

General Assembly of the ISBT

Draft Minutes of the General Assembly of the ISBT

Date: Tuesday June 9, 2020

Location (On-line): GoToWebinar

Time: 14:00 CEST

1. Welcome – ISBT President, Martin Olsson

Attendees were welcomed to the first ever ISBT digital General Assembly. The meeting is on-line as the Barcelona congress has been postponed from June to December due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Martin thanked everyone for attending it during these challenging times and noted that the purpose of this session is to summarize the fiscal year from April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020. The quorum of the meeting had been reached with 165 attendees, and members were encouraged to vote when requested.

2. Draft Minutes of the General Assembly 2019, June 25 - Basel, Switzerland

The minutes from the 2019 General Assembly which took place in Basel, Switzerland have been made available to members with the invitation to this General Assembly. The recommendation of the Board is for the membership to accept these minutes. The motion was proposed by Masja de Haas and seconded by Annika Hult; 73% of the attendees voted: 100% of the votes agreed with the recommendation. Therefore, the motion to accept the 2019 minutes was passed.

3. Report of ISBT President – Martin Olsson

Martin presented a summary of the year 2019/20. ISBT membership increased to 2037, including 32 Affiliate members. ISBT supported 31 Academy events in 20 countries, “Beryl’s book” was reviewed and updated, to be released in an updated version, first as an e-book and subsequently in hard copy. ISBT contributed to national meetings around the world, e.g. the ISBT Academy day in South Africa (35th SANBTC), and ISBT Highlights days in Brazil (ABHH Hemo 2019) and India (ISTM TRANSMEDCON). During 2019-20 ISBT received support from 13 Corporate Partners (8 gold, 1 silver and 4 bronze).

During this fiscal year, we signed Memoranda of Understanding with two professional societies, CSBT and ABHH and another with ICTMG. ISBT is in official relations with WHO and participated in the 2019 World Blood Donor Day Global Event in Kigali, Rwanda. ISBT also participated in preliminary meetings to explore ISBT support for the African Blood Regulators Forum (ABRF), took part in the launch of WHO’s Action framework for blood which was launched on February 27, 2020. The ISBT Clinical Working Party (WP) has helped with an update of the WHO Clinical use of blood manual.

ISBT reacted swiftly to the COVID-19 pandemic providing COVID-19 resource pages open to all, including two document libraries for institutions around the world to share experience on maintaining the blood supply and on COVID-19 convalescent plasma. There has also been a series of open access webinars on COVID-19 (some of them have attracted over 500 participants). We have worked with our publisher, Wiley, to make Vox Sanguinis and ISBT Science Series COVID-19 related papers available on line with a very short turnaround time.

The Board has had two face-to-face board meetings; one was held in Basel (June 2019) and the other one in Bangkok (November 2019). An additional teleconference took place on March 2020 to take the painful but necessary decision to postpone the Barcelona congress until December 2020. This decision was taken after consultation with international and local virologists and epidemiologists, and also with our corporate partners who supported this decision. A series of three virtual Board meetings took place between May and June 2020 in place of those planned for Barcelona in June.

One of the most important activities for the Board has been developing the new strategic plan 2019-2024. A meeting to discuss this took place in the days before the Basel congress and a strategic priorities meeting to develop these further took place in Bangkok. The new strategic plan 2019-2024 was launched in January. A new vision was developed: *A world of safe and sufficient blood*. The mission has been revised and 9 strategic goals were identified which will drive our activities for the coming years.

It was noted that, perhaps the most significant event, besides the pandemic, was the handover of the ISBT Executive Director role from Judith Chapman to Jenny White which took place on March 31, 2020. Jenny was appointed after a recruitment process that included several stages. Jenny has a long career in Transfusion Medicine and now she will put that in use for ISBT. Martin thanked Judith for having led and transformed the Society for over 11 years and listed some of her many achievements. Judith established the ISBT Central Office in Amsterdam and has overseen governance of the society that has become more transparent, engaged the membership, expanded ISBT activities beyond congresses, introduced the ISBT Academy, and acted as an ambassador all over the world for the ISBT formalised excellent working relationships with global partners including other professional societies, NGOs, and ISBT's corporate partners, among many others.

Martin asked for questions and clarifications – none were received.

4. Report of the Secretary General – Gwen Clark

ISBT membership at the end of 2019-2020 was 2037 which is the highest it has been since 2012. ISBT held two successful regional congresses in 2019, in Basel Switzerland and Bangkok, Thailand.

At the Basel congress, there were 2867 delegates from 107 countries, including 721 exhibition staff; 725 abstracts were submitted (excluding speaker abstracts) of which 115 were accepted for oral presentation, 565 for poster presentation and 45 abstracts were rejected; 46 scientific sessions, including 2 workshops and 1 breakfast, took place. There were 84 invited speakers and 75 exhibiting companies. In Bangkok there were 1138 delegates from 71 countries, including 391 exhibition staff; 363 abstracts were submitted (excluding speaker abstracts) of which 35 were accepted for oral presentation, 328 for poster presentation; 26 scientific sessions, including 3 workshops and 1 breakfast, took place. There were 47 invited speakers and 52 exhibiting companies.

The ISBT Award winners in 2019 were Ellen van der Schoot, Roger Dodd, Masahiro Satake and Neelam Marwaha. The Vox Sanguinis Best Paper Prize 2018 was awarded to M Möller, Å Hellberg and ML Olsson

for their paper: Thorough analysis of unorthodox *ABO* deletions called by the 1000 Genomes project (*Vox Sanguinis* 2018;113:185-197).

ISBT has 14 working parties, all of which have been active during 2019-20.

The ISBT Academy has supported a wide variety of educational events with financial support (26) and use of logo (5), and a list of Academy events which took place around the world in 2019.

The Young Professional Council (YPC) has been very successful and active in 2019/20. Amongst their activities are social media posts, weekly updates and a YouTube channel to stay connected to the YPs in the field. They have also held nine Live Journal Clubs (LJC) and held a career development webinar. The YPC has also been involved in TT articles and have participated in various forums such as the Academy day with ISTM in India (January 2020) and the International Congress in Turkey (March 2020). They also had a variety of activities in Basel and Bangkok such as workshops, a breakfast and “speed dating” session in Basel, among others. They have had 10 teleconference meetings since the congress in Basel.

5. Young Professional Council (YPC) – resolution to amend the ISBT Bylaws to include the YPC as an ISBT Standing Committee

The current five Standing Committees are ISBT Academy, Ethics, Jean Julliard Prize, International Scientific Advisory Committee, and Vox Sanguinis. A recommendation to include the Young Professional Council as an ISBT Standing Committee was made by Gwen Clarke on behalf of the Board members, and bring it under the formal governance of the Society. John Semple proposed the motion and it was seconded by Jerry Holmberg; 69% of the attendees voted: 99% of these agreed. The motion was passed.

6. Announcement of Honorary Members

In November 2019, the H.R.H. Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn, Executive Vice President and Chairman of the Thai Red Cross Society, was offered Honorary Membership of ISBT by Martin Olsson. The H.R.H. Princess was pleased to accept and we are very honoured by this. In addition, Judith Chapman, ISBT Executive Director 2008- 2020, was also awarded Honorary Membership in March, 2020. Gwen congratulated both of them.

7. Retiring Working Party Chairpersons, Standing Committee members and Vox Editors

Kevin Land who has been the chair of the Haemovigilance Working Party is stepping down. We had a changeover in Vox Sanguinis during 2019. Dana Devine who has been Editor in Chief for Vox Sanguinis for many years, announced in late 2019 that she would be leaving this post. ISBT undertook a selection process and is pleased to announce that Miquel Lozano will take over as the Editor in Chief for Vox Sanguinis by the end of June, 2020. Gwen thanked Dana for her services and said that we are looking forward to working with Miquel. No questions were raised at this point.

8. Report of the Treasurer – motion to accept financial accounts

Eric Jansen presented the finance report outlining the financial highlights of 2019/20. The congresses remain the most important source of income, and both Basel and Bangkok returned a higher profit than expected. Also, the membership increased during 2019-20 with the increase of cost of membership benefits being lower than membership fees. The income from Corporate Partners (CP) is also significant and the income from Vox Sanguinis is mainly stable with a small increase on the projected result due to negotiations with Wiley that reduced the Vox Sanguinis open access costs, resulting in a saving of €2000. Personnel expenses increased because of indexation and a small extension of the staff during 2019-20, but other office costs were stable. The result in general was very positive and €183,278 will be donated to the ISBT Foundation. Eric showed a figure regarding income sources over the years 2015 to 2020. No questions were asked regarding the treasurer’s report.

Eric made a recommendation to accept the financial statement 2019-20 as presented. The recommendation was proposed by Roger Dodd and seconded by Pieter van der Meer; 65% of the attendees voted and 100% of these agreed with the recommendation. The motion was passed.

9. Membership fees 2021/22

Eric Jansen made a recommendation to leave the membership fees 2020/2021 unchanged. The motion was proposed by Markus Mueller and seconded by Susan Nahirniak; 75% of the attendees voted and 96% of these accepted not to change this year’s membership. The motion was passed.

10. Retiring Board Directors

Martin Olsson acknowledged the retiring Board members who have served on the ISBT board for the past few years: Ravi Reddy (Past President), So Yong Kwon (Senior Vice President), Justina Ansaah (Regional Director Africa), Shubha Allard (Regional Director Europe) and Lin Fung (Regional Director West Pacific). He thanked them all on behalf of ISBT.

11. Announcement of the new Board 2020

Martin Olsson presented the new Board members:

Position	Successful candidate
President Elect	Michael Busch (USA)
Vice President	Lin Fung (Australia)
Treasurer	Eric Jansen (Netherlands)
Regional Director Africa	Shirley Owusu Ofori (Ghana)
Regional Director Europe	Cynthia So- Osman (Netherlands)
Regional Director South East Asia	Mahrukh Getshen (Bhutan)
Regional Director West Pacific	Denese Marks (Australia)

Martin also presented the new Board 2020-2022:

Name	Position
Erica Wood	President
Mike Busch	President Elect*
Martin Olsson	Past President
Masja de Haas	Vice President
Lin Fung	Vice President*
Gwen Clarke	Secretary General
Eric Jansen	Treasurer**
Mindy Goldman	North America
Lilian Castilho	South America
Cynthia So-Osman	Europe*
Birgit Gathof	Europe
May Raouf	Eastern Mediterranean
Shirley Owusu Ofori	Africa*
Mahrukh Getshen	South East Asia*
Denese Marks	West Pacific*
Veera Sekaran Nadarajan	West Pacific

* = newly elected

** = re-elected

Martin mentioned that it has been a period with a lot of work, a lot of travel, but most of all, lots of progress for ISBT. He is grateful to be part of the ISBT family and thanked everyone for the opportunity to serve as the ISBT President during the past two years.

12. Incoming President's address

Erica Wood stated that she is honoured and pleased to be taking on the role of ISBT President. She thanked Martin as outgoing President, the retiring Board members and Judith Chapman. She looks forward to working with Jenny White and the new Board, recognised all of the candidates who had put themselves forward in the elections and congratulated the new Board members.

Erica outlined the goals for her term of office. She intends to lead the Society safely through this difficult time and deliver on our strategic plan. Erica knows and is thankful that she can rely on the support of the ISBT Central Office staff and the Board members and all the membership for help and encouragement. She feels that we will look back on 2020 and be glad that it is behind us, but will also recognise that we will have learned many things from it. We will be able to continue to use innovative

developments during this time such as this virtual General Assembly. This will be helpful for us and our Society will be stronger.

Erica also wants to engage more with clinicians who are prescribing and administering blood and taking care of patients directly. ISBT, through its membership, represents enormous experience internationally in all facets of transfusion science and medicine. Clinicians have been invited to join our working parties and to contribute as speakers at our congresses. Their knowledge and expertise have enhanced the work in transfusion medicine through ISBT. Erica believes that more can be done and invited everyone to reach out even more widely and explore opportunities such as additional formal partnerships with clinical societies and more contributions to their meetings and their research activities which would benefit all. A MoU with ICTMG was recently signed. This will provide opportunities for ISBT members to contribute to the selection of clinical guideline topics and develop guidelines and implementation tools that meet the needs of clinical users all around the world including low and middle-income countries. Erica looks forward to this collaboration and also to see how it will complement our own ISBT activities.

Erica would like to support and develop the role of nurses within ISBT, especially Transfusion Practitioners. They plan an important role in strengthening the quality aspects of clinical practice including education, haemovigilance reporting, among others activities in the hospitals and blood centres. The TP role is established in some countries, but not in all, and it is relatively new within ISBT. Erica thinks that ISBT is a natural home for TPs who can benefit of what ISBT has to offer, and is confident that ISBT will benefit as a Society for expanding our membership with TPs from all around the world. Erica thanked all the people who have supported her and promised to do her very best in this role.

13. Any other business

Carolina Triplett asked what the plans are for the involvement in World Blood Donor Day (WBDD) 2020. Jenny White replied that this year, the WBDD launch planned to be in Rome will be hosted online due to the current pandemic. ISBT is advertising WBDD through all of our channels to support WHO.

Dr. Sumit Bharadva wanted to know how the YPC members are selected. Gwen Clarke said that any members under 40 can join in with the YP activities and apply to join the council when there is a vacancy. The YPC has been selected through elections held amongst the YP who have joined the council, the results had been proposed to the Board which has taken the final decision. This same system will remain now that they are a Standing Committee (SC).

Oluwafemi Ajayi asked how the members of the WP are admitted. Gwen replied that this process varies by WP. Some working parties open membership allowing anyone to attend their meetings which they generally held at our congresses; some others have more limited membership and entry requires communication with the chairperson and/or co-chair. These latter WPs are generally trying to keep the number of members per country within a certain limit so as to not make the WP too large to function well. She suggested visiting the WP pages on the ISBT website to find more information and the contact for the Chair of the WP of interest. There are plans to create a position for a young professional in each WP.

Danielle Domersant enquired that, derived from the COVID-19 experience, has online participation been considered for the foreseeable future of Congresses? This participation would go beyond viewing the

presentations which are already made available post Congress: allow for additional participants, real-time questions, virtual presence of all poster authors, etc. Martin replied that we have been working with our professional congress organizer, MCI, to look at all the options and opportunities. A good example is today's General Assembly which has quite a high attendance compared to the past ones. Martin mentioned that for further congresses, all options would have to be considered to make our offering, congress and educational activities more online-friendly as these times call for flexibility.

Kothai Subramanian suggested that, apart from webinars, online courses can be conducted on ISBT Education during this lockdown period. Martin mentioned that ISBT is currently working to develop e-learning modules.

Dr Kamini Khillan asked if ISBT plans to have some training programmes in Immunohematology in developing countries. Martin mentioned that the ISBT Academy supports workshops in these countries. Also, as part of the strategic plan 2019-2024, ISBT would like to develop training in addition to traditional education and courses.

14. Announcement of the date of the next General Assembly

The next General Assembly is planned to take place in Milan on Tuesday June 8, 2021. Martin Olsson mentioned that there is a possibility for also having it online, as well as face-to-face.

15. Close of meeting

Martin Olsson thanked all the people involved in organizing this online General Assembly, particularly Jenny White. He also thanked the members present for attending, proposing, seconding and voting.