

General Assembly - CIFEJ

Tehran, May 26 - 29 2005

MINUTES

Thursday, May 26

1. Registration of participants

The registration is done through out the day, at the Kanoon office.

2. Opening of the General Assembly and President's Report.

Jo-Anne Blouin, Executive Director and Monic Lessard, Secretary-General welcome the delegates. Mrs. Athina Rikaki, CIFEJ President, was unable to attend, and has asked that her report be read by Mr. Amir Esfandiari (available on the web site).

Afterwards, Mr. Moshen Chiniforoushan, managing director of Kanoon, and the Minister of The Iranian Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, welcome the assembly. Followed by the launch of Mr. Robert Roy (Canada) book, **Cifej, A History**, a look back at 50 years of CIFEJ activities. In the end, all are invited to screen the first Iranian children's film (*Bread & Alley*, Abbas Kiarostami)

Friday, May 27

3. Verification of proxies

The verification is postponed until Sunday May 29, during the Extraordinary General Assembly, since proxies are still being received. Motion proposed by Robert Roy (Canada) and seconded by Kathleen Aubry (Canada).

4. Designation of the scrutineers

Eli Stangeland (Norway) proposes Robert Roy (Canada) and Sol Millan (Canada); this motion is seconded by Britt-Marie Meyer (Sweden), and then approved unanimously.

5. Approval of the Agenda

Before "point 5. Approval of the Agenda" is attacked, Jo-Anne Blouin (Canada) suggests that each delegate present himself or herself briefly, 36 members representing 21 countries are present. After reading the different points of the Agenda, no one has anything to add.

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The Agenda is proposed by Eli Stangeland (Norway) and seconded by Robert Roy (Canada), and approved unanimously.

6. Approval of the minutes of the 2002 General Assembly

Jo-Anne reads the minutes of the 2002 General Assembly. Robert Roy (Canada) mentions a correction to be made on page 5: "Closing of the Extraordinary General Assembly. Reopening of the General Assembly" should go at the end of point 15.

M. Roy explains the voting process to the delegates present.

Minutes proposed by Robert Roy (Canada) and seconded by Eli Stangeland (Norway). Then approved unanimously.

7. Reports from the General Secretariat

Jo-Anne reads the report from the Secretariat, stressing several crucial points, the actual state of membership (Jo-Anne explains the status of active member, goes through the different types of new members), the future of CIFEJ, the new board of directors, the need for new active members, and the mandate versus the critical financial situation of the secretariat. Jo-Anne also presents Mr. René Malo (Canada) as new financial savior, and his role in the future of the CIFEJ Secretariat. Last, Jo-Anne gives an overview of the proposed action plan (delegates are invited to take a few minutes to read the document in question).

Comments:

-Kathleen Aubry (Canada): warmheartedly thanks Jo-Anne and the CIFEJ team for their hard work.

-Andrzej Roman-Jasiewick (Poland): shocked on learning of the precarious financial situation. Why can we not find money elsewhere, in other countries?

-Jo-Anne Blouin (Canada): there are different points of view regarding this matter, for some countries the membership fees are contribution enough. There is a real need to find other sources of financing, more consistent, open to suggestions on this matter... but proposes to keep the discussion for later, on returning to the action plan.

- Andrzej Roman-Jasiewick (Poland) accepts to put off the discussion till later on.

8. Membership

Jo-Anne goes through the membership list. She talks again of the new members, of the potential new members (those to come). She also explains the status of "friend of CIFEJ" (it's history, why and how it came about), and the lapsed members, especially the cancelled membership (explains how the cancellation process takes place).

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Comments:

- Fereshteh Taerpour (Iran): what are the reasons for cancellations are they mostly financial?
- Jo-Anne Blouin (Canada): if mainly financial, the secretariat generally seeks some kind of solution or compromise (thus some become friends of CIFEJ...)
- Robert Roy (Canada): agrees with Jo-Anne, several members also cancel because they are no longer working in the field.
- Fereshteh Taerpour (Iran): notes the need to have more producers and distributors as members, and therefore to keep them interested we must have feedback, members need something in return.
- Alabbas Bin Alabbas (Egypt): agrees with Fereshteh on the need to clarify what members get in return, what are the advantages of being a CIFEJ member.
- Jo-Anne Blouin (Canada): proposes creation of a membership package; information for newcomers, to be distributed to those interested in joining.
- Eli Stangeland (Norway): notes important fact, this current matter for discussion, but that must not forget CIFEJ is above all a network, therefore it's first mandate is "networking": a channel for information to and from its members...

Jo-Anne goes on explaining the honorary member status (can chose not to pay, but if wishes to have the right to vote, must pay membership fee). Jo-Anne reads the list of suggested new honorary members. Robert Roy (Canada) continues by giving details on whom and why. Jean Rabinovici (France) says a few words on the regretted Raymond Lefebvre from France (suggested as an honorary member).

Andrzej Roman-Jasiewick (Poland): emits a certain reserve on giving deceased members the honorary title... proposes that CIFEJ pays them tribute instead of naming them honorary members.

Therefore, the following modification was adopted unanimously during the assembly:

For deceased members, that have been active members of CIFEJ, a category "Tribute" is created to highlight their involvement.

Proposed by Andrzej R. Jasiewick (Poland)
Seconded by Robert Roy (Canada)
Adopted unanimously.

9. Financial Reports: 2002-2003 and 2003-2004

Jo-Anne reads and explains the facts and figures. She also explains why there are two documents, one for CIFEJ and one for Centre de promotion; this second company was created in order to get financial help from the Canadian Government. The financial year is

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from April 1st to March 31st, and all amounts mentioned are in Canadian dollars. CIFEJ has a \$5 760,00 debt that is reabsorbed by the second company's surplus of \$4 981,00.

Alabbas Bin Alabbas (Egypt) wishes to clarify if to know the real numbers, it is necessary to sum both figures (from both companies). This is confirmed by Jo-Anne.

The 2002-2003 financial report is proposed by Selven Naidu (Mauritius) and seconded by Kathleen Aubry (Canada). The 2003-2004 financial report is proposed by Robert Roy (Canada) and seconded by Nina Elstad (Norway). Both financial reports are approved unanimously.

10. Approval of operating budget: 2004-2005 and 2005-2006

Jo-Anne explains the numbers and the budget forecast. It is clarified after the facts that the surplus was spent compensating the deficit left from past years, and the lack of funding.

Comments:

- Andrzej Roman-Jasiewick (Poland): is the budget only for member's information?
- Jo-Anne Blouin (Canada): the budgets must be approved by the delegates, and therefore are open to discussion.
- Andrzej Roman-Jasiewick (Poland): problem is that CIFEJ should not be operating with a budget inferior to that of an international festival (which is the case presently). It is essential that more money be found somehow, through the members networking, their respective countries, by specific projects or by establishing regional European offices (autonomous)...
- Jo-Anne Blouin (Canada): agrees completely on the need to assure a more stable and solid financing structure, but must find a viable solution.
- Eli Stangeland (Norway): important to note that many elements are not found in the budget, the invisible expenses do not appear. She asks how many can afford an increase in their membership fees...
- Maikki Kantola (Finland): does not think the regional office is a sustainable idea as a way of financing the CIFEJ secretariat, it is already quite difficult for any small organization to assure its own financing.
- Firdoze Bulbulia (South Africa): asks if possible to associate CIFEJ to a festival structure (to profit of the festival financing). Jo-Anne Blouin (Canada) answers that this is not a possibility, since many festivals are already CIFEJ members, and are financed by the same government bodies.
- Firdoze Bulbulia (South Africa) proposes then the creation of a funding committee.
- Maikki Kantola (Finland): proposes that delegates get access to the budgets a few weeks before the next general assembly, so that they can be studied more attentively, and therefore be more prepared to propose realistic solutions.

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All delegates agree on the idea of creating a financial committee working towards securing a worthwhile operational budget. The 2004-2005 and 2005-2006 budgets are proposed by Firdoze Bulbulia (South Africa) and seconded by Selven Naidu (Mauritius). **All delegates approve this motion with the mention to create a financing committee.**

11. Nomination of Auditors

Jo-Anne proposes that Barbeau, Cousineau Chartered Accountants be accepted once more as auditors for CIFEJ. Motion is proposed by Eli Stangeland (Norway) and seconded by Robert Roy (Canada), and then approved unanimously.

At this point, Eli Stangeland (Norway) proposes that point 12 and 13 be inversed. First talk about "Going on projects" and then follow with "New business", so that there is no confusion or repetitions. All delegates agree on this.

12. New Business

Jo-Anne goes through the Action Plan in detail, reminding all that it is a working document. All delegates are quite enthusiastic with the plan; Firdoze Bulbulia (South Africa) mentions it is a good frame to start with.

The discussion on New business revolves around the need to secure financing for CIFEJ and it's activities. Amir Esfandiari (Iran) reminds the idea of "a box", a common pot/fund in view of financing specific projects, productions or co-productions.

Miomir Rajcevic (Serbia & Montenegro), agrees with this idea, and proposes that each member find funds through the creation of different projects supported by CIFEJ. Fereshteh Taerpour (Iran) proposes that a small contribution from distribution profits can go towards this "common pot"; she will give 5% of box office of her new film...

Firdoze Bulbulia (South Africa) also suggests that the Festival members think on how to create specific fundraising events (for CIFEJ) within their festivals, for example a CIFEJ day during each festival member...

13. Going on projects

a) **Kids for Kids Festival:** it is suggested (Jo-Anne Blouin) that the discussion be reported to Tuesday 31, when the Festival will be discussed in depth.

b) **Creating a space for children in Latin America, in Africa, in Asia:** CIFEJ initiated a study on policies and guidelines on children's media to establish a panorama of the Latin American situation. This project will be discussed in more detail during Susana

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Velleggia's (Argentina) presentation. Further discussions must also include the perspective of studying Africa and Asia.

- c) **Curriculum Package for media education:** project first presented to UNESCO. Although the budget for this project is included in the operational budget, must find a specific source of financing. Alternative projects backed by CIFEJ can become a good way of finding different sources of financing for CIFEJ activities.

Comments:

- Robert Roy (Canada): would like to know if CIFEJ has contacted specific experts in the field to work on /build the project. Project will need specific financing.
- Jo-Anne Blouin (Canada): has a lot of material, and has discussed with different possible contributors (*Association des Cinemas Parallèles du Québec* for example).
- Piotr Zalewski (Poland): proposes creating a specific committee to push this project forward.
- Firdoze Bulbulia (South Africa): would like that the mention of "underdeveloped countries" in the title be modified.

d) **Proposals for projects (voices from the floor):**

Firdoze Bulbulia (South Africa): Within the context of the 5th Summit, and in collaboration with Britt-Marie Meyer (Sweden) (and her project with children in Israel), request participation or collaboration for the project "what does peace mean to children in the world". Children are invited to construct/deconstruct the idea of peace in each part of the world. Open to collaborations, suggestions...

Miomir Rajcevic (Serbia & Montenegro): In the same line, can use the project "peace of mind"; use media development to help solve problems for children living in crisis areas. Has material from 6 countries (Israel, Palestine, Cyprus, Serbia...)

Horst Schäfer (Germany): new project, in collaboration with university, on Children, War & Cinema, all those interested to send information, contact him directly.

Andrzej Roman Jasiewick (Poland): would like to see more projects supporting scriptwriting for children cinema. Asks all to reflect on how can we stimulate creation in writing for children.

Maikki Kantola (Finland): talks of her experience in the Sydney Camp (Australia), and how in general media education camps in different countries are a great opportunity for children to be stimulated creatively and educationally.

Kathleen Aubry (Canada): reminds us that each member has great expertise in their field, and it is important for CIFEJ to act as a network, so that all can have access and exchange these precious information and experiences.

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Eli Stangeland (Norway): stresses the fact that it is very important to put all the resources together and that the information, conclusions and results be diffused so that all can be informed. She also gives what seems to be a good motto for CIFEJ, "*Think not what CIFEJ can do for me, but what can I do for CIFEJ*".

14. Presentation of nominees

The candidates for the new Board of Directors are presented by Jo-Anne: eight members are to be elected by secret ballot for a two-year mandate, plus two substitutes. The ninth member is René Malo (Canada), new Secretary General, and the tenth Monic Lessard (Canada), Treasurer, elected by the Canadian members first, then ratified by the assembly. Robert Roy (Canada) explains the principle of one country one vote briefly, once again. Each candidate present is given 3 minutes for presenting their interest in becoming a member on the CIFEJ board of directors. Jo-Anne gives information concerning the candidates that are absent.

The vote will be done on Sunday, May 29 during the Extraordinary General Assembly, thus permitting the delegates and nominees to get better acquainted.

15. Candidates for hosting the next General Assembly in two years from now

Jo-Anne explains the voting process for the next place and date of the General Assembly. Jo-Anne presents the different offers made to CIFEJ: one is from the city of Cartagena in Colombia, where our member Gerardo Nieto is working. Unfortunately, since he is not here to represent them, there is at this time no information on what they can offer. The second offer comes from Vahid Vahed from Sydney, Australia. The same situation applies here, Mr. Vahed not being present; Maikki Kantola was asked to give a few details on his behalf. Jo-Anne and the secretariat will do the follow up if necessary. Furthermore, Susana Velleggia proposed the city of Buenos Aires, in Argentina, and Alabbas Bin Alabbas proposed the city of Luxor in Egypt.

The vote will be done on Sunday, May 29 after the Extraordinary General Assembly, giving the delegates some time to reflect on the different candidates.

(Saturday, May 28: Activities prepared by our host, Kanoon, see programme)

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Sunday, May 29

16. Extraordinary General Assembly: Approval of modifications in Statutes

Please see the attached document: Minutes of the Extraordinary GA,

17. Election of Board of Directors

Election of the president

The Secretary general Monic Lessard (Canada) proposes for a second mandate the candidacy of Athina Rikaki from Greece.

All members of the Board appreciate Athina and she is very dedicated to her work. CIFEJ needs a strong president and Athina Rikaki is surely the best choice.

Proposed by Monic Lessard (Canada)
Seconded by Robert Roy (Canada)
Elected unanimously.

Election of the Secretary General

Jo-Ann, executive director of CIFEJ's office in Montreal, explains to all CIFEJ's members present that René Malo from Canada has been our financier for the last months in the absence of a Federal Governmental annual grant. Thanks to him, the office in Montreal did not have to close down. Jo-Anne reads a letter sent by René Malo, mentioning his interest in becoming Secretary General for CIFEJ.

Robert Roy (Canada) mentions that René Malo (Canada) has been in the film business for more than 20 years. He is a successful businessman and now, very much concerned with quality in media for children. Canadian members of CIFEJ have voted for Mr. Malo. This choice has to be ratified by the General Assembly.

René Malo is ratified Secretary General
Unanimously approved.

Choice of the treasurer

Amir Esfandiari (Iran) proposes the candidacy of Monic Lessard from Canada. She was Secretary General for the last two years and knows CIFEJ well.

Monic Lessard is appointed treasurer for CIFEJ.
Unanimously approved.

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Election of the board members

Eli Stangeland (Norway) proposes Robert Roy (Canada) and Sol Millan (Canada) as scrutineers for the election of the Board Members.

Robert Roy (Canada) explains to all members the principle of "One country, one vote". The value of the vote depends on the number of members of the country, which has the largest number of members. Canada has 20 voting members. In this country, each vote counts for 1. For example, in Mexico, there is only 1 vote so it counts for 20, in Iran, there are 5 members, and each vote counts for 4.

Jo-Anne Blouin, the Executive Director, reads aloud the name of voting members present and informs each of them about proxies they have from voting members that are not present. The participation to the vote represents 78% of the voting members of CIFEJ.

The secretary of the meeting, Sol Millan distributes the voting ballots.

Twelve candidates have informed the Secretariat of their candidacy. They are in alphabetical order:

Amir Esfandiari (Iran)	second mandate
T.S. Nagabahrana (India)	second mandate
Eli Strangeland (Norway)	second mandate
Vahid Vahed (Australia)	second mandate
Piotr Zalewski (Poland)	second mandate
Firdoze Bulbulia (South Africa)	first mandate
Ginette Dislaire (France)	first mandate
Andrezj R. Jasiewicz (Poland)	first mandate
Maikki Kantola (Finland)	first mandate
Selven Naidu (Mauritius Island)	first mandate
Miomir Rajcevic (Serbia & Montenegro)	first mandate
Susana Velleggia (Argentina)	first mandate

The voting members will vote for eight (8) candidates. The next 9 and 10 will be the substitutes in case of the resigning of one of the board member.

Results of the election

The scrutineer, Robert Roy (Canada) announces the results for the vote. The 8 candidates elected, in alphabetical order, are:

Firdoze Bulbulia (South Africa)
Amir Esfandiari (Iran)
Andrezj R. Jasiewicz (Poland)
Maikki Kantola (Finland)

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T.S. Nagabahrana (India)
Miomir Rajcevic (Serbia Montenegro)
Eli Strangeland (Norway)
Susana Velleggia (Argentina)

The two candidates elected as substitutes are: Selven Naidu (Mauritius Island)
Piotr Zalewski (Poland)

Congratulations to all!

Closing of the Extraordinary General Assembly Re-opening of the General Assembly

18. Date and place of next General Assembly

The next General Assembly will take place in 2007.
Four countries have proposed to host the next G.A. They are:

Argentina (Buenos Aires)
Australia (Sydney)
Columbia (Cartagena)
Egypt (Luxor)

Since none of the candidates had a definite proposal at this time, Jo-Anne asked the delegates to indicate (on their ballot) their choices, in order of preference; the board will have the task of working with the candidates in order to get a clear mandate and decide at the next board meeting, which city will be chosen to host the 2007 General Assembly.

Result of the vote

- 1- Egypt
- 2- Argentina and Australia are tied
- 3- Columbia.

Mr. Alabbas Bin Alabbas from Egypt is happy with this result and hopes that the next General Assembly will be as productive, lively and as well organized as the one in Teheran in May 2005.

All members take the occasion for a warm Thank you to our host Kanoon and especially to Mr. Moshen Chiniforoushan.

Prepared in Montreal, Canada, June 2005