MINUTES OF THE ECCAI GENERAL ASSEMBLY
At Paris, 7th July, 1995

ATTENDANTS:

Jean Paul Barthes (AFIA)

Ivan Bratko   (SLAIS) (Representing also Czech Cybernetic Society)

José Cuena   (AEPIA)

Jean Erceau   (AFCET)

Baltazar Frankovic (SKS) (SSKI now)

Carl Gustaf Jansson (SAIS) (Representing also Denmark Association)

Gerry Kelleher   (AISB)

Jean-Pierre Laurent (ECCAI)

Gabriel P. Lopez (APPIA)

Ramon Lopez de Mantaras (AI Communications)

Nicolaas Mars   (repres. NVKI and BAIA)

Johan Moller-Holst (NAIS)

Vadim Stefanuk   (SAAI)

Pietro Torasso   (AI*IA)

Maria Tóth   (John v. Neumann Society)

Wolfgang Wahlster (GI)

Manuel Zacklad   (ARC)

1.- CHAIRMAN REPORT

Jean-Pierre Laurent welcomes the attendees to the General Assembly. As first part of his report he comments on the modernisation of the ECCAI information distribution, made possible by the introduction of an ECCAI description in the WWW, including the ECCAI statutes (French and English translation version), the member associations, and current rules and procedures. This is a preliminary version that will be refined after new information has been received. It will be possible to include the Board meetings minutes.

2.- TREASURER REPORT

Nicolaas Mars presents the financial report for the year 1994/95.

ECCAI Financial report 1994/1995 (in ECU)

Starting balance 29-07-1994 67955

INCOME

Interest   600

Refund ECAI94 loan   15000

TOTAL INCOME   15600

EXPENSES

Travel awards   4000

Eastern Europe travel awards   9400

ECAI94 ECCAI General Assembly   415

ECAI94 logo   1060

AI Communications Vol.7   1550

ECCAI Board meetings   6163

ECAI96 preparation   710

Banking costs   173

TOTAL EXPENSES   23471

CURRENT BALANCE   60084

A part of this Current Balance has been committed already:

ECCAI Board meetings   1859

AI Communications Vol. 8   1450

ECAI96 preparation   2400

Secretarial support   1020

TOTAL COMMITTED   6729

EXPECTED BALANCE July 1, 1995   53355

where an expected balance of 53355 ECUs will be available by the end of July. The
Assembly approves this report.

3.- SECRETARIAT ISSUES

Jean-Pierre Laurent presents an homage to Susan Struthers who leaves the Secretariat
of ECCAI after nine years of services from the Istituto per la Ricerca Scientifica
e Tecnologica (IRST) in Trento. A present was given to her in appreciation of all
her years of ECCAI support, applauded by the General Assembly's participants.

Jean-Pierre Laurent comments on the need of a Secretariat that must be paid by ECCAI although provided by the corresponding Chairman. The estimated budget for this Secretariat is around 100 ECUs by day with one day of work per week which means around fifty or fifty five days/year. For the next period, the Secretariat will be provided by Nicolaas Mars until ECAI-96.

(The secretarial position will be held by Ms. Els van der Heijden. ECCAI's address will now be:

ECCAI Secretariat

c/o Ms. E.C. van der Heijden

Department of Computer Science

University of Twente

P.O. Box 217

7500 AE Enschede

The Netherlands)

4.- ECAI-96

Wolfgang Wahlster presents the Program Committee for ECAI-96:

*Programme Chair:*Prof. Wolfgang Wahlster

German Research Center for AI, DFKI GmbH

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*Tutorial Chair:*Prof. Werner Horn

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*Workshop Coördinator:*Dr. Elisabeth André

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Members: Christer BAckstrom   Sweden

René R. Bakker   The Netherlands

Wolfgang Bibel   Germany

Mario Borillo   France

Ivan Bratko   Slovenia

Alan Bundy   Great Britain

Tony Cohn   Great Britain

José Cuena   Spain

Robert Dale   Australia

Danail Dochev   Bulgaria

Floriana Esposito   Italy

Boi Faltings   Switzerland

Martin Charles Golumbic   Israel

Georg Gottlob   Austria

Werner Horn   Austria

Kimmo Koskenniemi   Finland

Sarit Kraus   Israel

Ioan Alfred Letia   Romania

Joseph Mariani   France

Pedro Meseguer   Spain

Robert Milne   Great Britain

Katharina Morik   Germany

Bernd Neumann   Germany

Cicile L. Paris   Great Britain

Jacques Pitrat   France

Francesco Ricci   Italy

Tamas Roska   Hungary

Stuart Russell   USA

Erik Sandewall   Sweden

Camilla Schwind   France

Vadim Stefanuk   Russia

Olga Stepankova   Czech Republic

Peter Szeredi   Hungary

Jan Treur   The Netherlands

Wahlster explains that the workshop coordinating person is from DFKI because this facilitates coordination with the Program Chair. The Program Committee is approved. It was also approved to distribute the ECAI-96 reference through WWW.

Next, the question of multiple submission of papers is discussed. Although ECCAI is in favor of single submission, it was agreed to oblige the person submitting to different conferences to indicate a preference between the conferences in the case of double acceptance. This is feasible for ECAI-96 and AAAI-96.

Next, Maria Tóth presents the local arrangements report about ECAI-96. She distributes information about the conference timetable, tutorials, workshops and exhibitions. Also the estimated budget is presented, where a surplus of 29170 ECUs is expected assuming 500 paying attendees where 50% are paying full fee.

It is commented that no time slot is provided in the preliminary timetable for the General Assembly of ECCAI. After discussion it is agreed to fix the General Assembly from 12pm to 14pm on Friday 16th. August, 1996.

It is also commented that, may be, it is optimistic to assume 50% of full fee from non members of ECCAI Associations.

To make the application of the special ECCAI Member Association fee feasible for the conference it is suggested to oblige to provide a membership list from all the associations if they want to ensure discounts to its membership. This may be a condition useful for the purpose of producing a general ECCAI membership in Europe.

5.- ECAIs AND AAAIs

It has been agreed between AAAI and ECCAI that from 1996, AAAIs will be scheduled in the second half of July and ECAIs in the second half of August

Even with this difference in the conference scheduling it was recommended to keep the same deadline as AAAI for the Call for Papers, that is around 9 January 1996.

6.- ACAIs

Jean-Pierre Laurent reports about ACAI-95 that he attends himself. He was very pleased about the results of this course where seventy people attended (fifty french people), even not being advertised in Amsterdam ECAI-94. ACAI-95 has actually been successfull. All participants have expressed satisfaction with an unusual level of enthousiasm...

He considers that the approach followed in this ACAI is very adequate based on:
(1) a strong sponsoring (50% of the budget),

(2) one week including one weekend and

(3) contents focused in a general interest unique topic but large enough, as this
    year was algorithmic complexity for AI, where some people from other fields
    were interested.

He is positive with respect to ACAI-97 taking into account the ACAI-95 experience.
He suggests that the deadline for the bid for this course be December-95 in such
a way that the course and the corresponding grants be advertised in the ECAI-96.
This may ensure a better diffusion.

7.- AICOMM

Ramon Lopez de Mantaras comments that the situation of AIComm is not good because
too few submissions are received. At present he has received 17 submissions where
8 are accepted plus two invited papers. Also a special issue on AI in Scandinavia
is planned.
AIComm has now been included in the Science Citation Index. However, even the
improvements reported, AISB is reconsidering to fund AIComm. The AISB
representative explains that the financial problems of this organization do not
allow to support AIComm and in an assembly of this association there was a
majority against the continuation of the support for AIComm.
Wahlster says that even considering that the job of Ramon Lopez de Mantaras is
good because the quality of the magazine has been improved, there is a problem
with the AIComm formula because of its ambiguity between a magazine and journal
contents. He comments that AAAI has also problems with the same formula in its
AI magazine. Ramon Lopez de Mantaras may propose a new formula, may be on a line
closer to a journal, at the next meeting of the ECCAI Board.

8.- THE ECCAI REPORT ON THE FUTURE OF AI IN EUROPE

ECCAI should coordinate the writing of this document where two aspects may be
considered: first a survey on what happens and what just happened in AI for
countries, second a synthesis and evaluation in such a way that the existing
successes may induce the support for additional research in different lines and
finally a suggestion about what may be done. Nicolaas Mars will coordinate this
issue.
ECCAI will propose a detailed draft of the report in April 96 to be distributed
between associations to allow its discussion in ECAI-96. Nicolaas Mars volunteers
to coordinate the writing of this report; this offer is accepted by the General
Assembly.

9.- TOWARDS A EUROPEAN AI LIST ISSUES

Nicolaas Mars reports that there is a lack of response by the side of the
Associations because only three answers had been obtained from 25 Associations.
But it is pointed out that this may be no significant at all as not enough
information was provided about the use of this future European AI list, nor
about a standard format for the addresses.
Some members comment that an electronic structure could be more adequate to allow
to get on-line updated versions of lists. Other members of the Assembly
consider that is important to publish a document even keeping this electronic
organization.

10.- ECCAI BUDGET FOR 1995/96

Nicolaas Mars presents the ECCAI budget for 1995/96 which starts from the balance
of 54374 ECUs presented at the previous point. Without taking into account the
profit from ECAI-94, the expected balance on August 96 will be 2474 KECUs but it
is commented that the day before the Assembly the results of ECAI-94 were obtained.
A profit of 18000 ECUs is obtained from ECCAI, so the expected balance for August
1996 will be 20474 ECUs. This balance will be increased in 15000 ECUs when the
ECAI-96 PC loan will be returned.

Budget 1995/96 in ECU:
Starting balance 1 July 1995   54374

INCOME
Interest   800
Profit ECAI94   18000
Total INCOME   18800

EXPENSES
AI Communications vol. 9   2500
Travel awards   5000
Eastern Europe travel awards 10000
ECCAI Board meetings   7000
Banking costs   1000
ECAI96 PC loan   15000
Preparation of ECAI96   3000
Printing Membership list 3000
Secretariat costs   6200

Total EXPENSES   52700

Expected balance August 1996   20474

Maria Tóth asks for an additional loan of 5000 ECUs for the local arrangements committee that will be returned by ECAI-96. Wolfgang Wahlster says that for the current year he is going to reduce his needs of money to support the program committee. The additional loan is approved.

11.- ECCAI TRAVEL GRANT PROGRAM

On behalf of the Board Jean-Pierre Laurent proposes to the Assembly to approve the criteria to concentrate the travel grants on ECCAI organized events (i.e. ECAI conferences, ACAI courses and IJCAI conferences when they happen in Europe). This was accepted by the General Assembly.
José Cuena reports on the submissions received along the years: six submissions where only two for ACAI-97 that where accepted. Also he comments that through Jean-Pierre Laurent he was in contact with Priscilla Rasmussen from IJCAI-95 who asked for support for some European researchers asking for grants to attend this conference. Given the lack of resources of ECCAI it was agreed to give a symbolic help based on a 1000 ECUs support of the Eastern Europe researchers belonging to ECCAI Associations. This money will be taken from the 5000 ECUs budgeted for Western travel awards that will remain in the same figure of previous years: 4000 ECUs. According to the list sent by Miss Rasmussen, only two researchers were in this condition; they will receive a 500 ECUs grant each.

12.- ECCAI MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS

The acceptance of two new associations was discussed: the ADUIS, an Ukrainian Association, and ACIA, a new Spanish AI Association from Catalonia. After the positive report by Stefanuk ADUIS was accepted. José Cuena presented the agreement between AEPIA and ACIA to share the two Spanish votes proportionally to their memberships (88 ACIA, 247 AEPIA). After this agreement ACIA is also accepted ACIA. It was commented also that, to ensure a better accounting of votes distribution between several associations in a country, an alternative assignement to every country of ten votes. Also it was remarked that the current state of vote assignement was unfair to countries with large memberships in its associations. It was commented that some step-by-step formula could be more adequate and should be proposed by the Board. No decision to change the current system was taken,

however.

13.- GUIDELINES FOR ECCAI SPONSORSHIP

José Cuena announced that the guidelines for ECCAI sponsorship are available in the
WWW document of ECCAI. Its contents may be summarized in the following criteria:
- ECCAI sponsorship means:
  * To use the ECCAI name and logo when advertising the event.
  * Members of ECCAI organisation applying to ECCAI's Travel Award fund receive
    preferential treatment when applying to go to an event sponsored by ECCAI.
  * A discount rate of 25% when advertising the event in AI Communications.
  * ECCAI sponsorship confers no direct financial support or liability.

- ECCAI will sponsor any event (conference or course) relevant enough for AI
  and/or for European people.

- The AI relevancy dimension is evaluated based on the conference/course contents
  and its program committee.

- The European dimension may be evaluated in a double view:
  * The European location
  * The representation of European know-how in the program committee when the
    location is outside Europe

14.- ECAI 2000

It was suggested by Jean-Pierre Laurent that in the bid for ECAI 2000 there should
be specified two additional requirements:
- A significant exhibition about AI, both industrial *and* academic should be organized,
- A travel grant program for eastern countries members of ECCAI should be an item of
  the conference budget (independently of the annual ECCAI budget).
The bid should be published in September or October.

15.- ELECTIONS TO THE ECCAI BOARD

The AFIA delegate reads a letter by the AFIA Board, claiming that the announcement
of the General Assembly was not sent in time. AFIA suggests that the meeting be held,
but the election of Board members is to be postponed.
The majority of the General Assembly decides to carry on with the meeting, as most
have received the announcement in time.

Jean-Pierre Laurent communicated to the assembly his impossibility of continuing as chairman of ECCAI by professional reasons of change of activity which does no allow time available.

He proposes as new ECCAI Chairman Nicolaas Mars who has been very active and very efficient in his responsabilities as treasurer and vice-chairman and now is providing the ECCAI Secretariat.

Also, Walter Van de Velde has to leave the Board by the same problem of time availability. It is necessary to vote for a Belgium representative because ECCAI is a belgian association. Luc De Raedt is presented as a candidate for the 'Belgian' position in the Board.

Both proposals are put to a vote.

The Assembly approved Nicolaas Mars as new ECCAI Chairman with six abstentions. The rest of the votes are positive.

Jean-Pierre Laurent leaves his place as Chairman of the General Assembly to Nicolaas Mars.

Nicolaas Mars, the new Chairman, expresses his gratefulness to the General Assembly for electing him and to Jean-Pierre Laurent for his excellent job as a Chairman during this year. The General Assembly aclaims with an applause to Jean-Pierre Laurent.

The Assembly approves De Raedt as new Board member with two abstentions.

It is commented that it is important that two additional persons follow the ECCAI meetings as observers during this year to ensure that they will be elegible with experience enough at the ECAI-96 Assembly. The idea to elect them as observers is meant to avoid this type of elections at intermediate years between ECAI conferences, where the attendance to the General Assembly is less than to the ECAI conference Assembly.

After some discussion about the adequacy of the concept of observer, not considered in the ECCAI statutes, the General Assembly approves to vote for two observers. Five candidates are proposed as candidates for observers:

Wolfgang Wahlster (Germany)

Carl Gustaf Jansson (Sweden)

Helder Coelho (Portugal)

Gerard Kelleher (AISB U.K.)

Piero Torasso (Italy)

Each vote may contain two names. After the vote of 28 votes, the following results are obtained:

  Votes

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Wahlster    13
Jansson      6
Torasso      4
Coelho       3
Kelleher     2
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It is concluded that Wahlster and Jansson are observers at the ECCAI Board meetings during the period until the Assembly of ECAI-96.

Without any other business to deal with, the session is closed at 17h40 min.

Last updated 1996-06-01.