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Item 12

Topic: **Secretary-General's report 2015-2019 / Secretary General's report 2015-2019**

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This report presents an account of activities undertaken by the Secretary-General and some of the associated work of the Executive Committee during 2015-2019.

Executive Committee and other committees

The Secretary-General was elected for the second four-year term at the General Assembly in Rio de Janeiro in 2015. It was not originally planned to nominate me for this position in 2011, but in 2015 Menno-Jan Kraak, the presidential candidate also asked me to continue as a Secretary-General, so I was seeking for re-nomination. The support from the Hungarian ICA National Board and that of my employer, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest that I be nominated is acknowledged here too. The most difficult part of my term started in 2017, when I was also elected for Vice-Rector of my university. I offered my resignation, but the ICA Executive Committee asked me to complete my term.

It is clear that the relationship between the President and the Secretary-General is crucial to the success of the ICA, and I have benefited from the input, direction and personal contact offered by both the current President, Menno-Jan Kraak and the Past-President, Georg Gartner.

The work of the other committees appointed by the ICA – the Awards Committee under David Fairbairn, the Statutes Committee under Tim Trainor and Derek Clarke, and the Publications Committee under Monika Sester – must also be acknowledged. I always had the opportunity to ask for their advice and contribution.

Communication

Much of the day-to-day work of the Secretary-General in fact relies on contacts with people other than those listed above. Maintaining communication and ensuring effective information flow with the members of the ICA is clearly the priority of the Secretary-General. I have been pleased to engage with helpful and interested members of the cartographic community from various countries from all over the world. It has been a pleasure to receive messages from around the world each day: I tried to reply them quickly, but sometimes the valid answer required more time. The number of e-mails received has increased steadily in recent years. Wherever I travelled, I always tried to be on-line and check and respond my e-mails continuously.

The traditional letter circulation is very low: only a few national and affiliate members request traditional paper letters, but the invoices and the important messages were also sent out in postal letters when it was appropriate.

Several mailing lists were created to support the communication with national members, affiliate members and commission chairs.

Commissions and Working Groups

The other major correspondence for the Secretary-General has been with the Commissions and Working Groups of the Association. These organizations are the driving force behind the ICA's commitment to advancing the discipline of cartography. I am grateful to the chairs of Commissions and Working Groups for their voluntary participation and valuable contribution to the ICA, and for responding to my requests for information when asked. The regular reports from Commissions and Working Groups to the EC form a useful summary of the progress of our discipline, and their websites (linked to the main ICA website) reflect this activity.

Website and outreach

It is through the ICA website that we advertise ourselves to the world. The ICA must be constantly indebted to our webmasters, Felix Ortog and Manuela Schmidt from the Technical University of Vienna, who have, from 2007, re-designed, launched, managed and maintained an exemplary website of which the ICA should be proud. They also successfully moved the website service to a professional company to guarantee more stable and powerful access to our website. We created an internal section on the ICA website, where commission chairs can access travel reports, commission reports and commission expenditures' statistics. I have got access to the website and the ICA Facebook page, so sometimes I myself make changes, updates on the website or publish photos on the Facebook page.

Of equal importance to the website is the regular publication of ICA News. The ICA has been fortunate in retaining the services of Igor Drecki, University of Auckland, who has edited a significant number of volumes of ICA News. Igor's skills in initiating, requesting and presenting material about the ICA are exceptional and the end product of his efforts is a shining example of the creativity and attention to detail, which is the hallmark of all cartographers.

David Fairbairn, my predecessor was so kind and managed the regular, bi-monthly submission of the ICA page in the GIM International magazine. This opportunity to promote the ICA in this leading international trade journal in geomatics is very useful for our association. Menno-Jan Kraak, ICA President has submitted similar columns to ESRI's ArcNews. David Fraser edited our monthly electronic newsletter on cartographic news.

Visits and meetings

Each Commission and Working Group of the ICA has a liaison member from the Executive Committee to ensure that their activities are being undertaken effectively. The ICA is grateful that Commissions and Working Groups have invited EC liaison members to their meetings, and many such visits have been made by colleagues.

I had the opportunity to represent ICA in various countries, and I was also invited to several national and regional cartographic events: Czechia, Austria, Australia, India, Italy, Russia, Bulgaria, China, Argentina, United Arab Emirates, Algeria, New Zealand, Spain, Croatia, USA and Greece.

The ICC 2017 was and 2019 will be a very challenging event for the Secretary-General. Being responsible for so many different issues, keeping deadlines on my mind, solving problems, meeting ICA officers and national delegates were always not only challenging but inspiring too.

Strategic work

The work of the ICA Secretary-General is often channelled through the Executive Committee. The EC members have taken responsibility for and reported on the working 'environments' of cartography. We were working together on the new Strategic Plan of the ICA.

In many other ways, the 2015-2019 EC worked effectively on behalf of the Association. Diverse tasks such as refereeing conference papers, promoting the ICA in specialist meetings (including

United Nations, International Council for Science), undertaking outreach in workshops, and liaising with national and regional mapping agencies are further evidence of the role of the EC members. We have advised conference organizers, we have initiated, approved or endorsed successful regional cartographic symposia, we have signed Memoranda of Understanding with various organizations, and we have agreed to promote cartography through a wider use of the Solidarity Fund – maintaining ICA Scholarship winners’ attendance at international conferences, but also setting aside funds to support outreach workshops to less developed countries. Although the EC meets together infrequently (nine times in four years), we have been able to correspond regularly by electronic means: the geographical distribution of the EC members has spanned all continents, and the ICA benefits from this diversity. The use of chat, e-mail and the web has ensured efficient management of ICA business.

We started our scientific journal with Taylor and Francis, we created our new publication policy.

Budapest, 15 April 2019