

21. Addresses by the retiring and newly elected Officers
22. Closing Ceremonies

At the first session of the General Assembly, to be held on 21 August, items 1 through 11 will be considered. The remaining items, and any that may have been adjourned from the first session, will be considered at the second session, to be held on 30 August.

FIRST SESSION

*Held in the Great Hall of the University of Sydney, Sydney, N.S.W., Australia,
on Tuesday, 21 August 1973 at 10^h30^m*

Professor Bengt Strömgren, President, in the chair

The Government Astronomer, Dr H. W. Wood, Chairman of the Local Organizing Committee, welcomed the participants in the XVth General Assembly of the International Astronomical Union as follows:

'It makes us very happy to welcome to Australia so many colleagues who are well known to us through their work and who have become our dear friends when we have been fortunate enough to visit them in their own countries or to meet them at Assemblies of the Union and at meetings such as have been arranged in our part of the world for these few weeks.

On behalf of Australian astronomers I express the hope that you will enjoy your stay with us, that many old friendships will be renewed and new ones made, that our meetings will give momentum to progress of astronomy and, this may be tempting fate, that the weather will smile for us.

Tout ce que j'ai dit c'est: soyez les bienvenus! En avant l'astronomie! Et vive l'amitié!'

The President thanked Dr Wood in these words:

'Dr Harley Wood,

On behalf of the International Astronomical Union I wish to thank you sincerely for your warm words of welcome. I am happy to have the opportunity to tell you that we of the IAU have come here with high expectations. We greatly appreciate what you, as Chairman of the Local Organizing Committee, and the other members of that Committee have already done for us. Very many thanks.

The Inaugural Ceremony will take place in the Sydney Town Hall on Wednesday, 22 August, at 8. p.m. This means that today we shall go right on to the Agenda of the First Session of the General Assembly.'

1. *Formal Opening.* The President wished a hearty welcome to the Members of the Union, Invited Participants and their guests, representatives of Adhering Countries and National Committees of Astronomy, representatives of sister Unions and other organizations, and formally declared the first session of the fifteenth General Assembly of the Union open.

He welcomed in particular the official representatives of ICSU and other scientific Unions as follows:

ICSU	(International Council of Scientific Unions): Prof. C. de Jager
BIPM	(Bureau International des Poids et Mesures): Dr J. Terrien
COSPAR	(Committee on Space Research): Prof. J.W. Carver
FAGS	(Federation of Astronomical and Geophysical Services): Dr B. Guinot
IUCM	(Inter-Union Commission on Studies of the Moon): Dr A. Dollfus
IUCS	(Inter-Union Commission on Spectroscopy): Dr A. H. Cook
IUCST	(ICSU Committee on the Teaching of Science) Prof. Edith A. Müller
IUGG	(International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics): Prof. P. Melchior
IUPAP	(International Union of Pure and Applied Physics): Dr J. S. Dryden
URSI	(Union Radio Scientifique Internationale): Prof. W. N. Christiansen

The President then suggested that a message of thanks be sent to Sir Rutherford Robertson, President of the Australian Academy of Science, in appreciation of his kind words of welcome. This proposal was approved by acclamation.

The President continued by asking Members to stand while the General Secretary would read the names of Members who had died since the XIVth General Assembly, or whose death had not been known at the time of that meeting. The General Secretary then read the following list:

A. F. Alexander, G. A. Alter, L. M. J. Arbey, R. H. Baker, J. Baltà-Elias, A. C. Banerji, N. P. Barabashov, M. G. Barros de Perreira, L. V. Berkner, R. Bernas, I. S. Bowen, R. C. Cameron, J. F. J. G. Cox, A. De Moraes, J. Dick, V. A. Dombrovskij, W. J. Eckert, J. Febrer, V. G. Fesenkov, G. Gamov, K. A. Grigoryan, G. Guigay, O. Günther, L. Harang, F. J. Hargreaves, V. A. Heiskanen, C. D. Hellman, Mrs. L. H. Herzberg, A. Kahrstedt, M. Kamieński, Kao Ping-Tse, A. König, H. Kox, W. M. Lindley, C. E. Luplau Jansen, M. G. J. Minnaert, H. Nordström, H. Nowacki, V. R. Ölander, W. H. Ramsey, V. A. Sarabai, P. Sémirot, H. Shapley, R. Sibahara, T. E. Sterne, J. Q. Stewart, K. Stumpff, P. Tardi, J. H. Thomson, D. Tiles, Y. Väisälä, G. B. van Albada, U. van Schewick, U. van Wijk, V. V. Vitkevich, C. B. Watts, A. Wilkens, H. Zanstra, E. Zinner.

2. *Appointment of official interpreters.* The Assembly appointed by acclamation J.-C. Pecker as official interpreter.

3. *Report of the Executive Committee.* The President passed the word to the General Secretary who invited the Assembly to discuss the Report of the Executive Committee (see pp. 1–29), as printed and distributed at the statutory date, and said that he was prepared to answer any questions that might arise. There was no discussion, and the report was approved.

The General Secretary then informed the meeting that the Republic of Korea had applied for admission to the Union after the statutory deadline. This application requires, according to article 8(b) of the By-laws, the support of at least two thirds of the votes of Adhering Countries represented at the General Assembly and having the right to vote by virtue of Statute 11(a), to be placed on the Agenda for further discussion. The vote taken showed unanimity, with one abstention, for putting the application of the Republic of Korea on the Agenda.

4. *Report of the General Secretary.* The General Secretary then read the following addendum to the Report of the Executive Committee, covering the period January–August 1973:

‘My supplementary report on the activities of the Union covers the period from 1 January to 20 August 1973 and also includes the finances of the IAU until 30 June 1973.

The President, General Secretary (with his staff) and the Assistant General Secretary met in Paris, France, on 28 February, and in Copenhagen, Denmark, on 8 June 1973 to discuss the most urgent problems of the Union, finances included, and to work out procedural guide-lines for the General Assemblies. It was decided to transfer the IAU savings on American accounts to an account in The Netherlands. The forward budgets for 1973 and 1974–1976 were revised in the light of the devaluation of the U.S. dollar, and new proposals were prepared for the consideration of the Executive Committee.

The work of the Executive Committee continued by correspondence. It prepared its Report to the General Assembly, approved the budgets drafted by the Officers for submission to the Finance Committee, resolved to ask the General Assembly for an increase of 25% of the unit of contribution, and released the Agenda for the XVth General Assembly, as prepared by the General Secretary, for distribution to Adhering Countries. The General Secretary attended part of the meeting of the Working Group for Lunar Nomenclature on May 21 to 23 in Konstanz, FRG, and represented the Union at the XVth COSPAR Meeting in Konstanz, F.R.G., 28 May–6 June.

The Reports on Astronomy, prepared by the Presidents of Commissions, are an outstanding achievement and I wish to thank all those who contributed to their success. The Presidents of Commissions participated in the preparations of the scientific programme of the General Assembly,

sent in the Commissions proposals for new Presidents, Vice-Presidents, and Organizing Committees, made nominations for new Commission members, and presented motions for resolutions.

Only one scientific meeting was held in the span of 8 months I am reporting on. It was *Colloquium* No. 24 on 'Lunar Dynamics and Observational Coordinates', which took place in Houston, Texas, U.S.A. from 15 to 17 January and was cosponsored by COSPAR. However, 6 *Symposia* are being held in Australia simultaneously with this General Assembly and further 5 *Symposia* will be held in Poland in the framework of the Extraordinary General Assembly. The Union cosponsors another *Symposium* in Poland.

There is hardly a year in the annals of the Union so fertile in scientific meetings as the year 1973.

In addition to the Reports on Astronomy, which were published as *Transactions XVA* in June, there appeared 4 *Symposium* volumes this year: volume 49 on 'Wolf-Rayet and High-Temperature Stars', volume 51 on 'Extended Atmospheres and Circumstellar Matter in Spectroscopic Binary Systems', volume 54 on 'Problems of Calibration of Absolute Magnitudes and Temperature of Stars', and volume 55 on 'X- and Gamma-Ray Astronomy'. This brings the number of IAU Publications issued since the XIVth General Assembly to 17.

I wish to congratulate all those who contributed to these publications and especially to thank the Assistant General Secretary for his outstanding work, since the IAU publications were his responsibility. My thanks are also due to our publishers, the D. Reidel Publishing Company, whose task to bring out the volumes in time was not always the easiest.

The International School for Young Astronomers, held in Lembang, Indonesia, in July-August of this year, could be organized with local financial help, and thanks, mainly, to the generosity of those Adhering Countries that spontaneously increased their category of adherence. I wish to thank these Countries for their help.

The preparations of the observations of the solar eclipse of June 30, 1973, with its central track over North-Africa, needed intense coordination. An IAU party (Prof. Rigutti, Dr LaCount) visited several African countries to arrange for the local preparations, while also the IAU secretariat took an appreciable share in communicating with the governmental authorities of the various countries involved.

So much on the activities of the Union, which, as is seen, show an expanding tendency. Unfortunately, I cannot give you a favourable report on the finances of the Union. Our savings were, and still are, kept mainly in accounts of U.S. dollars whose value dropped through the devaluation of the U.S. currency and owing to general inflation to about 64% of their value in 1970. The situation will be examined by the Standing Finance Committee, to convene during this General Assembly. Clearly, the Union will have to choose a currency other than the U.S. dollar as basis for its budget and accounts.

In conclusion I wish to thank all those who contributed to the success of our activities during this period of office, and to express the hope that we shall find means and ways for stabilizing the finances of the IAU.'

5. Report by the President of the proposals for membership of the Executive Committee.

The President informed the Assembly of the rules adopted at the Moscow General Assembly in 1958 which provided for a Special Nominating Committee to advise the Executive Committee on nominations for the new Executive Committee. According to Article 12(a) of the By-laws in force the Special Nominating Committee submits its proposal to the General Assembly direct. The Special Nominating Committee appointed at the XIVth General Assembly in Brighton consisted of the present President, the former President, O. Heckmann, a Vice-President of the present Executive Committee, M. K. V. Bappu, and four IAU Members, G. H. Chebotarev, J. Delhaye, D. S. Heesch, and A. Poveda.

The Special Nominating Committee made to the General Assembly the following proposals as to the composition of the next Executive Committee:

as President for the period 1973–1976:

Prof. L. Goldberg, U.S.A.