cho and Carlos Eduardo Pereira. The Council voted, including an e-vote for one position. The GA must vote on the slate of officers (presented) as a whole. TB vice chair Carlos Pereira will support Dan Cho in his role as officer. As the constitutional amendments were passed to create the Industry Committee the Council will include Tariq Samad as an ex officio non-voting member. The one error in the spelling on the posted list of proposed ordinary Council member Dawn Tilbury's last name was noted.

The lists of officers and Council members were voted on as a whole. Moved by Belgium, seconded by China, the lists were approved with one abstention (Switzerland).

11. Comments by the Incoming President were made by Frank Allgöwer.

Frank Allgöwer said that his goal is to keep IFAC strong and bring IFAC forward, and he will try to do his best, along with a whole team of people, for which he is very thankful. NMOs form IFAC and he is grateful to their past support and hoping for their future support. The IFAC Council is important to this organization. He feels that he is taking over the presidency at a time when IFAC is very healthy. IFAC is changing, all numbers are increasing, there are more journals, awards and events now than IFAC has ever had, also more people are attending IFAC events. There are also risks with this growth. People are sensitive to quality issues, which IFAC has to actively monitor. Quality is currently not a problem but it has to be maintained and strengthened. Also IFAC faces changes and challenges from the outside, such as industry 4.0, smart cars, etc. and so IFAC needs to move with the speed of the world around us. For example, IFAC sent documents for this GA four months ahead of the meeting (as stipulated), and in a company/industry this amount of time would be last year's product. The highlight of each triennium is the World Congress. IFAC 2020 will be held in Berlin and it is the goal of the German team to have a marvellous, high-quality event. The process for Germany to win the 2020 congress started ten years ago. Certain things require faster action. Dieter Westerkamp at VDI

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was also a big help and has now been promoted to new responsibilities within VDI. Frank Allgöwer said that he wants to be a president that listens to the community and is willing to consider things and ideas and bring them forward. He is looking forward to interacting with the members of the IFAC community during his term of presidential service.

12. 21<sup>st</sup> IFAC World Congress 2020 update (Berlin, DE) was presented by Klaus Janschek.  
The next World Congress is scheduled to take place from 12-17 July 2020. Jurek Sasiadek (Canada) asked about the long-promised new Berlin airport, which Klaus Janschek says the German team hopes is open by the time of the congress. The theme is “Automatic Control: Meeting Societal Challenges.” The German organizers plan to use some formats created by French colleagues such as the open invited tracks. Additionally plans will be made to present to the young generation and to school teachers teaching the control community members of the future. Industry panels will also be planned. Klaus Janschek feels that it will be hard to live up to the high standards set by the French colleagues in Toulouse.

The Congress location, Estrel, is close to public transport. This venue is not in the city center but with the nearby S-Bahn one can reach sites within 15 minutes. IFAC 2020 promotion is launching in Toulouse, with the website launching on 14 July 2017 at noon. A joint German-French event is planned after the Toulouse closing ceremony, with German beer and pretzels.

13. 22<sup>nd</sup> IFAC World Congress 2023 update (Yokohama, JP) was presented by Hajime Asama.

Hajime Asama introduced himself as the NMO representative from Japan who has most recently served as a CC chair. He thanked the IFAC community for the selection of Japan as the host of IFAC 2023 and said that he feels that it is a great honor to become IFAC president-elect. Yokohama, located in the greater Tokyo region, is the second-largest city in Japan. IFAC 2023 will be held in the venue Pacifico Yokohama, which is the largest convention complex in Japan from 9-14 July 2023. Yokohama and this venue are easy to reach from the Tokyo airports Haneda and Narita. Additionally great Japanese sights and tourist attractions are easily accessible from the venue. The concept of “WA”, which means “a harmony of traditional culture and innovative technologies” will be prominently featured. A list of organizing committee members

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was presented, which includes the son of the former IFAC president Sawaragi (who served as IFAC president from 1978-1981). A Yokohama promotional video was shown. Hajime Asama said that he and the Japanese team are looking forward to welcoming all IFAC 2023 attendees to Yokohama.

### 14. Any Other Business

Janan Zaytoon noted that the IFAC president has the privilege of presiding once over the General Assembly. He feels that the 2014-2017 triennium has had many interesting projects. There has been a lot of work but he has enjoyed the experience. He hopes that he has served community well, and extended his thanks for the support he has received. Janan Zaytoon feels that IFAC will be in good hands with the new leadership.

Janan Zaytoon also announced that the packaged thumb drive versions of the IFAC story eBook would be handed out by Steve Kahne at the close of the meeting. Janan Zaytoon gavelled the General meeting to an end at 16:09.

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