

European Forum of Heritage Associations
Forum Européen des Associations pour le Patrimoine
Forum Europeo delle Associazioni per i Beni Culturali

14th GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2004
Plovdiv (Bulgaria), 21st – 23rd May

Minutes of the 14th General Assembly of Forum held in Plovdiv (Bulgaria), in May 2004

FORUM's 14th General Assembly was held from May, 21st to May, 23rd 2004 in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, hosted by the Bulgarian Association Vaptzarov's Faith Foundation, which submitted an accepted request to join Forum during Tarquinia meeting last November and whose President Maya Vaptzarova had invited all Forum members to hold this meeting in Bulgaria during the latest GA in Tarquinia. Plovdiv, the ancient Philippopolis, is a very old and characteristic town: it was in fact founded more than two thousands years ago. The importance of this town during the centuries was emphasised by the place chosen for the opening of the General Assembly: the Trakart Foundation, placed in the site of the EIPHNH residence, a building whose floors are covered with still beautiful mosaics dedicated to Eirene, goddess of Peace; the walls are covered with the works of George Trak, owner of the place and famous and appreciated Bulgarian mosaicist. The place faces the main road of old Philippopolis, which can be still used by pedestrians.

Evaluation of Quorum and opening procedures

Quorum evaluation

The Assembly begun with the opening procedures, counting the presences and the delegations and evaluating the quorum.

Present: 9 associations

- ANGO (Finland) represented by Lena Hakulin;
- Archeoclub d'Italia, represented by Pasquale Tucci (Martinsicuro seat);
- Archeolo-j (Belgium), represented by Forum Treasurer Catherine Breyer;
- Aurelia (Italy) represented by Forum Webmaster Roberto Cavallini;
- Centro Polesano Studi Storici Archeologici Etnografici (Italy), represented by Forum President Adriana Martini;
- Council For British Archaeology (United Kingdom), represented by Jacqui Wood (Saveock Water Archaeology);
- Gruppi Archeologi del Veneto (Italy), represented by Raffaella Gerola (proxy for Giorgio Mastella);
- REMPART (France), represented by Forum General Secretary Antoine Monpert;
- Vaptzarov's Faith Foundation (Bulgaria), represented by Maya Vaptzarova

Delegations : 6 associations

- Archaia, delegation sent by Michal Bures to Antoine Monpert
- Arqueojojem, delegation sent to Adriana Martini
- CeSMAP delegation sent to Adriana Martini
- CIRA delegation sent to Adriana Martini

- JCW, delegation sent by Tony Waegeman to Adriana Martini
- NJBG, delegation sent by Mira Spijker to Antoine Monpert

Not present : 3 associations

- Centro de Archeologia de Almada
- Gruppi Archeologici d'Italia
- Offene Häuser

Summing up

9 Associations present with delegates

6 Associations present by delegation

3 Associations absent

With 15 Associations out of 18 the quorum was reached.

Membership

OUT: 2 associations will be out of the Forum if they do not pay their membership fees before the end of the year 2004: Archaia and Associação Portuguese de archeologia industrial.

IN: A.V.E.C, as associated member.

The Forum accepted the change of the name of the Bulgarian association: "Bulgarian Association for National Heritage" replaces "Vaptzarov's Faith Foundation"

Total

16 full members + 1 associated member

Opening speeches

The first session of the 14th General Assembly was started by the Mayor of Plovdiv, Ivan Chomakov, who thanked George Trak and gave a short resume of the history of his town, of its importance in the ancient world and of its role of meeting place among different religions and different cultures, with mutual respect. Mr Chomakov also talked about Plovdiv present and future projects.

Forum President Adriana Martini insisted on how Bulgaria is a significant element for Europe and emphasised the importance of a common work and of a network in order to work together and to solve problems together.

Opening speeches also insisted on the need of finding the funds necessary for restorations and the opportunities that can grow with a valid co-operation as regards the budget, the training and the exchange of people.

Operative decisions

The Board decided that all Associations that do not pay the associative sum for three consecutive years are out of the FORUM.

Membership application form

Antoine Monpert presented a membership application form. Currently there is no formal application process for new members. The General Secretary should have all the information available. The form should be sent to the present members, in order to have a full information about them. It should also be sent upon request to the associations which are interested in joining the Forum. On the new Forum website it would also be possible to download the form.

The proposal of the form was accepted.

New memberships

FORUM accepted a new association presented by its counsellor Raphael Souchier: this association is called A.V.E.C. (Alliance de Villes Européennes de Culture), is based in Pécs, Hungary, and is a network of cities, towns and regions all around Europe, with different situations and common points, working in co-operation with Universities, supranational Bodies (e.g. l'UNESCO) and Governments (e.g. the Hungarian one).

Financial matters and future activities

Forum Treasurer Catherine Breyer presented the budget, that was unanimously approved.

Letters will be sent by Catherine Breyer to the following associations asking for membership fees: Archaia, Associação Portuguesa de archeologia industrial (if not paid before the end of the year, they will be out), SDA (which was out of the Forum in 2003).

Adriana Martini presented the Town twinning programme, which allows municipalities throughout Europe to implement common actions in various fields, such as heritage and archaeology, and youth activities. Since almost every member of the Forum works in close relationship with one or more municipalities, it could be an idea to develop twinings between the municipalities in order to develop projects among Forum members.

Catherine Breyer presented the project of a workshop in September in Belgium: it will be dedicated to workcamp leaders and associations members who will have the opportunity to share experiences about the pedagogical activities in the field of archaeology and heritage for young people. This meeting will be funded by the Action 5 of the European Youth Programme. This programme should be more used by the associations to implement common activities.

Maya Vaptzarova asked if it could be possible to build a project in the frame of the TACIS programme which would help the Bulgarian association to develop activities for involving the young people in the archaeology and heritage preservation of their country.

Raphaël Souchier proposed also a co-operation between the AVEC network and the Forum members to set up common projects (for example: Costanza in Romania, Mertola in Portugal). A co-operation should be found between the municipalities and the associations.

Website

During the last meeting of the Forum in Venice (February 2004), a group worked on a new website for the Forum. The purposes of the new website are the following:

- to promote the Forum in a better way on the internet
- to exchange more information between the members on the website
- to promote especially the voluntary workcamps of the members

Antoine Monpert presented the result of this working group and the proposal for a new structure. Among the proposals:

- a leaflet in different languages to be downloaded by the visitors of the website, or by the members
- a list of keywords, so that the website can be found on search engine
- a mailing list to inform about the news on the website
- a page for each member to present its association and activities, with a link to its own website
- a page for each member to present its voluntary workcamps
- an agenda to present the events and news of all members

The proposal has been accepted. Roberto Cavallini will create the new structure for the website, and take the useful information from the current website. Antoine Monpert will ask to all the Forum members the information needed for the new website, and also the keywords they would like to add.

UISPP 2006 congress

During the last congress organised in Forlì, more than 100 volunteers from the Forum members were involved in the organisation (translation, daily life, communication, editing, etc.).

The next congress will be held in Lisbon on the 4-9 September 2006. Forum will be involved as it was in 1996. The Board accepted the invitation of Portuguese Association Arqueojovem to hold the next G.A. in May, 2005 in Portugal. In this occasion, the Forum will prepare its participation to the UISPP congress, too.

The invitation to the congress has to be made to all the Forum members before May 2005. After May 2005, the Forum members will have to find volunteers for the organisation of the congress, which is a unique opportunity of meeting the best specialists in prehistoric and protohistoric archaeology. The Forum GA 2005 will also have to set up a special commission for the participation of the Forum to the congress.

Next appointments

July 2004: meeting in Paris with Luiz Oosterbeek (Archeojovem).

The Forum accepted the proposal to hold a Board in Bulgaria before the end of 2004, in order to strengthen contacts among Bulgarian members and members from the rest of Europe. The goal is to organise an archaeological camp in Bulgaria next year.

Confirmation

The entire Board was unanimously re-elected.

Other activities

During the days of the General Assembly all delegates visited various important archaeological, historical and religious sites around Plovdiv. The first visit was in the Thracian cult centre in Starosel, which is a tomb of the V century b.C.

After the closing of the works all delegates visited Smolyan, a town in the mountains near Greece, which is rich in traditions and which is considered the birthplace of Orpheus. Here they met by the Mayor, Ms Dora Yankova, by Ms Tanya Mareva, director of Smolyan Historical Museum, and by other local authorities. The discussion was about the problems and the projects of this community.

Before the end of the day the delegates visited the Bachkovo monastery, a very important Bulgarian religious centre founded about one thousand years ago, dedicated to the Archangels and rich with frescoes of various ages.