

Annual Report 2010

This Annual Report summarizes the activities of the IUBMB in 2010

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Report of the IUBMB President (Angelo Azzi)

Organization and participation in the IUBMB Executive Committee meeting in Melbourne (October 2, 2010)

Participation in the organization of new advanced schools

- **Advanced School on “Epigenetics: Molecular Mechanisms, Biology and Human Diseases”**, Sheshan, Shanghai. Local organizer: Xiao Yan Ding. Venue: Sheshan Forest Hotel of Songjiang County, Shanghai. Date: 12-17 July, 2010. The participation of FEBS as co-organizer of the event was not possible due to the late application by the Chinese organizers. A general discussion on FEBS participation as co-sponsor in the organization of non-European advanced schools is taking place within the FEBS Council. The ASBMB has provided support of \$7500. Given the emerging significance of epigenetic roles in normal development, diseases, stem cell research and aging, the training course is entitled “Epigenetics: Molecular Mechanisms, Biology and Human Diseases”. The course will be focused on the following topics: 1. DNA methylation: mechanism and biological function; 2. Histone modifications: mechanism and biological function; 3. siRNA guided chromatin modification; 4. Chromatin modification and transcription regulation; 5. Epigenetics in stem cell and early embryonic development; 6. Epigenetics in cancer and other diseases.
- **Advanced School on “Biochemistry of Biofuels”**, Costa Verde – Ubatuba, Brazil. In collaboration with the ASBMB and SBBq (Brazilian Society of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology) with Debora Foguel as chair of the organizing committee. The Advanced School on “Biochemistry of Biofuels” is a new, intensive course of 6 days (Sept. 26 – Oct 3, 2010) aimed at creating competence and stimulating new ideas for biochemical, genetic and physiological approaches to biofuels among young researchers who wish to begin careers in biofuels, or who are already pursuing projects in this area. It is jointly sponsored by the American, International and Brazilian Societies for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (ASBMB, IUBMB and SBBq). Applications consider 40 advanced PhD students, post-doctoral fellows and young researchers no more than 5 years past the PhD degree, working in any geographic region. Successful candidates receive a stipend for travel and housing. The course consists of 27 lectures, afternoon discussion groups built around project proposals and ongoing student projects, and four evening lectures on the impact of biofuel production in the developing world. Students have ample time for informal contacts aimed at establishing new collaborations and receiving advice on research strategy and career development.
- A second **Advanced School** in China has been initiated, “**Functional Analysis of Disease Models**”. Further administrative functions relative to the advanced schools have been delegated to Stathis Gonos.

Haidi Yin and the “Friends of the IUBMB”

After the IUBMB Congress in Shanghai, the e-mail addresses of 1500 participants that visited the IUBMB booth were transcribed in a database by Qian Hu. Haidi Yin offered her complementary services to the IUBMB to establish a network among the participants (Friends of the IUBMB). Through a mass mailing program (paid by the IUBMB), the 1500 e-mail addressees have been contacted and only a small number of them (about 10%) opted out. To the others, Haidi has sent five newsletters illustrating the activities of the IUBMB, its publications and its journals. The same information sent to the friends of the IUBMB has been also circulated among the Executive Committee. This activity continues, and additional friends have been added from the list of participants in the conference in Australia. In due time, this program will be transferred to the Secretary General.

ICSU Bio-Unions Cluster

After a series of preparatory e-mail exchanges, the Meeting of the Bio-Unions Cluster (BUC) took place at the French Academy of Sciences - 23, quai de Conti - 75006 PARIS - FRANCE on April 6, 2010, in the Salle Edouard Vuillard. Members from the following Unions were present:

IUBMB - Angelo Azzi; IUBS - Giorgio Bernardi and Nathalie Fomproix; IUIS - Gilbert Faure; IUMS - Geoffrey L Smith; IUPESM - Dov Jaron and Fridtjof Nuesslin; IUPHAR - Urs Ruegg; IUPS - Walter Boron, Denis Noble and Daniel Ricquier.

Agenda Items: 1. Bio-Unions' common topics of concern, such as payment of dues, revenues/losses from publications, organization of scientific events, etc. 2. Projects that can bring the Bio-Unions together in activities of common interest. 3. Activities that may be performed jointly to bring financial support and visibility to the Bio-Unions. 4. General strategies of the Bio-Unions to provide a useful service to the rapidly changing world of science.

In the following order, representatives of the unions attending the meeting presented short summaries of their activities: IUPS, IUMS, IUIS, IUPESM, IUBS, IUPHAR. Many of the activities such as Union Congresses, sponsored symposia, travel fellowships, and outreach programs have been shown to be common to all the Bio-Unions. In the discussion, Denis Noble pointed to the importance of the outreach to the developing world, with teaching and social networking. Several preview projects can be united. Geoffrey Smith indicated as important points the lack of representation in the ICSU control organisms (executive board, CSPR) and suggested the need of proportional representation of the BUC, in the executive board and in the most important committees including the nominating committee. To this end, it is important that vacancies, important dates for nominations, etc. are circulated within BUC in time to permit action. Geoffrey L. Smith and Walter Boron, together with the executive secretary of the IUBS Nathalie Fomproix, will collect and distribute this information.

The following common activities have been proposed: 1. A scientific "showcase" meeting with top representatives of the bio-unions (1-2 days) or a scientific convention (like the FASEB meetings). A proposal for this activity should be coordinated by Geoffrey Smith, Walter Boron and Angelo Azzi. 2. Advanced schools in the developing countries. Possible topics are to be defined by the IUIS together with the IUMS, IUPHAR, IUBMB and IUBS. Basic oncology and therapy was also proposed as a unifying topic. Angelo Azzi read a statement on the role of ICSU, which was approved for presentation at the ICSU meeting on April 7th. Next meeting of the BUC will be on September 24, 2011, in coordination with the 2011 ICSU General Assembly in Rome. IUBMB has proposed to have on this occasion a plenary lecture of a very highly qualified biologist.

Committee on the Standards of Graduate and Undergraduate Curricula in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology

The first formulation and writing of the Standards for the Ph.D. Degree in the Molecular Biosciences goes back to 1989. The decision to revise and extend the 1989 recommendations was taken by Bill Whelan and the responsibility as Chair of the Working Group was given to Frank Vella. Leopoldo de Meis, Chair of the IUBMB Education Committee, was given the function of liaison with the IUBMB EC. The other members have been Alan H. Mehler, Wilfried Rombauts and Harold B. White. It should be remembered that more than 100 persons are acknowledged for their help in the preparation of this document, which was completed in 1999. Ten years after the publication of the first revision, it appeared useful to have a second revision and to develop, as well, guidelines for undergraduate programs in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology. After consulting with a number of colleagues, the following "Working Group for the Revision of the IUBMB Guidelines for Graduate and Undergraduate Programs in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology" was created. George Kenyon, who has much experience in the IUBMB, has agreed to be Chair of the committee. The size has been kept small to facilitate operations. Members of the committee are George Kenyon, Chair, Susan Hamilton, Dagmar Ringe, Frank Vella and Adele Wolfson. Frank Vella took responsibility for coordinating the entire project, however, after he had presented a comprehensive draft of the "standards" for both the graduate and undergraduate programs, some members of the committee indicated that the two projects had to be separated. Following this, Frank Vella resigned. Following the indication of need to produce two separate documents, Manuel João Costa, Braga, Portugal, agreed to chair the subcommittee "Undergraduate Standards". The report on both programs was made by George Kenyon at the EC meeting in Melbourne.

Collaboration with Other Unions

Collaboration with the IUPAC has resulted in the participation at the opening ceremony for the Year of Chemistry, January 2011 in Paris, and in granting collaboration for the Year of Crystallography. The IUBMB has also been invited to organize a symposium on the occasion of the IUPAC Congress in Puerto Rico (August 2011).

Collaboration with the General Secretary

The following applications for Jubilee Lectures have been received and granted:

- Emma Whitelaw, Miami Winter Symposium, 2011
- Johannes von Lintig, Meeting on Carotenoids, Boston, 2011
- John Mattick, FEBS Congress 2011, Torino, Italy

Collaboration with the Treasurer

Bordier & Cie. A visit was paid in Geneva to the Suisse private bank Bordier & Cie (Mr. Joseph Gomez, Director) with Joan Guinovart on March 3, 2010. Both the signatures of the President and Treasurer have been deposited. The information regarding the present composition of the Executive Committee of the union has been updated. All information regarding the management of the IUBMB portfolio has been transferred to the Treasurer.

Credit Suisse, Bern. A commercial bank account in the name of IUBMB has been opened c/o Credit Suisse, Christoffelgasse 6, Bern, Switzerland (contact person Vice-President Francisco Xavier Martin). The signatures of the President and Treasurer have been deposited. The account of the IUBMB Inc. in Boston in the Bank of America has been used for the administrative maintenance of the account (bank fees), for the payment of the registration of the charity c/o Attorney General, Massachusetts and for the income tax return.

Collaboration with the Liaison for Congresses and Conferences

Consultations with PCOs INCON and Congrex (face-to-face and/or by e-mail) have taken place to establish the possibility of having a PCO responsible for the organization of the IUBMB congresses and conferences. Both companies provided business models which could make the IUBMB meetings financially profitable. Further discussions are ongoing and a document will be prepared and presented to the Executive Committee for discussion.

Preparation of the booth (posters, equipment and promotion) for the Melbourne Conference was coordinated.

Organization of a symposium at the **IUPAC Congress** in Puerto Rico, July 30 - August 6, 2011, "From Protein Structure to Cell Regulation".

Together with Stathis Gonos, a visit to Mexico (Tuxtla and Mérida) took place in November 2010 within the scope of verifying the local situation (venue and program) relative to the forthcoming IUBMB conference. The visit has been very important in helping to tune up the conference plans.

Negotiations with EMBO on the collision with the Seville IUBMB Congress. The finding that EMBO had planned a meeting in Madrid in 2012 partly overlapping in time with the IUBMB Congress in Seville prompted a series of exchanges aiming at finding a reasonable solution in the interest of both organizations and, above all, of science. The Secretary General of FEBS has been continuously in contact with the President of IUBMB with the purpose of finding a joint solution. The possibility which was favored by FEBS and the IUBMB has been a joint meeting on the template of the Experimental Biology meetings in the United States. Despite a number of attempts and discussions with Maria Leptin, President of EMBO, and with a number of EMBO Council members, the idea of a joint meeting has been postponed in favor of a change in date and venue (Nice, France) of the EMBO Congress.

Collaboration with the Publications Officer.

Collaboration was offered in the maintenance of contacts with Anita Lekhwani and later on with Justin Jeffryes (Book Series) and the renewal of the publishing agreement for BAMBEd and its complete online archives publication. A visit was made to Wiley-Blackwell, Hoboken (in substitution for Willy Stalmans, incapacitated by an accident) together with Parvis Shamlou (Editor-in-Chief) to coordinate the transfer of Biotechnology and Applied Biochemistry from Portland Press to Wiley-Blackwell.

Collaboration with the IT officer.

In a number of discussions with Peter Ott, strategized to transfer the IUBMB website from a server at the University of Bern to a commercial server of the company Frappant and other server for the IUBMB archives (for more details see report of the IT officer).

Report of the General Secretary (Michael Walsh)

My term as General Secretary officially began on January 1, 2010. However, I was in regular contact with Jacques-Henry Weil, the outgoing General Secretary, since the Shanghai Congress in August 2009 in order to "learn the ropes". I began my official duties on January 1, 2010 and visited Jacques in Strasbourg where I spent 3 days in late January completing the transition process and arranging for the transfer of materials to Calgary. During that period, we also had a visit from Peter Ott who came from Geneva to brief me on the IUBMB website management and procedures involving communication with Adhering Bodies and Associate Adhering Bodies. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Jacques wholeheartedly for his painstaking and patient teaching of all that is involved in the job of the General Secretary, and Peter for making the trip to Strasbourg. Subsequently, Jacques mailed me the materials (ties, scarves, Briefing Books, agendas and minutes from earlier Conferences and Congresses, etc.) that we had decided needed to be transferred to Calgary, and they arrived safely in due course.

One of the most important duties I have performed to date concerns the acquisition of new Associate Adhering Bodies. Late in Jacques' tenure, two biochemical societies, the Armenian Association of Biochemists and the Myanmar Biochemical Society, had expressed an interest in becoming Associate Adhering Bodies of the IUBMB. I received the application materials from both societies and initiated the process for their admission to the IUBMB in accordance with the Statutes and ByLaws of the Union. Both applications were unanimously supported by the Executive Committee. Since there was then no objection to the admission of either the Armenian Association of Biochemists or the Myanmar Biochemical Society from existing Adhering and Associate Adhering Bodies during the prescribed four-month period, I am pleased to report that both have been admitted to the IUBMB as Associate Adhering Bodies. This will need to be ratified by a vote at the next IUBMB General Assembly to be held in conjunction with the IUBMB Congress in Seville, Spain in 2012.

I conducted a final careful proofreading of the revised Statutes and ByLaws, and arranged for their printing at the University of Calgary, and was provided an excellent quality product at a reasonable price. Copies were circulated to all the EC members, and to the contact person at each of the Adhering and Associate Adhering Bodies. In addition, several copies were sent to Angelo Azzi for distribution by him.

I arranged with Peter Ott for the production of a set of IUBMB business cards for each of the EC members, which were then distributed.

I participated in the Young Scientist Forum in conjunction with the 12th IUBMB Conference/21st FAOBMB Conference (OzBio2010) held in Melbourne, Australia from September 23 - 26, 2010. This included presentation of a lecture entitled "Travels of an academic biochemist" as part of a Career Development Session.

Much of the General Secretary's time is taken up with the day-to-day business of the Union, which includes correspondence with members of the Executive Committee, individuals with specific queries about the Union, ICSU as the umbrella organization for scientific unions, various organizations that publish information about international scientific communities, etc.

Report on the Wood-Whelan Research Fellowships (M. Iqbal Parker)

The Fellowship Committee consisted of, Avadheshia Surolia from India, Irene Díaz Moreno from Spain, Carla Ribeirao Polycarpo from Brazil, and M. Iqbal Parker from South Africa, chair).

In 2010 the Fellowship Committee received 47 applications (37 in 2009) and awarded 15 fellowships (15 in 2009), of which 2 of the 15 fellowships were declined as these participants received an EMBO travel fellowship.

According to my records, we committed 27,700 USD in 2010, but as usual, the amount actually spent by the Treasurer might be slightly different, because the Euro/USD exchange rate varied during the year (some fellowships are paid in Euros), and because some awards, especially those made at the end of the year, are only paid the following year. With only US\$28,000 of the 40,000 USD committed (or spent), we underspent somewhat on the fellowship budget, which is 120,000 USD for the triennium (or about 40,000 USD per year).

In **another section of the website** (under «Young Scientist Support»), there is a table giving, for each of the 15 awardees, details on the research project, the duration of the stay, the amount awarded (in USD), the sending and receiving laboratories and the host lab supervisor.

The following figures can be mentioned :

- The success rate was 32 % (40.5 % in 2009).
- The average age of the awardees was 28.8 years (28 in 2009).
- The average length of the stay in the receiving laboratory was approximately 2.3 months (3.1 in 2009).
- The average amount awarded was 2,192 USD (2,721 USD in 2009). The maximum which can be awarded is 3,000 USD.
- Countries of the sending laboratory: Argentina (9), India (2), Brazil (1), Ukraine (1), Barcelona (1)
- Countries of the receiving laboratory: USA (4), Italy (2), Poland (1), Argentina (1), Bern (1), UK (1), Barcelona (1), Denmark (1), Sweden (1), Spain (1).

More than half of the applications submitted (out of 47) were from Latin America, while almost half of the awarded fellowships (11 out of 15) and almost half of the money (US\$ 23,600 out of the committed amount of US\$ 28,000, namely 84%) went to applicants from Latin America.

Report on the Publications Portfolio (Willy Stalmans)

This report focuses on two publishing activities where important changes occurred in 2010.

Biotechnology and Applied Biochemistry (BAB)

On May 25, 2010, I received a totally unexpected e-message from John Misselbrook, Head of Finance of the Biochemical Society & Portland Press. He reported that recently an extensive timesheet analysis had shown that specifically the editorial costs for BAB had been significantly undercharged in recent years, to the extent that the balance for 2008 and 2009 showed an increasing deficit instead of the habitual profit. I want to state that Portland Press handled the financial implications quite courteously: they abstained from any retrospective correction for 2008, and for 2009 they still offered a goodwill payment of £10,000. However, for 2010 "and future periods" (quotation) profit share would be paid in accordance to contract. According to the latter, no immediate payment should be due by IUBMB for a deficit incurred in 2010 (and subsequent periods), until we would next make again a profit.

During subsequent correspondence and conversation with Chris Kirk, CEO of the Biochemical Society, I received the clear message that Portland Press did not perceive how to turn the journal again into a profitable business, and an encouragement to look for another publisher. I contacted three publishers for a bid, and in view of the limited time available for an orderly transition we chose after a short negotiation to entrust BAB to Wiley-Blackwell from 1st January 2011 onwards. There should indeed be a definite advantage in having all four IUBMB-owned journals published in the same house. Furthermore the publisher's conditions were very much in line with what we expected from our experience with the three other journals, ensuring a solid and stable profit to IUBMB.

One volume would be published per year, at least initially in 6 bimonthly issues. Portland Press has been fully cooperative in ensuring a smooth transition of the e-archive and of the subscription base. A new general format and cover design were agreed upon.

The Wiley-IUBMB book series on Biochemistry and Molecular Biology

Some necessary background: during a meeting with Darla Henderson (Wiley) on April 29, 2007 in Washington, D.C., A. Azzi, W. Whelan and I decided to enter into this project on behalf of IUBMB. A. Azzi proposed there a first volume, on "Plant Phenolics and Human Health", to be edited by César Fraga (U.C. at Davis). The latter volume was soon agreed upon, and was published in the autumn of 2009. Other volumes (6 in all) have been commissioned by A. Azzi and W. Whelan in the course of 2008-2009.

However, Darla Henderson, who had been very efficient, left Wiley in January 2008. She was replaced by A.L., who soon made it clear that she favoured another approach, i.e. (in spite of an elementary knowledge of biochemistry) to take on herself the selection of new book editors, a task that was contractually reserved to the editorial board members. In spite of my firm opposition, she commissioned herself early in 2010 independently one volume (on "Cholesterol Regulation of Ion Channels and Receptors"), which she followed up energetically. The really bad aspect is that ultimately we discovered that (after the Fraga volume) A.L. had not followed up any of the projects that had been commissioned by editorial board members.

On October 5, 2010, we received the news that A.L. had finally been removed from the Wiley-IUBMB book series. Her function was

taken over by Justin Jeffries, who is currently doing an excellent though not very comfortable job in contacting the neglected potential book editors, with variable success.

Report of the Committee on Symposia (M. Iqbal Parker)

A total of 26 applications were received in both calls. Sixteen applications were approved for funding while four applications were received late and six applications were unsuccessful.

These approved symposia were held in Italy (2), Sweden (1), Greece (3), Germany (1), India (1), Poland (1), Portugal (1), Spain (1), Switzerland (1), South Africa (1), Bangladesh (1), Argentina (1) and Pakistan (1). The number of applications for the year 2010 was 6 more than in 2009 and 7 more than 2008. There seems to be a considerable increase in applicants for 2010, but the number of approved symposia remains the same as 2009. The selection criteria for the last two years have resulted in less successful applicants but with a higher funding level, as it was possible to increase the size of the awards to the successful applicants.

Geographical distribution:

FAOBMB: 3; PAMBMB: 1; FASBMB: 1; FEBS: 11

There have been a low number of applications from the FASBMB and FAOBMB regions, although an effort was made to encourage member countries to apply. There was only one applicant from the FASBMB region. A large part of the applicants came from the FEBS region. We have not received any applications from countries other than South Africa in the FASBMB region.

Total value of awards allocated for Symposia in 2010: US\$ 127,000

The activities supported by the Committees on Symposia in the year 2010 were as follows:

1. Membrane Domains in CNS physiology and pathology; held in Sicily, Italy, from May 22 – 26, 2010; (S1/2010); Contact person: A. Prinetti, Alessandro.prinetti@junimi.it
2. Structure and Function from Macromolecular Crystallography: Organization in Space and Time; held in Erice, Italy, from June 03 – 13, 2010; (S2/2010); Contact person: Prof Sir Tom Blundell, tom@cryst.bioc.cam.ac.uk
3. The Cytoskeleton in Development and Pathology; held in Sweden, from June 19 – 24, 2010; (S3/2010); Contact person: Roger Karlsson, Roger.Karlsson@cellbio.su.se
4. SFRR-2010 Summer School "Protein maintenance and turnover in ageing and diseases; held in Spetses Island, Greece, from June 04 – 10, 2010; (S4/2010); Contact person: Dr. Efstathios Gonos, Sgonos@jeie.gr
5. 6th International Conference on Protein Kinase CK2: "Protein Kinase CK2-a catalyst for biology, medicine and structural biochemistry; held in Germany, from September 07 – 10, 2010; (S5/2010); Contact person: Dr. Karsten Niefind, Karsten.Niefind@uni-koeln.de
6. ICGB/IUBMB Workshop on human RNA viruses; held in New Delhi, India, in February, 2010; (S6/2010); Contact person: Alessandro Marcello, Marcello@icgeb.org
7. 16th European Bioenergetic Conference – EBEC; held in Warsaw, from July 17 – 22, 2010; (S7/2010); Contact person: Adam Szewczyk, adam@nencki.gov.pl
8. Eukaryotic lipids; treasure of regulatory information; held in Spetses, Greece, from June 19 – 24, 2010; (S8/2010); Contact person: Prof Karel Wirtz, k.w.a.wirtz@uu.nl
9. XIIth Iberian Peptide Meeting; held in Lisbon, Portugal, from February 10 – 12, 2010; (S9/2010); Contact person: Miguel Castanho, macastanho@fm.ul.pt
10. Understanding Transient Molecular Interactions in Biology; held in Sevilla, Spain, from May 18 – 21, 2010; (S11/2010); Contact person: Irene Diaz Moreno, idiazmoreno@jus.es
11. Trends in Enzymology: Bridging the Biology and Chemistry Interface; held in Ascona, Switzerland, from June 13 – 17, 2010; (S12/2010); Contact person: Paul Fitzpatrick, Fitzpatrick@biochem.uthscsa.edu
12. Genomics and Proteomics Approaches in Cancer Research; held in Cape Town, South Africa, from September 05 – 11, 2010; (S13/2010); Contact person: Luiz Zerbini, Luiz.Zerbini@uct.ac.za

Report of the Member for IUBMB Conferences and Congresses (Efstathios Gonos)

OzBio2010 - The 12th IUBMB Conference and 21st FAOBMB Conference: "The molecules of life: from discovery to biotechnology", September 26th – October 1st, 2010, Melbourne, Australia. Regular contacts were made mainly with one of the organizers, Professor P. Nagley, regarding the scientific program as well as the organization of the Young Scientist Forum and the selection of students. No major problems were encountered and I consider the Conference as successful.

The 13th IUBMB Conference and the 1st PABMB Conference will be organized by the Mexican Society of Biochemistry (SMB) and held in the city of Merida, Yucatan from October 22nd to October 27th, 2011. The title of the Conference will be "Cell Signalling Networks". There were regular contacts with the organizers regarding several issues, including the hotels of choice (two hotels will be used having a maximum capacity of accommodating ~1000 participants), the selection of the invited speakers, the construction of the Conference's webpage and the organization of the Conference by a PCO. As there were significant delays regarding the delivery of most of the above-mentioned items by the organizers, an official visit, together with the IUBMB President, was made. The IUBMB President and I also announced the 13th IUBMB Conference to the 2010 Conference of the Mexican Biochemical Society in Tuxtla in November 2010.

The 21st IUBMB International Congress and the 37th FEBS Congress of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology will be held in 2012 in Seville, Spain. The dates of the Congress will be as follows: The Young Scientist Program: Sunday, September 2nd – Tuesday, September 4th; Congress: Tuesday, September 4th – Sunday, September 9th. The title of the Congress will be "From Single Molecules to Systems Biology". There are regular contacts with the local organizers. A major issue was the intention of

EMBO to organize a conference in Spain during the same period. Following extensive discussions, mainly by the IUBMB President and the FEBS Secretary General, EMBO has decided to move its Conference to Nice, France. A “Letter of Agreement” setting out the commitments made and obligations accepted by the Spanish Society of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, IUBMB and FEBS has been signed by the involved parties. Finally, a “Trans-Atlantic Meeting on Biochemistry and Molecular Biology” will be organized in Seville, Spain, on May 24th-26th, 2011. The Presidents of the National Societies of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology of Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Portugal, Morocco and Spain, as well as outstanding young group leaders from these countries, have been invited to participate in seven symposia mainly aimed at providing a general overview of the state-of-the-art in their respective countries.

IUBMB Conferences, 2013 and 2014. We have launched a call for applications to host the IUBMB 15th Conference in 2013 and the IUBMB 16th Conference in 2014. The application deadlines are/were: April 30th, 2010 for the 15th IUBMB Conference (2013) and April 30th, 2011 for the 16th IUBMB Conference (2014). Two applications, from Turkey and Morocco, have been received regarding the organization of the 15th IUBMB Conference in 2013. Both applicants have provided additional clarifications, following requests from IUBMB. It was decided Morocco would host the 2013 Conference in April 2013. The title of the Conference will be “Biomolecules and Signalling: From Microorganisms to Plants to Man”. Turkey has been invited to submit a new application to host the 2014 Conference.

IUBMB Congress, 2018. We have launched a call for applications to host the IUBMB 24th Congress in 2018. The application deadline is April 30th, 2012.

Proposal to bid for preferred PCO services. Contacts were made with three different Professional Congress Organizers (PCO), namely INCON, Congrex and Tarsus, regarding the provision of “an umbrella PCO” for the management of the IUBMB Congresses, Conferences and Meetings. INCON and Congrex have submitted applications to IUBMB and following discussion of the applications with Executive Committee members, the two PCOs provided me with further clarifications in personal meetings held with their representatives in Brussels, Belgium (in March, 2010) and in London, U.K. (in April, 2010) respectively. All relevant files have been submitted for consideration to the members of the IUBMB Executive Committee. INCON was asked to prepare a file for consideration regarding the organization of the IUBMB 15th Conference in 2013 in Morocco.

Agreement with FEBS regarding Advanced Courses. IUBMB has signed an agreement with FEBS regarding a joint initiative aimed at increasing the global participation of leading scientists as well as young scientists at FEBS Advanced Lecture Courses/FEBS Workshops/FEBS Special Meetings. The signed agreement has been submitted to the IUBMB Secretary General.

IUBMB Advanced Schools. Following a decision made during the last IUBMB Executive Committee meeting in Melbourne, I prepared and launched the “Guidelines for Organizing IUBMB Advanced Schools” as well as the relevant “Application” and “Final report” forms. An application from China has been received and its revised version has been approved. The title of the Advanced School will be “Toward Cutting-Edge: 2011 Advanced Summer School in Biochemistry and Molecular Cell Biology: Functional Analysis of Disease Models”. The Advanced School will be organized by Professor X. Ding and held at the Sheshan Forest Hotel, Songjiang County, Shanghai, from July 25th – 30th, 2011.

Participation at the FEBS Executive Committee and Council meetings. I represented IUBMB as an “Observer” at the FEBS Executive Committee Meetings in Tromso, Norway (March, 2010), in Gothenburg, Sweden (June, 2010) and in Zurich, Switzerland (November, 2010), as well as at the FEBS Council Meeting in Gothenburg, Sweden (June, 2010). Reports from all meetings have been submitted to the members of the IUBMB Executive Committee.

Report on the IUBMB Website (Peter Ott)

The website of IUBMB is used to spread continuously updated information on all the aspects of IUBMB and its activities. The site has an increasing popularity as can be seen from the summary overview of the access statistics for the years 1999 – 2010 shown in the table below.

Year	Page Views	Visits	Visitors
1999	37795	14183	9653
2000	89559	33546	22654
2001	89014	38065	27365
2002	102237	47396	34668
2003	108642	51954	36645
2004	126504	57246	38035
2005	134371	64896	45218
2006	167446	88007	60335
2007	167010	75706	47256
2008	185456	69313	43031
2009	232596	86499	52279

The most requested pages, besides the "Homepage" have been those with information about the activities of the IUBMB (meetings and congresses, symposia, education events), about Young Scientists Support (including the Wood-Whelan fellowships), about the Publications of the IUBMB (including the Standards for the PhD Degree and the IUBMB Nicholson Metabolic Maps) and - last but not least - the list of all the (Associate) Adhering Bodies with contact addresses including e-mail contacts.