

International Committee

Minutes of the Meetings held in Taipei, Taiwan 13–20 July, 2014

Present:

Richard Forster	President	forster@olympiad.org.uk	Great Britain	2011–2014
Greg Lee	Host 2014	leeg@csie.ntnu.edu.tw	Taiwan	2010–2015
Bakhyt Matkarimov	Host 2015	bakhyt.matkarimov@gmail.com	Kazakhstan	2011–2016
Vladimir Kiryukhin	Host 2016	vkiryukhin@nmg.ru	Russia	2012–2017
Mohammad Ali Abam	Host 2017	abam@sharif.edu	Iran	2013–2018
Kresimir Malnar	Elected	malnar@hsn.hr	Croatia	2011–2014
Valentina Dagienė	Elected	valentina.dagiene@mii.vu.lt	Lithuania	2012–2015
Mārtiņš Opmanis	Elected	Martins.Opmanis@lumii.lv	Latvia	2012–2015
Ricardo Anido	Elected	ranido@ic.unicamp.br	Brazil	2013–2016
Eslam Wageed	Elected	eslamwageed@gmail.com	Egypt	2013–2016
Madhavan Mukund §	Executive Director	madhavan@cmi.ac.in	India	2011–2014 §Non-voting

1. Welcome

- Richard Forster welcomed the committee to the meeting.
- Greg Lee welcomed the committee to Taiwan.

2. Apologies

- Peter Taylor could not attend the meetings due to ill health.
- Fuad Hajiyev could not attend the meetings because he was involved with overseeing the International Physics Olympiad (IPhO), which was being organized concurrently in Kazakhstan. In his place, Bakhyt Matkarimov filled the role of the host representative from IOI-2015 at this set of meetings.

3. Urgent decisions regarding IOI-2014

- At the last minute, the Venezuelan team announced that it would be sending a single student without a Leader. The Mexican delegation had agreed to take care of the student. This was informed to the hosts after the student had already boarded his flight. Venezuela had originally registered a full delegation. This last minute change was due to funding that was promised to the team not coming through.

In consultation with the President and the Executive Director, the Chair of the Host Committee agreed to permit the student to participate.

It was pointed out that such a situation was not desirable, because the hosts could not assume responsibility for students who come without a Leader in circumstances such as medical emergencies requiring hospitalization.

There was a discussion on whether the IOI regulations need to be strengthened to rule out such a situation in the future. It was pointed out that the definition of a delegation requires a Leader, so the regulations are clear that any delegation must have a Leader. This could be deemed to be an exceptional situation where the composition of the delegation was changed at the very last minute, after the student was already on his way. Under normal circumstances, the current regulations would not permit a delegation to be registered without a Leader.

4. Confirmation of Minutes (IC meeting 21—23 February, 2014)

The minutes of the previous IC meeting were approved unanimously. As usual, a draft version of these minutes had been posted on <http://ioinformatics.org> after the initial round of email discussions and revisions within the IC, and have been publicly available for some months.

5. Matters arising

- Two reports promised by the ISC have yet to reach the IC. These concern the demarcation of responsibilities between the ISC and HSC and an internal report on the technical problems that arose during IOI-2013. These would be taken up during the presentation of the ISC report.
- The ISC was discussing a proposal to expand its membership and scope. The ISC were yet to finalize the proposal. Details would be presented during the ISC report to the IC.
- There was a suggestion to renew the practice of formally designating a member of the IC as an official liaison with the ISC to ensure that the IC was kept aware of new proposals being discussed within the ISC. It was agreed that this would be taken up after the new IC members were elected.
- A replica of the IOI trophy used for the top student award and the Distinguished Service Award had been commissioned in Taiwan. The replica was examined and deemed to be of good quality. The cost of production was around US\$ 315, which was considerably less than the cost of the previous set of trophies (US\$ 450 each). The cost was expected to reduce further for additional copies.
- The ISC had indicated that they would like to propose a candidate for the Distinguished Service Award. This would be taken up during the current set of meetings.
- At the last meeting, it was proposed to compile data about participation of countries across IOIs to help track the status of invited observers and identify countries that had missed multiple IOIs. This data has been compiled by the Executive Director for the period 2010–2013 and shared with the IC. Henceforth the table should be updated each year with the registration data for that year.

6. Report by President

Richard Forster reported on his activities since February 2014.

- The President informed the IC that his focus had been on streamlining the processes underlying the organization of IOI to ensure smooth functioning in the years to come.
- One item that has not been addressed adequately is to maintain effective communication with the GA between IOIs.
- As usual, the President has been involved in resolving and clarifying issues raised by the host organizers.

7. Report by Executive Director

Madhavan Mukund reported on his activities since February 2014.

- Data on country-wise participation in IOIs has been compiled from 2010 to 2013, by requesting the organizers of each year for registration data. Registration information prior to 2009 appears to be unavailable.

The data indicates that almost all countries are participating regularly and all invited observers in recent years, other than Uzbekistan, have reported with regular teams after being invited as observers.

Follow up action needs to be initiated with Uzbekistan to review their status and verify if they should be invited automatically to IOI-2015.

- Several enquiries have been received from new countries interested in joining IOI. Details are discussed under the agenda item **16**.
- There has been correspondence with potential hosts of IOI. Details are discussed under the agenda item **17**.

- Like the President, the Executive Director has been actively involved in resolving and clarifying issues raised by the host organizers.

8. ISC and ITWG Report

Martin Mareš, ITWG Chair, could not attend IOI-2014 due to ill health. Fredrik Niemelä, ISC Chair, reported on both the activities of the ISC and the ITWG.

- At suggestion of the ISC, this report was scheduled midway through the week, between the competition days, rather than at the end of the week, so that any corrective action needed could be discussed prior to the second day's competition.
- The ISC Chair reported that the first competition day had gone smoothly. There was a minor glitch during the "Results and Analysis" period after the competition when the competition test data was not available on the server. This was due to a misunderstanding and was fixed after some delay.
- There was a question concerning the document demarcating ISC and HSC responsibility. Apparently this document had been ready for some time, but had not reached the IC due to some email going astray. The ISC Chair sent the document to the Executive Director after the meeting and it has been shared with all IC members.

There was a discussion about the coordination between the ISC and HSC and whether there was any gap in communication. The ISC chair clarified that the HSC is always receptive to suggestions, but the ISC's role is advisory. The ISC is strongly involved in problem selection but all other aspects of the competition are handled by the HSC. If the ISC were required to monitor and supervise every aspect, this would be a major bottleneck in getting things done effectively.

- The ISC Chair noted that the ISC spends a lot of time on the tasks but relatively little attention is paid to the technical arrangements. Most of the operational hitches that have been encountered in recent years during the contest have been due to technical lapses rather than lacunae in the problems and test data.

The ISC strongly felt that the ITWG should be strengthened to play a role parallel to the ISC in overseeing the technical aspects of the competition. The suggestion was to expand the ITWG to a full-fledged committee called the International Technical Committee (ITC). The Chair of the ITC could be an elected member, replacing the current position of ITWG Chair. There should be representatives from past, present and future hosts, mirroring the composition of the ISC. The additional members of the ITC could be adjuncts appointed by the ISC.

The IC approved, in principle, to such an expansion. Accepting this proposal in full would require modifying the regulations. It was initially decided to propose such a regulation change to the GA later in the week. However, subsequently it was felt that too many changes were required and drafting the changes in the limited time available would not be feasible. It was agreed to request the GA to permit an ITC to be set up on an ad hoc basis for IOI-2015 and evaluate this experiment before recommending any permanent change.

- There was a question about the internal report on the technical shortcomings in IOI-2013, which was to be shared with the IC. Such a report is ready, but the ISC does not intend to share it in its present form. The ISC Chair will discuss the issue with the IC and revert back to the IC about preparing a version that can be shared.
- There was a discussion on inviting the ISC and ITC a few days before IOI to give them more time to examine and comment on the competition arrangements. While this would be very desirable, one of the major bottlenecks is that the actual competition floor would not be available till the last minute. Setting up the competition hall a few days in advance would incur significant additional costs for the hosts. Given this limitation, the utility of the ISC and ITC arriving early would be severely diminished.
- There was a discussion on the mailing list set up by the ISC to match trainers to countries requesting training. Some members of the GA had objected to the ISC undertaking this activity. The objections seem to stem from a misunderstanding of the ISC's role in this activity. The ISC was not directly involved in training any contestants, only in providing a service to match up those available to provide training with those in need of training.

- The ISC requested a regulation change relaxing the stipulation of having no contact with contestants after seeing the problems. Details are discussed under the agenda item **19**.
- As far as the ITWG is concerned, things are going smoothly.
 - The proposal to include Java as an official language has been investigated and it has been found to be technically feasible to do so without separate time limits. Memory limits are harder to enforce, so task setters will have to keep this in mind. A detailed report would be presented to the GA.
 - The IOI survey lists the languages of choice, in order of popularity, as C/C++, Pascal, Java, and then Python. The support for Python is significantly less than for Java. Python would be much harder to support as an official language without tinkering with time limits because there is big mismatch in execution times.
 - Work is continuing on a common format for packaging tasks. This would also be a crucial step towards developing an automated tool to verify integrity of tasks, including compliance of test data with constraints in task descriptions.

9. Report on *Olympiads in Informatics* and the IOI Conference

Valentina Dagiene reported on the IOI Conference and the latest volume of *Olympiads in Informatics*.

- Progress was reported with registering the journal in scientific databases. Registration with Scopus has been initiated, but the final decision is still awaited.
- This year 19 papers were submitted to the IOI Conference, of which 11 have been accepted. In addition, there are 2 invited papers and 3 country reports.
- In response to suggestions from the GA, contributed presentations would be restricted to a single day during IOI. On the second competition day, there would be an invited talk by Prof Mikko-Jussi Laakso from Turku University, Finland.

10. Awards and Trophies

- Fredrik Niemelä proposed Michal Forišek for the Distinguished Service award for his contributions to the ISC. The proposal was accepted unanimously.
- There was a discussion about shifting the production of trophies to Taiwan, based on the sample produced this year at a significantly lower cost than the previous year. The IC felt it would be good to ask Taiwan to continue to produce these trophies and Greg Lee agreed to oversee this. It was agreed that each year trophies for the best student and the DSA, along with one spare, should be produced and shipped to the current hosts.

11. Finances and Budget

Kim Schrijvers presented details of the IOI finances and budget.

- Many expenses were below budgeted values. The biggest underspend was the IOI workshop, which was not held.
- As has been the practice, the money allocated but not spent by the ISC and ITWG was accounted for as being spent and indirectly sponsored by the host institutions of ISC and ITWG members.
- The travel support for the invited speaker at the IOI-2014 conference will appear in the accounts for 2015 because the expense was incurred after the end of the financial year being reported.
- The travel budget for the President and Executive Director has been increased, taking into account the locations of the new individuals taking over these positions.
- The budget for Communications has been increased to € 3000.

- A budget of € 2000 has been sanctioned to make the live broadcast more professional. This will primarily be used to design a better scoreboard.

There was a suggestion to show the contest floor in the background during the live broadcast. It was noted that this could be achieved using a green screen. The cost of the green screen would be about € 1000, but it would also involve carrying more equipment to IOI for the broadcast, so the feasibility would have to be evaluated.

There is also a hidden cost of about US\$ 500 for the communication charges to host the live stream. These are currently being borne by the IOI hosts and should be made explicit in the budget in the future.

The camera and other equipment used for the broadcast is being currently provided gratis by individuals. It was suggested that this should be recorded as an indirect sponsorship, like the unutilized ISC and ITWG funds.

- The workshop budget was carried forward to the next year. Mile Jovanov from Macedonia has promised to organize a workshop. (See agenda item **18**.)
- The budget was approved unanimously.

12. Report on IOI-2014

Greg Lee presented a report on IOI-2014.

- IOI-2014 had 81 official teams and 2 invited observers. There were 311 official contestants and 158 Leaders and Deputy Leaders.

83 countries had registered. Albania and Kuwait withdrew very late. Venezuela sent a delegation consisting of only one student, without a Leader. Albania and Venezuela cited financial difficulties.

Overall, there were 75 teams with 4 contestants, 4 with 3 contestants, 1 with 2 contestants and 1 with 1 contestant.

- Other attendees include 10 IC members, 7 ISC members, the Executive Director, 75 Guests and 3 Invited Guests.
- 115 high school volunteers were involved, along with over 75 faculty from the university and several full-time and part-time university staff.
- The selection process for volunteers took place between October, 2013 and February, 2014. 917 students and 67 teachers applied, out of whom 100 students and 18 teachers were selected. All volunteers underwent a 3 day training programme from July 10–12, 2014.
- The main activities planned during the week went off smoothly. This included the opening and closing ceremonies, two competition days, two excursion days and the IOI Conference.
- The main sponsors and hosts of IOI-2014 were the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Science and Technology. The event was co-hosted by the Taipei City Government. The main organization in charge of the event was the National Taiwan Normal University (NTNU).

Private sponsors included Acer (contest servers and laptops), Chunghwa Telecom (wifi, cloud service, volunteer expenses), Cisco Taiwan (network equipment, VIP dinner), Intel Taiwan (IOI conference, teacher conference), Schneider Electric (UPS) and EasyCard Corporation (Taipei MRT Card).

Some of the private sponsorship was organized in the form of direct funding for excursions and dinners to reduce bureaucracy.

- Some minor incidents and special situations were reported.
 - One student with a respirator required a single room and was provided a separate room.
 - Some students were allergic to specific foods.
 - There were some minor illnesses reported amongst students.
 - One contestant accidentally damaged the false ceiling in his hotel room. The delegation was informed and they agreed to pay for the damages.

- The student hotel reported an alarmingly high rate of lost key cards and started charging US\$ 10 per key for replacements.
- Some aspects of the organization that worked well included:
 - The use of tablets and the IOI app for translation of clarification requests.
 - The use of RFID tags to keep track of participants on the different buses.
 - Having the venue in the city centre.
 - Adhering to schedule for all events.
- Some areas where things could have been better included:
 - Arrangements for landing visas.
 - Glitches with the translation system.
 - Better utilization of the tablet.

13. Report on IOI-2015

Bakhyt Matkarimov presented a report on IOI-2015, to be held in Kazakhstan.

- The venue has been changed from Astana to Almaty. The new venue will be the Kazakh National University.

Almaty is the largest city in Kazakhstan. It is the former capital, located in an attractive mountain area. Compared to Astana, it has a larger local pool of human resources (in terms of English speaking volunteers etc) and is better connected by air, internationally.
- Kazakh National University is the oldest university in Kazakhstan and is named after the renowned medieval scientist and philosopher al-Farabi. Founded in 1934, it is located on a 100 hectare campus with 20,000 students, 3000 staff, 14 faculties and 2 national level laboratories.
- The proposed dates are July 19–26, 2015. The schedule of activities for the week will be along conventional lines, as in previous IOIs. Regarding other Olympiads, IMO-2015 ends on July 15, so there is no clash, at least with IMO.

The proposed dates fall after the month of Ramadan. However, it was noted that the arrival date is only a couple of days after the traditional feast to mark the end of Ramadan fasting.

Kazakh National University would prefer to have the event in July rather than August, so there may not be much flexibility in moving the dates.
- Contestants will be housed on the campus of Kazakh National University in a new building that has been completed but will be opened for use only in 2015. Leaders, observers and guests will be accommodated in a hotel close to the campus. The Leaders' hotel is a short walk from the campus. A shuttle bus service will be organized to transport Leaders between the hotel and the venues on campus.
- The contest venue will be either the al-Farabi Library or the Internet Centre. Both locations have advantages and disadvantages. Among the important considerations are the availability of emergency power backup for systems and effective air-conditioning.
- GA meetings will be held at the al-Farabi library. Meeting rooms for the IC and ISC will also be arranged at the al-Farabi library. The IOI conference will be held in the Leaders' hotel.
- The opening and closing ceremonies will be held in the Dzholdasbekov Palace of Students within Kazakh National University.
- The excursions during IOI are planned to the mountains around Almaty. Transportation will be by bus.
- The overall organization remains under the Ministry of Education and Science. Operationally, the event will be jointly coordinated by the Daryn Centre, a state enterprise with considerable experience in conducting national and international olympiads, and the host institution, Kazakh National University.

- A Scientific and Technical Committee (STC) will be set up for IOI. It is proposed to invite specialists from outside Kazakhstan to join the national STC and share their expertise.
- Overall, there is a lot of experience in Kazakhstan with hosting Olympiads in different subjects. In informatics, Kazakhstan has hosted the annual Eurasian Olympiad in Informatics and the International Zhautykov Olympiad in Informatics (IZhO). This year, the Asia-Pacific International Olympiad (APIO-2014) was hosted by Kazakhstan.
- The IC emphasized the importance of allocating clear responsibilities for various technical roles, such as problem setting and organizing the hardware.
Also, there should be a secretariat in place to respond reliably and promptly to email enquiries about arrangements, registration, visas etc.
- It is planned to introduce Java as an official language at IOI-2015. This has been discussed by the ISC and shown to be feasible. The ISC would present this proposal directly to the GA.
There is also a proposal to eliminate all printing during the contest. The main concern is with delivering a printout to the wrong contestant during the contest.
- The main funding for IOI-2015 is through the Ministry of Education and Science. This funding has been approved in principle, but the exact amount will be confirmed only in December.
Efforts are also underway to obtain private sponsorship.
- Tenders for computers and other equipment to be used in IOI-2015 will be issued in January, 2015. Government regulations do not permit this process to start before that. The IC pointed out that this would be a very large tender and there may be operational difficulties in completing the process in time. The response was that the backup plan is to borrow existing equipment from the university.
- The guest rate will be US\$1500, like this year.
The organizers were requested to investigate the possibility of special guest rates for participants who may come for the IOI Conference and wish to spend only part of the week at IOI.
- The IC reminded the organizers to make suitable provisions for delegations that may arrive early or leave late.
- Overall, the IC expressed concern that many details about the arrangements for IOI-2015 are still unclear with less than a year to go before the event. The organizers of IOI-2015 were requested to provide a monthly progress report to the IC.
- There was a discussion about the dates for the IC and ISC meetings in early 2015. The proposed range of dates was from late February to early March. A joint IC-ISC meeting was strongly recommended. It was finally decided to hold the meetings from Friday, February 27 to Sunday, March 1, 2015. The arrival date in Kazakhstan would be Thursday, February 26, 2015 and the departure date would be Monday, March 2, 2015.

14. Report on IOI-2016

Vladimir Kiryukhin presented a report on IOI-2016, to be held in Russia.

- IOI-2016 will be held in Innopolis, a new IT hub being built near Kazan. Innopolis is about 30–40 minutes by road from Kazan. Kazan has international flights from Europe and Asia as well as several connecting flights via Moscow and other major cities in Russia.
- Construction of the buildings in Innopolis is proceeding on schedule and all facilities are expected to be ready well in time for IOI-2016.
- The Russian Government has issued a Directive in April, 2014, signed by the Prime Minister of Russia, formally recognizing that IOI-2016 will be hosted by Kazan Federal University and assuring financial and administrative support from the federal government for the event.
- Funding of US\$ 1 million each will be provided by the Russian government and the Republic of Tatarstan. In addition, some funding is also expected from Kazan Federal University.

- According to the Government Directive, the Organizing Committee will be constituted by August, 2014. This will typically consist of heads of federal and regional executive agencies as well as rectors of participating universities.

The Organizing Committee will then set up working groups for various activities associated with IOI-2016, such as administration. Olympiad preparations, programme committee, technical support, out of competition activities, assistance for the IC and recruitment and training of volunteers.

15. Report on IOI-2017

Mohammad Ali Abam presented a report on IOI-2017, to be held in Iran.

- At the last IC meeting in February, 2014, the following items had been completed.
 - A budget of approximately US\$ 1 million had been sanctioned by the government.
 - CMS was being used in the training camp for the Iranian IOI team.
 - The domain www.ioi2017.org had been registered.
- Since then, the following progress has been made.
 - The Steering Committee is now official and has held its first meeting. The Steering Committee includes the following members.
 - * 4 deputy ministers: the prime deputy minister and the finance, security and logistics deputies.
 - * Dr. Hossein Shojaei, chairman of SAMPAD, an organization in the ministry of education for development of exceptional talents.
 - * Mr. Hasan Saei Dehghan, chairman of YSC, an organization in SAMPAD running national olympiads. Mr. Dehghan was also a member of the executive committee of IPhO-2007 that was held in Iran.
 - * Mr. Hossein Mirzaei, former chairman of YSC and a member of the executive committee of IPhO-2007.
 - * Dr. Mohammad Ghodsi, chairman of INOI National Committee (INOI-NC) from 1991 to 2010, chairman of the ACM-ICPC Tehran site from 1999 to the present, team leader of Iran at IOI 10 times, and a former member of the ISC and IC.
 - * Dr. Ghasem Jaberipour, member of INOI-NC and Iran team leader or deputy leader at IOI 9 times.
 - * Dr. Hamid Zarrabizadeh: member of INOI-NC, Iran team leader at IOI once, and the executive director of the ACM-ICPC Tehran site in 2012 and 2013.
 - * Dr. Mohammad Ali Abam, chairman of INOI-NC from 2011 to the present, Iran team leader at IOI twice, and chairman of the scientific committee of the ACM-ICPC Tehran site in 2012 and 2013.
 - * Mr. Ali Sharifi Zarchi, member of INOI-NC and member of ISC.
 - The following decisions were made at the first meeting of the Steering Committee.
 - * YSC should prepare a general plan to attract sponsorship by the end of the summer.
 - * YSC should prepare a report on candidate locations for accommodating contestants and leaders before IOI-2015.
 - * The competition dates have to be fixed. This requires negotiation with the ministry of internal affairs because presidential elections are scheduled to be held in Iran in 2017.
 - Development has started on a website wiki.inoi.ir to archive national exams and run online contests.
 - A delegate from YSC is in Taipei to prepare a video of the events during IOI-2014.

16. New countries

- Two new countries, the Dominican Republic and the Philippines, have been invited as Observers to IOI-2014.
- Applications from Lebanon and Panama for Invited Observer status at IOI-2014 were deferred to 2015 because they have not yet conducted national competitions. All other aspects of their applications are in place and they may be invited in 2015 if they show evidence of a national competition having taken place.
- Puerto Rico had applied for Observer status in 2013. The IC had determined that Puerto Rico does not qualify to participate as a separate country at IOI according to the guidelines laid out in S2.1 of the IOI regulations. This was communicated to the representative from Puerto Rico. A request for reconsideration was received, citing Puerto Rico's participation in IMO and other international events. Notwithstanding these precedents cited by Puerto Rico, the IC felt that the guidelines in S2.1 should be respected, and hence Puerto Rico's application cannot be accepted under the current circumstances.

17. Future Hosts, Candidate Hosts and Potential Hosts

- Azerbaijan had lost out to Iran last year in the bid to host IOI in 2017. At the time, Azerbaijan had indicated that their bid should be carried forward to 2018. However, a few weeks before IOI-2014, Azerbaijan withdrew their bid for IOI-2018.
- The other bid received for IOI-2018 was from Japan. The Japanese delegation made a presentation to the IC about their plans to host IOI-2018, including details about the venue, infrastructure and organizations involved. There was a discussion about finances, committees, dates and guest fees. The IC agreed unanimously to accept the bid and to appoint Japan as the Candidate Host for 2018.
- Singapore has indicated an interest in bidding for IOI-2019.
- Croatia is interested in bidding for IOI-2020 or IOI-2021. The hotel where Croatia proposes to host IOI would like a confirmation 5 years in advance. However, the IC confirms Candidate Hosts only 4 years in advance. Croatia were advised to wait for IC approval before making any bookings. It was pointed out that it would be unfair to other countries that may be planning bids to anomalously announce a Candidate Host 5 years in advance.
- Two other countries that have expressed an interest in hosting IOI in the near future are Bolivia and Jordan.

18. IOI Workshop

- Mile Jovanov from Macedonia has volunteered to host a workshop in 2014–2015. He indicated that he could take responsibility for the local arrangements, but he would need assistance from other members to fix the academic programme. An announcement would be made in the GA regarding this, seeking volunteers to frame the academic programme of the workshop.

19. Regulation changes

- The regulation changes approved by the GA during IOI-2013 had been written out in detail and circulated in advance of IOI-2014. These were voted on and approved in the first meeting of the GA.
- The ISC requested a relaxation of the third point under Appendix A3.13 in the IOI regulations forbidding any contact between ISC members and contestants after seeing the tasks. The ISC argued that this was unrealistic and also logistically impossible to enforce. The proposal was to replace this by a weaker constraint forbidding any form of training after seeing the tasks. A revised regulation to this effect was drafted and presented to the GA for a vote.

- There was a discussion about the definition of a Contestant in S2.5. Some IC members felt that the first clause about being "...enrolled at a school for secondary education, in the Country they are representing, ..." was contradicted by the final sentence "Students who are studying abroad may represent the Country of their nationality." In the end, it was agreed that the intention was clear and that changing the wording would only cause confusion. Hence, no change was recommended.

20. Israel proposal to allow official off-site participation in IOI

- In the final GA meeting at IOI-2013, Israel had proposed the creation of an official mechanism for countries to participate off-site in IOI if they were not able to attend in person due to circumstances beyond their control, such as diplomatic difficulties with the host country. It was agreed that the ISC and IC would evaluate this proposal and report back to the GA during IOI-2014.
- The ISC reported to the IC that it had examined this proposal and was confident that a technical solution could be worked out for such a scenario. Among other things, this would require the ISC to appoint a technical observer to oversee the contest at the remote location, so such a request must be made several months ahead.
- The IC discussed the request and considered various aspects.
 - Making such an exception once could lead to more requests. There are several reasons why countries may not be able to participate, including finances, visa issues, worries about travelling to certain parts of the world It would be difficult to draw the line between what is acceptable and what is not.
 - Gathering together is an important part of IOI. The fact that IOI has a special status, in that the competition allows a technological solution for remote participation, should not create a situation where the social aspect of IOI is compromised.
 - Even if the competition is conducted synchronously at the remote site, it is difficult to ensure that contestants take part on an equal footing. For instance, remote participants would not have undergone the stress of travelling to a new country and being immersed in a new culture shortly before the contest.

At the end of the discussion, the IC strongly recommended against allowing formally allowing remote participation in IOI. (There were 8 votes in favour of this decision, 1 against and 1 abstention.)

21. Collection and management of IOI-related data

- At the last IC meeting, it was agreed that the competition data made available by the hosts should reside jointly with the Office of the Executive Director and with the ISC.
- Since this data was likely to be voluminous, a suitable technical solution should be found to store the data.
- It was also important to ensure that the data should be in a format that would allow easy retrieval at a later date.

22. Other business

- There was a discussion on whether to make second team from the host country an official part of the competition.
 - One opinion was that by making the second team official, the possibilities for medals for the host country improve, which might be useful to convince local and government bodies to support the event.
However, it was pointed out that the effect may be the opposite. If the host country's performance is poor even with additional participants, it could have a negative impact.

- There was some discussion about giving medals to the second team, but declaring that these were “unofficial”. It was felt that this could create confusion at a later stage about the authenticity of a medal.
- A compromise solution would be to allow the second team to receive special medals at the closing ceremony, organized by the host country.

This would be consistent with the decision taken in the IC meeting in February 2013 to disallow the presentation of external awards during the closing ceremony, but allow the host country to propose and present special awards related to the competition.

A vote was taken on this proposal and was passed by a simple majority (5 for, 2 against, 1 abstention).

- Madhavan Mukund has completed 3 years as Executive Director and has indicated that he wishes to step down. Margot Phillipps from New Zealand has expressed a willingness to take on this responsibility. She has been attending IOI since 2006 and has administrative experience in other professional organizations. The IC unanimously approved the appointment of Margot Phillipps as Executive Director for the period 2014–2017. The IC also approved an increase in the travel budget for the Executive Director given the extra cost of travelling from New Zealand.
- Eslam Wageed had requested a private URL to test out an improved design for the IOI website. There appeared some confusion between Martin Mareš, who maintains the IOI nameserver, and Mārtiņš Opmanis, who maintains the current IOI website, about what needs to be done to set up such a private URL. The IC strongly recommended that this should be resolved at the earliest through discussions.
- There was a suggestion that the work done by IC members should be presented more visibly to the GA so that IC members could be held accountable to, and claim credit from, the body that elected them. It was agreed, however, that the IC was a committee and that any activity of the IC should be reported as a collective activity.

It was decided that in future GA meetings, the report presented by the Executive Director would be renamed the “IC Report” and would reflect the work done by the IC, rather than just by the Executive Director.

- There was a suggestion to set up a YouTube channel for IOI with training videos, curated by the ISC. The IC felt that this would be a useful activity, but more discussion was needed on how to implement it.
- A new President and a new Executive Director will take charge after IOI-2014. There was some concern about effecting a smooth handover of documents and information to the new office bearers. The current President and Executive Director assured the IC that they would coordinate with the incoming members to ensure a smooth transfer of responsibilities.