

Draft minutes of the meeting on 27 May in Brussels (video)

**This is a translation for information; only the French text is authentic.**

The President opens the meeting and notes that two-thirds of the members of the Association are not present. She shall convene a new General Meeting, which shall take a final and valid decision on the proposals, irrespective of the number of members present or represented.

The President opened the new General Meeting and welcomed the participants who were following the debates remotely. She thanked the interpreters in advance.

She noted that 115 members were present and 16 were represented.

### **Adoption of the agenda**

The agenda was adopted with the addition of an item entitled 'Appointment of auditors'.

### **Approval of the minutes of the AGM of 15 December 2023**

The minutes were adopted unanimously.

### **President's activity report**

The President presented the highlights of her activity report, which had been distributed to attendees.

P. Blanchard asked that a few lines be added about AIACE's financial support in the case concerning the reversionary pension; it was decided to do so under 'Expenditure'.

### **Finances**

The Treasurer General presented the 2023 management report and the balance sheet and income statement. He highlighted the surplus of €12,361 (compared with a loss of €26,302 in 2022) and the increase in the number of members (around 205), giving a total of 14,450 members.

Expenditure on social actions amounts to €256,708, while the institutions' contributions are only €155,000, leaving €101,708 to be paid by AIACE. This growing imbalance should be brought to the attention of the institutions, and particularly the Commission, as it would justify an increase in contributions.

In response to a question, he explained the need to have substantial reserves, on the one hand to ensure the operation of the association in accordance with legal provisions, but also because of the uncertainty over the continuation of the Commission's support, particularly logistical support. He explained, as did the President of the Belgium Section, that the AIACE International reserve was separate from those of the sections and did not duplicate them.

J.-J. Beurotte, also on behalf of fellow auditor P. Zangl, briefly presented the auditors' report and recommended that the General Meeting adopt the accounts and grant discharge.

The accounts for the 2023 financial year were approved with one abstention, and the AGM thus discharged the Board of Directors.

The Treasurer General presented the draft 2024 budget. He emphasised the increase in the item 'legal expenses' due to the increase in current and potential applications, while the rest of the budget was virtually identical to the previous one. The question of the agencies' contributions was raised.

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The 2024 budget was adopted unanimously.

F. Rinaudo warmly thanked his predecessor, Mr Oostens, for his unfailing support and sound advice.

### **Appointment of auditors**

The AGM appointed J.-J. Beurotte and P. Zangl as auditors for the duration of the three-year term.

### **Confirmation of the members of the Board of Directors**

The AGM confirms the membership of the Board of Directors.

The Chairman thanked all the participants and interpreters and closed the meeting.

### **Guest speaker**

The President introduced F. Frutuoso de Melo, former Director General and Head of the Civil Household of the President of the Portuguese Republic. He gave a provocative speech on the subject of 'The European elections and beyond'. This was followed by rich and interesting exchanges with the participants.

The President warmly thanked F. Frutuoso de Melo.

### **Amendment to the Articles of Association**

The Chairman reopened the meeting. The General Secretary explained the two proposed amendments to the Articles of Association submitted by the Board to the AGM for decision. These are

- firstly, to add to Article 6 '*There may not be more than one section per Member State or former Member State*', in order to confirm the existence of the United Kingdom section
- and, secondly, to define the role of the auditors (which is not mentioned anywhere until now) in Article 29 in new paragraphs 3 and 4 as follows:

**The auditors shall be elected by the General Meeting for a term of office of 3 years. There shall be two of them and they must belong to different sections. Their task is to check that transactions have been recorded in the accounts and that the profit and loss account and balance sheet are true and fair. Observations and reservations may be made. This audit leads to certification, which they will set out in a report to the General Meeting.**

**The Administrative Body submits the annual accounts for the previous financial year accompanied by the auditors' report as well as a draft budget for approval at the Annual General Meeting.**

Both proposals were adopted unanimously.

Furthermore, the President recalls that during the revision of the statutes of December 15, 2023 aimed at complying with Belgian legislation, certain sections had expressed the desire to make other modifications to the existing statutes, or even to transform the association into a federation of national associations.

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A working group, chaired by the President, was tasked with examining all the proposals put forward by the sections, as included in a summary document prepared by the Secretary General.

The group held a first meeting on April 11, 2024; the meeting report has been distributed. This is a progress report, the start of a possible long process.

The Belgium and Finland sections recall their respective proposals for modifying the structure of the association and explain their motivations. A debate ensued between the participants, the vast majority of whom spoke out against a change in the structure. Some participants question the need for such work

The working group is responsible for continuing its work to evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of the different proposals, whether on modification of the structure or on improvements to be made to the current structure.

It was agreed that we should not work in a hurry and that we should take the time to discuss in detail the different proposals on the table. A new meeting of the group will be scheduled for early September.

At the end of the meeting, C. Popotas explains the existence of a proposed directive dating from September 2023 on the creation of European cross-border associations, which is already under discussion in the EP. This new structure could correspond to the needs of AIACE and allow it to intervene in all EU countries. This proposal will also be analyzed by the working group. With this in mind, over the next two years, it would perhaps be wise not to modify the current structure while waiting to see if the AIACE could be transformed into an ATE (ECA according to its English acronym).

### **Other questions raised by members.**

P. Blanchard explained that, according to the 6th Method of Updating Remunerations and Pensions, the Eurostat report concluded that an intermediate adjustment of 3% would be made in June 2024, with retroactive effect from 1 January 2024. This is the 3rd time that the cost of living recorded by the joint Brussels/Luxembourg index over the last six months of 2023 has reached 3%. The figures for the whole of 2024 will be known around October/November, but this year, for the first time in several years, Eurostat is forecasting an increase in purchasing power of around 3%.

### **Miscellaneous**

No miscellaneous points