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MINUTES OF THE SECOND MEGREC BOARD MEETING "Complexe Alhora" Congress Center Fès, Morocco; April 28th, 2006.

The second official meeting of the Board of the Mediterranean Countries Green Chemistry Network (MEGREC) was held in Fès (Morocco) on Friday April 28th, 2006.

The meeting started at 9.15 a.m.; the following MEGREC Board members were present (in alphabetical order according to country of origin):

- Prof. Mohamed Tawfic AHMED, Suez Canal University, Ismailia, Egypt;
- Prof. Panayotis A. SISKOS; University of Athens, Greece;
- Prof. Pietro R. TUNDO, Chairman; Interuniversity Consortium "Chemistry for the Environment" (INCA), Venice, Italy.
- Prof. Abdelhak KHERBECHE; University of Fez, Morocco;
- Prof. Teodor AST; University of Belgrade, Serbia and Montenegro;

The scientific & technical secretary of the Network:

- Dr. Fulvio Zecchini; INCA, Venice, Italy, and

the following representatives from candidate organizations were also present (in alphabetical order according to country of origin):

- Prof. Tahar SEHILI, University Mentouri-Constantine, Algeria;
- Dr. Ammar HOUAS, University of Gabès, Tunisia.

One Board member was absent due to previous mandatory commitments and sent his apologies to the Board through the Chairman:

- Prof. Carles ESTÉVEZ, Institut Univ Ciència i Tecnologia (IUCT), Barcelona, Spain

Agenda of the meeting:

1. Chairman's overview
2. Official affiliation of Egypt as founder country
3. Presentation by the representatives of candidate organizations / Admittance of new partners
4. Bookkeeping and annual balance, bank account, eligible uses of capital stock, other regulations
5. Future dissemination activities, contributions to the development of the MEGREC website
6. Applying for future educational & research projects under the 7th FP & other funding programs
7. Creation of a project preparation team
8. Devising the next board meeting and free discussion



1. Chairman's overview

The Chairman, Prof. Tundo, provided a general introduction to the meeting informing the Board that the Charter of the Network was registered by the Italian notary's 'Studio Notarile Bianchini' (Venice), thus the Network will act under Italian laws. He also reported about the forthcoming creation of a bank account for managing the stock capital of the Network and that decisions were to be taken about its management. He also remembered to the Board members that - within one year from the official affiliation - their organizations should deposit their subscription fee (€ 3,000) into the MEGREC bank account.

Then the Chairman reported about the forthcoming signature of the agreement with UNESCO for the participation of MEGREC in the UNITWIN (UNiversity TWINning) program for international university networks (a pdf copy of the agreement will be e-mailed to all Board members prior to signature).

Finally, the Chairman presented the draft of the headed paper of the network, which was approved by all Board members. It will have the MEGREC logo on top left, and the affiliated organizations listed in a leftmost column according to the alphabetical order of the country. Major official sponsors of the Network will be listed in the bottom of the first page of the headed paper. A model of the approved headed paper will be attached to these minutes.

2. Official affiliation of Egypt as a founder country

Since, due to *force majeure*, the representative from the Egyptian partner organization, Prof. Mohamed Tawfic AHMED was unable to attend the 1st MEGREC Board Meeting in Belgrade (Dec. 9th, 2005), the present Board members decided to preliminarily accept Egypt as a founder country. During the 2nd meeting, the 5 board members present in Belgrade confirmed their decision and Suez Canal University (Egypt) was officially admitted as a founder member. Therefore, the definitive line-up follows (in alphabetical order according to country of origin):

- Suez Canal University; Ismailia, EGYPT.
- University of Athens; GREECE.
- Interuniversity Consortium "Chemistry for the Environment" (INCA); Venice, ITALY.
- University of Fès; MOROCCO.
- University of Belgrade; SERBIA and MONTENEGRO.
- Institut Univ Ciencia i Tecnologia (University Institute of Science and Technology); Mollet del Valles (Barcelona), SPAIN.

3. Presentation by the representatives of the candidate organizations / Admittance of new partners

This topic immediately led to a preliminary discussion about the guidelines to be adopted by the Network for admitting new partners. The following criteria were identified and approved:

Geographical balance – The choice of new partners must take into consideration a balanced geographical distribution. With respect to this principle Prof. Tawfic underlined that no country of the Middle East Mediterranean regions is presently affiliated and fosters the recruitment of Lebanon and Palestinian Authority in the near future, since representatives from scientific organizations of these countries contacted him to ask for admittance into MEGREC.

Admission rate – Bearing in mind that 22 countries are present in the Mediterranean rim, it seems advisable to keep the admittance rate at 1-2 countries per year, in order to let the Network work smoothly, without major changes in the Board. This principle should be followed for the first years of activity, in order to have a limited amount of partners who will set the objectives and start the activities of the Network. Once that is done, no such restrictions should be necessary.

New Member's introduction – According to the Network's Charter, only the first affiliated organization of each country will send a representative to the Board with the right to vote, all other organizations of the same country may participate in the Network, but can just send observers to the Board meetings. So, particular care is needed when choosing the first member of a country. In order to assure a good scientific



quality and reliability of the candidate partners, the latter must be introduced by a Board member of the Network. The standard procedure for admittance is the following:

1. The Chairman (or eventually another Board member) is contacted by e-mail by an organization willing to enter the Network.
2. Once verified the quality of the organization, the Chairman or a Board member supports the new candidate and reports this to all the Board members (via e-mail).
3. The proposal is discussed by Board members (via e-mail).
4. If there is preliminary (unanimous) consent, the Chairman formally invites the representative of the candidate partner organization to attend the next Board meeting.
5. At the meeting, the formal decision of admittance is made.

The representatives of a Tunisian organization, Dr. Ammar HOUAS (Ecole Nationale d'Ingénieurs de Gabés, Université de Gabés), and of an Algerian organization, Prof. Tahar SEHILI (Laboratoire des Sciences et Technologies de l'Environnement, Université Mentouri – Costantine), were introduced to the Network by Prof. Kherbeche. After a presentation of their respective organizations, during a session restricted to Board members, they were unanimously accepted as 7th (Tunisia) and 8th (Algeria) partners of the Network.

Suggestions have been put forward that the next candidate organizations should come from Palestinian Authority and Lebanon (supported by Prof. Tawfic), and Slovenia (supported by Prof. Tundo and Prof. Ast). These proposals should be evaluated and discussed in the course of preparation of the next Board meeting.

4. Bookkeeping and annual balance, bank account, eligible uses of capital stock, other regulations

Bookkeeping and annual balance. Bookkeeping and the preparation of the annual balance of MEGREC as a *non-profit* organization will be performed by the administrative office of the Chairman's organization, INCA, in Venice (Italy).

Bank Account. A MEGREC bank account will soon be created at the "Cassa di Risparmio di Venezia" (Venezia-Marghera). It will initially host the capital stock, then all other funds coming from different sources, if no separate accountancy is requested. The Board unanimously approved the following (a short hand-written extract was signed during the meeting by the representatives and is attached to the present minutes):

Prof. Pietro Tundo is allowed by all the present Board members to operate the bank account of MEGREC through his signature.

Eligible uses of capital stock. MEGREC will act as a *non-profit* organization under the auspices of different NGOs, presently it is affiliated to the UNITWIN program of UNESCO, but further future affiliations are envisaged. The hub of the Network is officially seated in Venice, Italy, thus MEGREC will act under Italian regulations. Accordingly, the capital stock will be used for all the legal purposes of a *non-profit* organization.

Other regulations (communication via e-mail). As discussed in the 1st Board meeting, in order to make the Network's management agile, the communication among the partners will mainly take place by e-mail. During the present meeting the following rules for writing MEGREC-related e-mails were discussed. During bilateral discussions between Board members the sole addressee will be indicated in the 'TO' field of the e-mailing system, while all the other Board members will be addressed in the 'CC' (carbon-copy) field. This will allow other members to be aware of and to enter the discussion if they may add some proper contribution. In the case of communications to the whole Board, all the members should be included in the 'TO' field, so that each member will immediately realize that this is a matter of general interest to the Network and his/her comment, advice, and/or approval is requested.

Other regulations ('silent approval'). In order not to delay the Network's activities, the rule of the 'silent approval' was discussed and informally approved by the members at the 1st meeting in Belgrade. During the present meeting the 'silent approval' rule was officially accepted: *failure to reply within a 15-day period*



to an e-mail or any other type of written (fax, letter) query by the Chairman or any other Board member will be considered an approval.

An official e-mail note about the two previous issues (e-mail communication and silent approval) will be sent to all Board members by the Chairman in the near future.

Network's scientific & technical secretariat. During the 1st Board meeting, Dr. Fulvio ZECCHINI (INCA), was nominated as 'scientific & technical secretary' of the Network. A secretariat rotation by staff from other partner organizations was envisaged at each Board meeting. Nonetheless, none of the Board members raised this matter during the present meeting, so Dr. Zecchini will stay in charge until next meeting.

5. Future dissemination activities, contributions to the development of the MEGREC website

The Network's website was inaugurated on February 22nd, 2006 (www.megrec.org). Contributions to it are possible from all partner organizations, they will be collected at a national level by the corresponding Board member, then they will be sent to the scientific MEGREC collaborator, yet to be identified, who will then in his/her turn check, organize, and describe the materials (documents, scientific papers, newspapers' and magazines' articles, pictures, graphs, and links to other interesting websites). Then he/she will send them on a monthly base via e-mail to Miss Katuscia GRANDI (grandi_INCA@unive.it), the administrative person in charge of INCA's websites management, e-mailing a copy (CC) to the scientific & technical secretary, Dr. Zecchini (zecchini_INCA@unive.it), who is in charge of the supervision of MEGREC website.

Upon suggestion of Prof. Ast, a 'MEGREC Board members page' will be created. This page will contain the curricula of Board members and the basic information on their institutions. Board members should provide their CVs to Miss Grandi and Dr. Zecchini at their earliest convenience.

Newsletter. In order to inform major NGOs devoted to environment protection, decision makers, and general public about MEGREC objectives and activities, Prof. Tawfic suggested that a 'MEGREC newsletter' would be a valuable dissemination tool. He was recently asked by UNEP to write some articles about life cycle assessment, such papers could be written under the umbrella of MEGREC and a section dedicated to the Network could be hosted in the UNEP's webpage for life cycle assessment. Prof. Tawfic himself will coordinate the preparation of the newsletter with the contribution of other Board members. The newsletter will be sent to relevant addressees via e-mail and a copy will be available on MEGREC's website. On a yearly base, 4 issues of the newsletter will be released. At the present moment, the production of a hard copy is not envisaged.

Other NGOs will be involved in the realization of the newsletter. Format and envisioned content of the newsletters will be proposed by Prof. Tawfic within the first week of June 2006.

Future sponsors. Guidelines for the quest for new MEGREC sponsors and their eventual acknowledgement on MEGREC headed paper will be communicated by Prof. Tawfic. It was suggested that only the major sponsors, actively supporting the Network, will be reported on the headed paper.

MIO. Prof. Siskos reported about the Mediterranean Information Office (MIO, www.mio-ecsde.org) which is also active in dissemination for green chemistry worldwide and seats in Athens by Siskos' organization. Prof. M. I. Skoullou, director of Environmental Chemistry Laboratory, is acting as chairman of MIO organization. Prof. Siskos will contact the MIO office for dissemination of MEGREC activities.

Presentation letter. Each partner organization will write official letters on MEGREC headed paper in order to present MEGREC to selected academies, public agencies, policy makers, NGOs, etc. in their respective countries.

6. Applying for future educational & research projects under the 7th FP & other funding programs

The general issues of the 7th FP of the EC (2007-2013) were briefly described by Dr. Zecchini, who discussed which of the four specific programs, corresponding to four major objectives of European research policy – ‘Cooperation’, ‘Ideas’, ‘People’, and ‘Capacities’ -, could be appropriate for submitting MEGREC projects. Since specifically addressed to international scientific networking, the ‘Cooperation’ program was an easy choice. The ‘People’ program (Marie Curie’s Actions) will be taken into consideration for training and transfer of knowledge. Among the nine proposed topics for the ‘Cooperation’ program, four were chosen as the most appropriate for MEGREC:

- Food, Agriculture and Biotechnology;
- Materials and new Production Technologies;
- Energy;
- Environment (including Climate Change).

Prof. Tundo reported to the Board that the EC still accepts communications from national NGOs dealing with novel research priorities in Europe and its partner countries (deadline May 31st, 2006). Within 7 days from the meeting’s date, the Chairman will collect the Board members’ suggestions and send a communication to the EC by mid May 2006. To this end, seven major topics were already identified during the meeting:

- green technologies for wastewater management;
- persistent organic pollutants (POPs) in the food chain;
- green (eco-compatible) pesticides;
- ‘environmental health’;
- extension of the European REACH program (Registration, Evaluation and Authorization of CHemicals) to partner countries of the Mediterranean basin;
- clean energy from renewable feedstocks.

Some of the Board members will explore other chances for sponsoring MEGREC’s research and education projects. Prof. Tawfic will check the LIFE program by the EU and local funding programs in Egypt. Prof. Siskos will survey NATO and IUPAC funding programs in order to check for appropriate calls.

Two major possibilities for project submission were identified for the near future. A residual 6th FP call for Marie Curie Actions may be used for the submission of projects such as summer schools or training courses. One such summer school and workshop on Environmental Applications of LC-MS is planned by the University of Belgrade, a project presented during the meeting by Prof. Ast. More suggestions for the Marie Curie action should be submitted since the rules require a minimum of 4 events in the proposal. The deadline for submission is May 17th, 2006.

Another chance is that of UNEP program on POPs called ‘Stockholm Convention’. MEGREC was invited to submit research and education proposal for tackling the POPs question in the Mediterranean area. This work will involve the examination of more than 45 UNEP documents on POPs prior to starting the project preparation (http://www.pops.int/documents/meetings/cop_2/meetingdocs/default.htm). The Chairman is currently awaiting for comments of the Board members in order to reply to UNEP’s invitation

7. Creation of a project preparation team

The basic idea is to have a MEGREC Project Preparation Team (PPT) composed by one selected English-speaking researcher coming from each of the partner organizations (8 members), coordinated by one experienced project writer. Along with the Board, the PPT will monitor funding programs, identify the proper ones, prepare and submit the projects, upon Board’s approval. As reported by Prof. Siskos, a basic tool in order to evaluate environmental priorities in the Mediterranean area is the document entitled ‘Priority issues in the Mediterranean environment’ recently issued by the European Environment Agency (report no. 4/2006, free download at http://reports.eea.eu.int/eea_report_2006_4/en/tab_content_RLR). The official line-up of the PPT will be discussed during the 3rd MEGREC Board meeting (see below).

8. Devising the next board meeting and free discussion

In order to save time and money Board meetings are to be generally held on the occasion of international meetings of common interest to MEGREC partners. Such was the present one held in Fès in concomitance with the “Euro-Mediterranean Workshop on Liquid and Solid Wastes Treatment, and Green Chemistry” (April 27th, 2006). In line with this principle, it was decided that the next Board meeting will take place on the occasion of the NATO Advanced Study Institute (ASI) “New Organic Chemistry Reactions and Methodologies for Green Production” (Lecce & Otranto, Italy; Oct. 29th – Nov. 10th, 2006).

Applying for UNEP POPs program may involve a future meeting between managers from UNEP and some MEGREC Board members, in such a case an on-demand meeting may be organized in Venice.

The meeting ended at 1.15 p.m.

Done in Fès, Morocco, on April 28th, 2006.

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