

Notes from the First General Assembly, AILC-CILA XXII Congress, Macau, 29 July 2019.

Professor ZHANG Longxi, President of the AILC-ICLA, gave a general report on the activities of the Association over the last three years, its healthy status, and explained the most important decisions that had been reached in the recent Executive Council meeting that had taken place in Shenzhen, in the context of the International Comparative Literature Forum co-hosted by the CCLA and Shenzhen University.

Important decisions taken were, in particular: the strengthened support of early career scholars (via waiving of fees for graduate students and the establishment of travel bursaries); the investment into the consolidation of a membership list of all individual members; and the preliminary steps towards the organization of the 2022 AILC-ICLA Congress.

The President then invited the Treasurers to the stage to address the General Assembly. Professors Hans-Joachim Backe, Professor HIRAISHI Noriko and Professor Kathleen Komar (on behalf of Professor Efrain Kristal, who had been unable to attend) reported on the state of the Association's finances, which is on the whole healthy.

Next, the president invited the Vice-President with responsibilities for website and membership list development to explain the recent progress and future plans. Professor Lucia Boldrini reported that an administrator, Ms Livia Franchini, and a web consultant, Ms Elvina Flower, had been helping with these tasks, doing much of the work, and thanked them warmly. She reported on the progress made with the website, which had been re-developed and re-launched since the last Congress and General Assembly, and was still being expanded: all members are invited to check it as it shows the great work done by the Research Committees; the site also explains how the administrative committees work, to enhance transparency; and how members can join existing committees and propose new ones, via the Research Development Committee. She also reported on the development and consolidation of a membership list: this is made difficult by the fact that the membership of the AILC-ICLA is through National Associations, so the AILC-ICLA does not automatically have the names and email addresses of its members and needs to collect these via many different Associations which work in different ways and to different schedules. Nevertheless, we were making good progress and we now had a reliable list (for the electoral register); the decision had been taken to invest, as soon as we felt the list was solid, complete and secure, in a commercial mailing list service (Mailerlite). This would enable us to send regular newsletters and communications directly to members and to have the possibility of wider consultations and online voting.

She finally reported on communications received regarding the organization of the next congress in 2022. So far, the only offer had come from the Georgian Comparative Literature Association; a decision would be made in due course and communicated via the website and the newsletter.

The President then explained that the election of the new Presidency and Executive Council would take place over the next days; where the information could be found on candidates and on modalities for voting; and invited all members of the AILC-ICLA attending the Congress to exercise their right to vote.

He also explained that the winner of the 2019 Balakian Prize would be announced that evening at the Banquet.

The President finally thanked the organizers of the XXII Congress of the AILC-ICLA: the CCLA, the University of Macau, the University of Saint Joseph, Shenzhen University, Shanghai Jiao Tong University and Renmin University of China, as well as the Macao Association of Convention, Exhibition and Tourism Sectors for their excellent work, carried out at short notice when the previous plan proved no longer viable; and wished everyone a successful and enjoyable Congress.

(Note: minutes were not taken; the notes above were reconstructed by Lucia Boldrini, in consultation with Professor ZHANG Longxi, after the event)