

WORKING GROUP FOR THE WORLDWIDE DEVELOPMENT OF ASTRONOMY (GROUPE DE TRAVAIL POUR LE DEVELOPPEMENT MONDIAL DE L'ASTRONOMIE)

CHAIRMAN: A.H. Batten

The principal activity of the Group during the post triennium has been the organizing of a workshop for secondary-school teachers on the Indian sub-continent. This project arose out of discussions at the Group's half-day meeting in Buenos Aires, and was timed to coincide with the IAU Asian-Pacific Regional meeting held in Pune in August 1993. In concept, the workshop was similar to the one-day meetings organized at General Assemblies by Commission 46, and the Chairman is grateful to the President and several members of that Commission for help and advice. This meeting lasted two days and attracted between 40 and 50 teachers, mostly from India, but one each from Nepal and Bangladesh. Several participants had undertaken train journeys of four or five days duration in order to be present. Lecturers at the workshop (besides the Chairman) were J.V. Narlikar and N. Raghavan (both of India), S. Isobe (Japan), C. Iwaniszewska (Poland) and D.B. Hoff (U.S.A.). Unfortunately, M. Othman (Malaysia) was prevented from coming at the last minute. Regional meetings are, if anything, more suitable than General Assemblies for this kind of programme, and the Group hopes that teachers' workshops will become a common feature of regional meetings. The workshop was held at IUCAA in Pune, like the Regional Meeting itself, and the enthusiastic cooperation (including financial support) of the Director and staff of that institution is gratefully acknowledged. Financial support was also provided by the IAU.

The Chairman has sent out two newsletters in the past triennium and these have generated some correspondence. Sometimes help can be given by putting the correspondent in touch with existing IAU services. Several letters drew attention to the special problems being faced by astronomers on the African continent, and this led to the selection of "Problems of Astronomy in Africa" as the theme for a half-day meeting of the Group at the forthcoming General Assembly. At the time of writing, planning for this meeting is well advanced and we hope for contributions from several African countries. The Group is also developing relations with the UN Committee on Outer Space which is organizing a Space Science Workshop in Nigeria in late 1993, which the Chairman hopes to attend.

Another project of the group has been to develop relations with the small astronomical community in Viet Nam, following the initiative taken by Professor Kozai during his term of office as President of the Union. The Chairman has engaged in considerable correspondence and met two Vietnamese astronomers during the Regional Meeting in India. He is at present trying to arrange a visit to Viet Nam. A major topic of concern is opening up opportunities for Vietnamese to undertake graduate studies in developed countries.

Membership of the Group is at present ill-defined, although the Chairman has a list of those who have expressed interest in its activity. We are moving towards clarifying the criteria. In the meantime, he will be pleased to hear from any member of the Union who feels that the Group can be helpful, or who has ideas for future directions. One obvious function of the Group is to act as a clearing-house for information about the possibilities for research or study visits between countries. It can perform this function only if those in a position to offer opportunities will make them known to the Chairman. Response to a request for such information, made in the IAU *Information Bulletin*, has so far been disappointing.