

IC Meeting - Minutes

February 1-5, 2019 Tehran, Iran

Nivaran Palace Hotel

Participants:

Krassimir Manev	President	Bulgaria	2014-2017
Vladimir Kiryukhin	Host 2016	Russia	2012-2017
Mohammad Ali Abam	Host 2017	Iran	2013-2018
Fuad Hajiyev	Host 2019	Azerbaijan	2015-2020
Sun Teck Tan	Host 2020	Singapore	2016-2021
Ben Burton	Elected	Australia	2014-2017
Krešimir Malnar	Elected	Croatia	2015-2018
Mile Jovanov	Elected	Macedonia	2015-2018
Mathias Hiron	Elected	France	2016-2019
Ricardo Anido	Executive Director	Brazil	non-voting
Eljakim Schrijvers	Treasurer	The Netherlands	non-voting

1. Welcome

The president welcomed all members and introduced Mohammad, who also welcomed everyone to Iran and wished a pleasant and fruitful stay.

2. Apologies

Seiichi Tani could not attend, due to matters in Japan. He will send the Host Report by email, to be presented by a representative. Eslam Waggel could not attend, as he did not get permission to leave Egypt at this time.

3. Voting procedure for IC

Ben Burton suggested that voting in the IC should be taken with simple majority, instead of 2/3 of the vote, to lessen the probability of the IC not reaching a decision. As this will require a change in the Regulations, which would take effect only after approved by the GA, it was decided that in this Meeting the vote will be taken by simple majority, but at the end of the Meeting the IC will take a vote, using 2/3 of the votes, to validate all previous decisions. All voted in favour of changing the voting procedure.

4. Confirmation of Minutes

Next item was the confirmation of Minutes of the IC meetings and of the GA meetings during the IOI2016, in July 2016). With two abstentions, the Minutes were confirmed.

5. Procedural propositions

- Ben Burton proposed that the IC uses a Bug Track System to document and discuss matters arising. He already implemented and made available a tracking system to all IC members, and populated the system with some items. Ben presented a brief tutorial on using the bug track system to the IC members. Everyone voted in favour of adopting such a system.
- Mathias Hiron proposed that the IC is split into Working Groups during the meeting, to better tackle the problems. Everyone agreed in principle, but decision of which groups will be formed is postponed, as most matters need voting.

6. Report by President

Krassimir Manev described communication with the UAE, which is interested in becoming an active member of the IOI. He directed the person to contact the ED to get more information on how to be part of the IOI community. He also informed about a proposal of changing the Executive Director Office, maybe integrating it into the President's Office, maybe changing the ED title to the title of "Secretary of the IOI", better reflecting the work of the ED office. It was decided that further discussion is needed, and a more complete plan of the changes.

7. Report by Executive Director

Ricardo Anido reported few messages inquiring about the IOI. One request by the Philippines was for IOI to issue a letter attesting the entity organizing the team from Philippines was the "official organization" in Philippines "representing" the IOI. It was decided that the ED could write a letter attesting that the organization was the one that had been attending the IOI for the past years, without making it the "official" entity representing the IOI, as this was considered as an interference with the country. This point raised a discussion about the necessity of maintaining a database of the entities organizing the national contests and selection of teams in each country. Mile Jovanov and the President will propose some action in this direction.

8. IOI'2016 Final Report

Vladimir Kiryukhin reported on the organization aspects of the IOI2016. Eljakim Schrijvers reported on the registration fees of IOI2016. Attended IOI2016 in Kazan: 80 official teams, five observing countries. Invitations were sent to 84 countries. A total of 450 laptops were purchased, plus 60 machines for evaluation. There were 194 volunteers, chosen from 350 applicants. Total budget was 1.5 million Euros. Eljakim Schrijvers reported that IOI2016 received 83 registration fees.

9. Report of Future Hosts

9.1 Report on IOI 2018 – Seiichi Tani (presented by Tetsuchi Ito)

IOI2018 will be held in Tsukuba City, 65 min from Tokyo (45 min from the Airport). Competition hall will be in a sports gymnasium, 1320 m2. Leaders and guest in hotel, closed to translations/competition hall, accommodation for students provided by two organizations. Students will need transportation, but this has been accounted for. Full plan of IOI2018 already prepared in Japanese.

9.2 Report on IOI 2019 - Fuad Hajiyev

Fuad informed that the preparations are proceeding. Ben Burton asked about the situation of Armenia. Fuad informed that the organizers will pay for one parent from each Armenian contestant to accompany the students. Ben also asked if the technical team has already been selected. Fuad answered the team will be almost the same from Kazan, plus a few local personnel. Krešimir asked about the weather, if it is too hot in summer. Fuad answered that the average temperature in August is 33-34 degrees.

9.3 Report on IOI 2020 - Sun Teck Tan

The IOI2020 will start one day earlier than previously planned, from 21th July to 28th July. Taxis will be used on arrival so that teams do not have to wait. The facilities of the NUS will be used unless more funds are found.

10. Corporate sponsorship of IOI from Acer

Eljakim explained that some changes happened within Acer; in particular, the Acer representative changed. We still have not been able to sign the contract. It was decided that

Eljakim will write to Acer and countries involved (IOI2018-IOI2020) to ask what is the status and get answers in one month.

11. Changes to the regulations

11.1 Rename SC to HSC.

SC was named so before the introduction of the ISC, better to change the name.

Unanimously approved.

11.2 Rename ISC and ITC.

Unanimously approved.

11.3 Make ISC / ITC members eligible for Distinguished Service Award.

Unanimously approved.

11.4 Clarify eligibility rules for contestants.

Everyone agreed the rule should be clarified. Changes approved, but there was a suggestion to ask feedback from other countries, so that different education systems are contemplated in the change. Old wording: "during the period September to December". New wording: "for the majority of the period 1 September to 31 December".

11.5 Clarify status of host team B.

The current text is: "The second team will participate on an equal footing with all other teams, but will not be ranked in the final results used for the awarding of medals". Amended, after the end, in the new version: "and are not officially considered to be medallists."

Unanimously approved.

11.6 Remove the guest-like Observer role from the regulations

This change was proposed by Ben. Currently the regulations have two observer roles: Invited Observers (who are new countries to the IOI, and whose expenses are covered by the host), and plain old Observers (who are like guests - they are extra people brought by a delegation, and they have to pay the guest fee). Since we already have the roles of Guest (i.e., accompanying personnel, with no role in the competition) and also Adjunct to the Team (extra delegates who have an active role such as translators or chaperones), there seems little need for the second type of Observer nowadays, and it is probably a good idea to remove this role from the regulations to avoid confusion. Krassimir is against removing it, because some countries use this role for translators also, to be able to enter the GA during translation. Vladimir notes that to sponsors it is strange to be Observers. The proposed changes were approved.

11.7 Clarify whether Invited Observers pay the registration fee

Proposed change to E5.9.1: "The Registration Fee must be paid by each country that participates through a National Delegation." Unanimously in favour of Observers not paying registration.

11.8 Clarify whether Invited Observers can vote in the GA

Unanimously in favour of one vote for each National Delegation (Observers do not vote).

11.9 Ease restrictions on flags

Krassimir explained that the restrictions on flags were introduced by Zide when President. Krassimir thinks the problem is not the flag, but the behaviour of students, who obstruct other students with flags. Several versions for a new rule were discussed. The vote was taken on the principle for the rule, Ben will implement wording later. (i) Having a rule: 7 in favour, 2 against. (ii) The rule should specify "large objects", "any objects", or objects that obstruct other people" in the rule: 7 in favour, 2 against. The rule should specify "unless invited by the Host Country": 1 for, 7 against, 1 abstention. The rule, footnote or explanation should specify "such as flags or mascots": 9 in favour.

12. Confirmation of off-site competition

Canada and USA formally applied for participating in the off-site contest. Canada is concerned that they will not be able to get the entry visa because it must be processed through Washington. Mohammad said that they will be able to process it somewhere else. Since Canada does have diplomatic relations with Iran, the IC decided not to allow Canada to use this rule to participate in the off-site competition. Vote: 9 votes against allowing Canada to use the rule. USA also asked to participate in the off-site competition. Mohammad said that Iran accepted to process the visas for a “longer” contestant list from USA (list of possible students that could be selected). Ben argued that this is a temporarily problem, but we should postpone the decision until Iran Foreign Ministry guarantees that the visas will be processed. Ben: issue that has been visible for the GA for the last four years, would like to show the GA that IC considered the situation in its broader aspects. Vote: 0 in favour of allowing the participation of USA in the off-site competition, 8 against, 1 abstention. After some more discussion, the IC decided that Israel should decide if they will participate in the off-site competition by 1st March. Vladimir informed that Russia will provide certificates for the off-site participants, signed by the President of IOI.

13. Visiting facilities of IOI'2017

IC members visited the hotels, Contest hall, GA meetings hall, IC and ISC/HSC meetings rooms, Opening and Closing ceremony venue(s), Conference venue.

14. Report on IOI-2017 – Mohammad Abam

After the visit to the IOI2017 infrastructure and comments on the preparations for the contest, Mohammad answered several questions from IC members. About the contest machines and systems: Computers will be mini-machines, with external 20in displays. Programming environment is ready to be published, live version will be provided for students to practice. 328 desks planned in the two floors. 450 machines will be available (60 for judging system). Ben suggested that the organizers plan for extra desks so that it is faster to setup a new machine to replace a student's failed machine. Six servers will be used for translations room, 30 printers. The contest will use CMS, some improvements are being done, with cooperation with Stefano Maggiolo. Implementing also a Task Preparation System, integrated with CMS, and improvements to the Translation System. Ben commented that it would be good to show to HTC representatives of Japan and Azerbaijan the systems being used and have a hands-on experience while they are here. Mohammad also showed the program. Some small adjustments on the schedule times have been suggested. After some discussion about the registration dates, it was recommended that the deadlines are: May 15th to guarantee that visa will be on time; after that, Host will try their best, but there is a risk that the participating country will not get the visa on time.

Mohammad also answered a mix of other questions from IC members: Registration system opens when? Arrival/Departure points? Early arrivals accommodation? Visitors' fee? Internet access outside quarantine times? Misplaced/delayed luggage? Translation computers or laptops? Meal arrangements? Nomination of GA Chairman for IOI-2017.

15. Budget

The Treasurer presented the current balance (EU 124.398,00) and expenses (EU 1.182,84) so far. Eljakim proposed to hire someone to update the website (graphics, style). Krassimir would like to review the idea of a wiki, with information from each country (about training, curricula, etc.). Mathias commented that there were some difficulties on the technical side (semantic wiki), but would be happy to work on this issue. Kim also proposes to hire someone to collect and prepare a report on good practices in training from the most

successful countries: materials for training courses, task sets used for different subjects, etc. The discussion was postponed.

16. New Countries

The Executive Director informed that only two countries manifested interest in participating: United Arab Emirates and Mozambique. UAE seems more promising, as the contact is from an organization that is interested in science, but have no experience on olympiads. For Mozambique the contact is the same that wrote last year, was sent information on what he should do to participate, but did nothing, wrote basically the same letter this year. Both countries were sent the standard letter explaining the IOI goals and what actions a country should take to be invited as Observer. As there were no submissions with enough information, no country was approved as Observer. Mile commented that it would be good to clarify the status of "invited guest countries" (as happened in IOI016, El Salvador, Honduras, invited by the host country and not from the IC) from official observers.

17. IOI Workshops

In the IC meetings in August 2016 there was a proposal to have an IOI Workshop, in April 2017, with the theme "From talent to an IOI medal". Krešimir Malnar, responsible for the organization of this workshop reported that, due to lodgement prices, the venue of the workshop has moved from Dubrovnik to Zagreb, to cut costs. The same hotel used for the IC meetings for IOI2007 will be used for the Workshop. The IC has still no confirmation from ITC if they will have their planned workshop, with focus in building and testing the IOI software infrastructure, as approved in the August 2016 Meeting.

18. Potential Hosts

The President informed that he received a message from China, stating that the proposal made during IOI2016 was not "official", and it will not progress. The President is worried that no country will submit a proposal, and so it was decided that he will send a letter to the community asking for proposals to host the IOI in 2021.

19. Awards and Recognitions, Certificates for leaving IC/ISC/ITC members

The President presented a proposal for a "recognition award", different from the Distinguished Service Award. For that, he proposed a "points system", based on participation in IOIs, in its committees, in chairing IOIs, etc. Different points are assigned to different roles for each year (IC, ISC, ITC, Chair); Technical persons (ISC, ITC) are ranked separately from Leaders Chair and IC. Ben argued that time alone is not a good measure for "distinguished service", but would be in favour to a "long service" award. Mile is in favour of awarding and recognizing more people. No vote was taken on the recognition award, the IC agreed to discuss more the matter.

Mohammad suggested that Mohammad Ghodsi is nominated for DSA. He was IC member from 1996 to 1999, leader for 10 years, two years of the ISC, chair of the Iran Olympiad for more than 20 years. Ben noted that by regulations the IC should have asked the GA for nominations for the DSA. The IC then decided first to vote if there will be a DSA for this year, with nominations from the IC: 8 were in favour, 1 against.

Were nominated for the DSA: Ghodsi by Mohammad, and Göktürk Üçoluk, from Turkey, by Krassimir. In favour of Göktürk for DSA: 8 in favour, 1 abstention; in favour of Ghodsi for DSA: 8 in favour, 1 abstention. The President also proposed to award Ka Man Chan, the Leader from Macau, a "recognition" award (long service): in favour 6, 2 abstentions.

The IC also decided to place a call for DSA nominations after the IOI, persons to be nominated by the end of the year. On an administrative matter, the IC agreed to make another five IOI trophies.

20. Proposals to be discussed

20.1 Remove ED and create Office of the President

Krassimir argues that the OED is not necessary and should be removed from the Regulations. Ben said that we have been using it, for example to assign Valentina as the Journal Director within the OED. Krassimir proposes to rename the ED role to Secretary, create an Office of the IOI, including some other roles: database/information manager, Journal Editor, Wiki. Mile proposes that the Secretary is a paid position, and hire a professional; could be part time, would provide secretarial services. Ben reminded the history, the GA created the President role because it was not comfortable with a paid role. Ben comments that he does not mind changing the name, but we only should make changes when needed. The OED has no function, but it is a framework that is sometimes useful, like when Valentina needed an official role (Conference Organizer) so that she could get funds from her country.

Mathias commented that we already have the power to create roles.

Proposal to change the name of the role “Executive Director” to “Secretary”: 6 in favour, 2 against, 1 abstention.

Proposal to change the name of OED to OIOI: 7 in favour, 1 against, 1 abstention.

20.2 Include Journal Editor in OED

Initially there was a proposal to create a new role, Journal Editor. As this was already discussed, with the change of the OED to OIOI, the IC approved that the ED would write a letter to Valentina asking if she accepts to be a member of the OED (in future OIOI), with the role of Journal Editor, and to Mārtiņš Opmanis if he accepts the role of database/website manager.

20.3 Elect GA chair / alternative chair

The President argued that we have had problems in the last years. He then suggested that the IC should discuss whether to (1) keep the same procedure; (2) to introduce the position of IOI GA Chair, elected by GA for a reasonable period; (3) to introduce the position of IOI GA Alternative Chair, elected by GA, in case the Host Country is not able to find an appropriate candidate. Mohammad says Iran has a good choice for Chair, experienced in past IOIs, who now lives in the USA, but is coming to the IOI. However, Mohammad prefers that the Chair is someone from IC. Mile thinks it is good to have a Chair outside the IC. Ben commented that Host should be able to choose the Chair, but it has to be taken seriously. However, if we change the rule, the IC should appoint the Chair. Voting: 6 voted in favour of keeping the current rule, 1 against, with 2 abstentions.

20.4 Changes on Regulations

The IC then voted on small changes in the regulations, presented by Ben (“yellow changes in regulations”). In favour of the changes: 8; 1 abstention.

20.5 Schedule only one conference day

Mathias argued that one conference day would be adequate. The other competition day should be used to have group discussions, and the GA should be able to propose activities and themes for discussion. Unanimously approved.

20.6 Empower national IOI organisers

Eslam raised this point, by email. His point was, in some form, provide the organizations/entities that organize National Olympiads the recognition that they are the ones "approved" by IOI. It was felt that more discussion and a better understanding of the proposal was needed.

20.7 Survey/Database of Organization responsible for the National Contest

In a related issue with the previous item, Mile argued that IOI needs a database of "organizations" instead of simply "contact people" (leaders and deputy leaders) from each country. Mile also suggested that the collection should be done in the registration system. Ricardo manifested a preoccupation that the participants may not understand why the IOI is collecting this information: who is collecting the information, the IOI or the Host Country? Ben argued that IOI collects the data because we may need to contact the country organization, but we shouldn't use the information to regulate participation; in case of disputes, the IC should discuss case by case. Vladimir suggests that IOI should write to governments, asking which organization is responsible for that country. A proposition was then made, to postpone the discussion to email list. Approved unanimously.

20.8 Opportunities for universities at IOI

Vladimir manifested his opinion that IOI is not an appropriate place for recruiting, it should be avoided. Ben suggested that if there is a time in the schedule, IC should approve previously the schedule, and the opportunity should be offered more openly to any interested university. No vote was taken, matter postponed to discussion by email.

20.9 Documents / checklist for future hosts

Mathias points out that one of the tasks of IC is to make it as easy as possible to new or potential hosts to bid for hosting an IOI. His suggestion is to produce a document, with data (size of hall, number of toilets, etc), advices and best practices from previous IOIs. The IC agreed to create a working group: Mathias, Sun Tek and Mile volunteered. Ricardo mentioned that Bakhyt Matkarimov produced also some documents after IOI2015, based on a checklist produced before the IOI2015 by Ben, Margot Phillips and Ricardo, they are in the ED repository.

20.10 Guidelines for food in competition

Ben presented a request from the ISC regarding food during the competition. In particular, should snacks be allowed in competition hall? Should food always be provided by the host? Should a contestant be allowed to bring his/her own snacks? Possible problems are smell and distracting noise. Ben suggests that the host provides some food and water, but if someone needs some special food during the contest, for medical reasons, it should be allowed. Eljakim said he can put a question related to that in the registration system, asking this specific question. The President also mentioned the importance of diversity of food. Mohammad said the comments would be taken into account and implemented.

20.11 Proposal of rule for off-site competition

Bakhyt Matkarimov (IOI2015 Chair, Kazakhstan) sent a proposal for introducing, in the IOI Regulations, the existence and eligibility of countries for the off-site competition in the IOI. The IC decided to postpone the discussion until after IOI2017.

20.12 Wiki and sharing training resources

Mathias described a project to define and develop a tool to replace the wiki to help countries find resources for training and running National Competitions. Also, he proposed to use the money already allocated to the ITC workshop to hire someone to implement the new wiki. The proposal was voted: 8 in favour, 1 abstention.

20.13 On-line competition

The on-line competition, if it is possible to implement, must start after the contest. Everyone agreed.

20.14 New website

Eljakim proposes to spend money to update the website. Not the content, which seems adequate, although some additions could be made, but mainly in the layout and design. Voted: 8 in favour, 1 abstention. Mile wants to help in preparing the description of the work and deliveries.

21. Vote on decisions taken by majority vote.

As agreed in the beginning of the Meeting, the IC should confirm the decisions taken by majority vote. Present members: Krassimir, Mathias, Sun Tek, Vladimir, Ben, Mile. Vote: 6 confirmed the previous votes.

22. ISC and ITC Reports

Jakub Łącki (Poland) presented the ISC report, Stefano Maggiolo (Italy) presented the ITC report. Nine tasks were selected, and the committee discussed the subtasks and testing data. The syllabus was also updated, for example introducing some restrictions on geometrical algorithms (but nice geometrical algorithms are always needed).

The ISC also discussed including the use of headscarves in the rules, but decided against the inclusion. Contestants should not be disturbed during the contest, for example by volunteers, due to issues as headscarves. The ISC advice is to mail the participants (leaders AND testers) about local rules and customs. Stefano has a question: does removal of topics from Syllabus signal a future trend? Jakub answered that no, and please encourage the submission of geometrical problems; we simply don't want very hard geometry problems, as too many issues arise. Jakub also informed a change in the contest rules: the maximum number of submissions is 50. The off-site contest will use the same grading system (CMS), with similar machines. Points of contact for the off-site contest will be Stefano and Sergey Masyagin (Russian Federation). During translations, ISC will provide only version 0 and final version for each task. Any problems during the contest (extra time for contestants, disqualification) will be decided by ISC. Mohammad will run the IOI survey, so please contact him for any item you wish to add.

23. Final Remarks

The President thanked everyone for their participation, and Mohammad and his team for the hospitality. Mohammad thanked all IC, ISC and ITC members and wished everyone a safe trip home.