REPORT OF THE SIXTEENTH
IPA COUNCIL MEETING

SIXTEENTH COUNCIL MEETING, JUNE 12, 2005
The meeting convened at 2:00 p.m. and adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS
Jerry Brown (P), Charles Harris (VP), Georgy Perlshtein (VP), Don Hayley, Hans-H. Hubberten. EC member not present: Zhu Yuanlin
Secretariat: Hanne H. Christiansen, Angélique Prick

COUNCIL MEMBERS AND PARTICIPANTS
Austria: Andreas Kellerer-Pirklbauer
Belgium: Irénée Heyse
Canada: Brian Moorman, Margo Burgess
Denmark: Niels Foged
Finland: Matti Seppälä
Germany: Lorenz King, Eva-Maria Pfeiffer
Italy: Francesco Dramis, Mauro Guglielmin
Japan: Norikazu Matsuoka, Mamoru Ishikawa
Netherlands: Jef Vandenberghe
Norway: Kaare Flaate, Ole Humlum
Poland: Kazimierz Pekala
Russia: Vladimir P. Melnikov
South Africa: Jan Boelhouwers (proxy)
Spain: Miguel Ramos
Switzerland: Daniel Vonder Mühll
United Kingdom: Michael C.R. Davies
USA: Frederick Nelson
Adhering Bodies not represented: Argentina, China, France, Iceland, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Sweden

CO-CHAIRS AND MEMBERS OF COMMITTEES, WORKING GROUPS, TASK FORCES AND OBSERVERS
Canada: Antoni Lewkowicz, Sharon Smith
Italy: Nicoletta Cannone
New Zealand: Megan Balks, Ian Campbell
Poland: Wojciech Dobinski
Portugal: Gonçalo Teles Vieira

1. WELCOME
President Jerry Brown opened the meeting and welcomed the Council members and members of the Executive Committee.
2. ATTENDANCE AND ROLL-CALL
An official roll call verified that, at the opening of the Council Meeting, 13 Members were present, less than the 2/3 needed for major votes.

3. PREVIOUS COUNCIL MINUTES
The minutes of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Council meetings, Zurich, Switzerland, July 21 and 25, 2003, respectively, were reviewed. It was noted that Vladimir Ryabinin, had represented the World Climate Research Programme in Geneva, Switzerland. The minutes were unanimously approved (moved by Vonder Mühll and seconded by Kellner-Pirklbauer).

4. PRESIDENT’S REPORT
Brown reported that the IPA Secretariat, located at the University Centre in Svalbard (UNIS) received financial support from the Research Council of Norway for the period 2005-08 in order to administer the Secretariat and cover the costs of a half-time administrative position (Angélique Prick’s position).

The IUGS had recently approved a 4-year grant to the IPA in support of IPY activities, for a total of 50,000 USD; this grant will mostly cover travel costs.

The former International Commission on Snow and Ice has become the IUGG Union Commission on Cryospheric Sciences. A copy of the IUGG CCS report sent to the IPA was distributed to the Council Members.

A meeting will be held on February 17, 2006 in Vancouver, Canada, to celebrate the 90th birthday of J. Ross Mackay, the first Secretary General of the IPA. Council Members and others are invited to attend.

Brown indicated the main purpose of the two Council meetings was to consider changes in the Constitution in response to the mandate of the last Council meeting in Zurich.

5. SECRETARIAT’S REPORT AND STATUS OF IPA FINANCES
Christiansen confirmed the good news of Norway’s support for the Secretariat and that the UNIS director is very supportive of these IPA activities.

Christiansen provided detailed accounting of income and expenditures for 2004, the proposed 2005 budget, and the record of IPA Members contributions over the period 1987-2005. Annual contributions remain the main source of income. Christiansen suggested that some Members might voluntarily increase their number of units (one unit = 250 USD), particularly if they want their financial contribution to the IPA to reflect their increasing involvement in permafrost research. Seppälä asked whether the Members whose Adhering Body did not pay the IPA dues have the right to vote at the present meeting; Brown answered that all Council Members have a vote at the present meeting. The budget was approved (moved by Davies and seconded by Seppälä).

Christiansen briefly reviewed the 2004 IUGS Annual Report that is submitted to the IUGS Executive Committee. The IUGS support to the IPA increases the importance of these annual activity reports. Vonder Mühll raised the question of supporting partially the IPA finances through a fee from the International Permafrost Conferences (ICOP). Brown explained that, as this is already done by large scientific organisations, a small fee (around 25 USD / person) could be collected on each ICOP registration fee for the IPA. Vonder Mühll indicated that the 8th ICOP was very challenging from the financial point of view. Hayley indicated that the 7th ICOP had a small financial surplus. Davies suggested that such a fee should be fixed on a percentage basis so that it adapts to the changes of organizing costs from one conference to another. Hayley approved this measure and wished to establish a relatively simple system. Seppälä expressed concerns that the already high registrations fees may deter some scientists
Brown invited Members to think about this issue and wished to discuss it further at the next Council Meeting.

6. APPROVAL OF NEW MEMBER
A formal request for membership in IPA was received from Dean Peterson, Antarctica New Zealand, in November 2004. Balks and Campbell presented the increasing involvement of New Zealand in permafrost research, particularly in the Antarctic. The motion to accept New Zealand’s request for membership was made by Moorman and seconded by Boelhouwers. The vote was unanimous (an official roll call verified that 16 Members were present). Brown indicated that New Zealand voluntarily paid a one-unit membership fee in 2004. This level of membership fee for New Zealand was unanimously approved (moved by Nelson and seconded by Seppälä).

7. PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES
Brown invited a discussion of the proposed constitutional changes circulated to Council Members on March 8, 2005. The proposals were in part based on the findings of the Task Force, Chaired by Brian Moorman and recommendations of the Executive Committee. The proposed changes were submitted by the United Kingdom. A second set of proposals were circulated prior to the meeting. A vote on the initial changes is suggested for the present meeting and a second series of votes for the next meeting after Members had time to discuss among themselves.

Hayley reviewed and explained the main suggested changes, which are:
- (1) the establishment of Regional Groups (RG) for the purpose of improved coordination among IPA members; these RG are proposed in order to widely accommodate wishes of Members to develop regional collaboration; (2) the establishment of a category of Associate Members for countries that do not have Adhering Bodies and that have more than one individual member; (3) a suspension of voting privileges for Member in arrears of the annual fee payment by more than two years, and a one-time forgiveness of delinquent payments; (4) a change in the balloting for Conference (ICOP) location when there is more than one invitation by allowing for proportional voting; and (5) an enlargement of the Nomination Committee (currently three) to take into account regional interests, and to include the outgoing President either as an advisor or a full member.

Moorman asked for more details on Associate Members; Boelhouwers asked about the maximum number of persons who could constitute an Associate Member and underlined that the suggested number of three is a too restrictive limit. Brown commented that the limit in the first draft was higher than three (Article 3) and that there is no minimum number of persons for constituting an Adhering Body. Hayley commented that if an Adhering Body does not pay fees for more than two years, this Member would then become an Associate Member. Seppälä expressed concerns about Adhering Bodies being reassigned as Associate Members. Brown indicated that the IPA Council would still determine the level of membership. Davies suggested writing in Article 3: “An Associate Member consists normally of up to three persons (…)” to allow flexibility; this proposal was supported by Balks.

Brown explained that “Adhering Bodies in good standing” in the Constitution (Article 9) and Bylaws (Article 1) refers to countries who are not in arrears of the annual fee payment for more than two years.

Hayley proposed not to include a RG member on the NC (Article 2). Moorman asked if a person from an Associate Member can be nominated for the EC; Hayley suggested that it is possible if this person is nominated by an Adhering Body. Kellerer-Pirklbauer asked what will happen to Individual Members; Brown reiterated they are welcome to attend Council Meetings and receive Frozen Ground. Foged was concerned that it would be possible to be
nominated host of an ICOP by paying higher membership fees to the IPA and so gain an advantage in proportional voting. Burgess asked for a better definition of RG and whether their formation had to be approved by the Council. Brown answered that the formation of a RG (hopefully already at the 9th ICOP) will have to be formerly approved by the Council. Guidelines for Working Groups, Standing Committees and Task Forces, like RG, are not defined in the IPA constitution, but in separate documents. Brown agreed that the IPA will need a definition of the RG concept, taking into account the geographical benefits, but Members should feel free to develop proposals for RG as they wish. Davies expressed that it is not consistent to institute both RG and Associate Members, as these two concepts may cover one another. Boelhouwers indicated due to limited funding and activity that South Africa is likely to seek a change in membership to Associate Member.

The proposed changes to the IPA Constitution were approved by 17 votes in favour (moved by Davies and seconded by Nelson). The approved version of the Constitution will be published in 2005 issue of Frozen Ground).

8. APPROVAL OF NEW ASSOCIATE MEMBER
A formal request for membership in IPA was received from Gonçalo Teles Vieira, University of Lisbon, Portugal, in April 2005. Brown invited Vieira to present the involvement of Portugal in permafrost research and underlined that Portugal is taking part to the IPA application to the IPY. The membership of Portugal to the IPA as an Associate Member was approved by 18 votes (moved by Boelhouwers and seconded by Dramis).

9. MEMBERSHIP OF THE NEW INTERNATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR ICOP
At the request of Brown, Kaare Flaate, current Chair of IAC, introduced the new nominees for membership in the Advisory Committee for the period 2005-2010. This Committee’s Statement of Purpose is: to provide continuity in maintaining policies for the International Permafrost Conferences and to provide advice in other matters as requested by the hosting member or the Executive of the IPA. The nominees are: Antoni G. Lewkowicz (Chair, Canada), David Gilichinsky (Russia), Huijun Jin (China), Truls Mølmann (Norway), Marcia Phillips (Switzerland). The nominations were approved unanimously by the Council (motion moved by Flaate and seconded by Moorman).

10. NEW NORWEGIAN COMMITTEE
Flaate presented information on the new temporary Committee on Frost in Ground, affiliated to the Norwegian Geotechnical Society and acting as the Norwegian Adhering Body of the IPA. Permafrost research is very active in Norway and this Committee is issuing a new publication *Frost i jord / Frost in Ground* (Editor: Øystein Myhre). Brown invited Ole Humlum to join the Council table as a member of the new Norwegian Adhering Body.

11. FURTHER CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES
Brown invited a discussion on the additional changes to the Constitution. These were proposed by Germany and endorsed by Canada and the USA. Brown introduced the first suggested change: the organisation of ICOP every four years (and not five as at present), in order first to reflect the needs of the very active permafrost research community and secondly to avoid overlapping with other international conferences. Seppälä indicated that, as many other international organisations organize conferences on a four-year cycle, the ICOP will systematically overlap the same conferences by adopting the same cycle. Brown acknowledged that there will be an overlap, whatever the cycle. Foged agreed that a four-year cycle would better accommodate the needs of the IPA Council; Flaate agreed. Moorman
stressed that a four-year cycle would reflect better progress in permafrost engineering research. Kellerer-Piriklbauer was in favour of a four-year cycle with Regional Permafrost Conferences (RCOP) inbetween. Vonder Mühll is in favour because PhD students (with a PhD fellowship of 3 years) have a better chance to attend an ICOP if this change is approved. Heyse asked whether the 9th ICOP could be already moved from 2008 to 2007; Brown answered that this was not practical. Foged proposed that the 10th ICOP could be organised in 2011 in order not to collide with other conferences in 2012; Brown answered that such a decision could be taken at the 2008 Council meeting.

Brown opened the floor for comments on the organisation of RCOP at a two-year interval between ICOP; IPA Council could then meet every two years (alternately at ICOP and RCOP). Moorman asked about the exact role of the IPA in these Regional Conferences; Lewkowicz answered that RCOP could receive financial support from the IPA and would host IPA Council meetings. IPA support would give them a higher visibility and they would attract higher attendance. Hubberten stressed that a RCOP should have a broad scientific scope, not only a regional interest, so that all the IPA Council Members have a scientific interest in attending. Boelhouwers asked if the EUCOP II is already part of that RCOP scheme; Harris answered that, currently, regional conferences are organised on a voluntary basis when a member proposes to organise it; the EUCOP II was developed from a PACE21 initiative. Hayley stipulated that according to the decision of the EC, the IPA could endorse a large number of conferences but only one every four years would be approved as a RCOP. Vonder Mühll expressed concerns that by organising the 10th ICOP in 2011 instead of 2012, there will then be a one-year interval between the RCOP and the ICOP at that stage.

Brown indicated that there are plans for an IPA-sponsored Asian Conference on Permafrost, organised in Lanzhou, China in August 7-9, 2006 and followed by a field excursion along the Qinghai-Tibet Railway. The IPA recommended to the Chinese organizers not to publish proceedings, only abstracts. The non publication of proceedings from a RCOP should be a ground rule, in order to avoid competition with ICOP proceedings. King asked if the conference topics are limited to Asian Permafrost; they are not. Foged expressed concerns about sending students to a conference without papers published in a proceedings volume. Balks and Vonder Mühll indicated that papers have better visibility in journals. Moorman asked for prior approval from Permafrost and Periglacial Processes (PPP) to publish papers after a RCOP; Lewkowicz (Associate Editor of PPP) welcomes such papers, but in issues with a particular theme, there is no possibility to publish papers of an entire conference in PPP. Moorman is concerned about the short time left for organisers to set up a RCOP if the IPA Council decided who would host a RCOP only two years before; Brown acknowledged that a longer time planning is desirable. Hubberten indicated that he organised EUCOP II in about one year. Hayley requested clear guidelines to be established for RCOP local organisers. Brown proposed that this should be stipulated in the proposed constitutional changes.

Brown opened the floor for comments on a change in rotation of members of the EC, with the election of two to four members every two years. Davies stressed that this type of rotation would allow continuity within the EC. Vonder Mühll indicated that the presidency period should be long enough so that the person elected can have the opportunity to apply his ideas in practice. Moorman is concerned that a two-year mandate as a Vice-President followed by a two-year mandate as a President is too short. Hayley is in favour of not limiting this period of combined Vice-Presidency / Presidency to four years; six years would be adequate. Brown invited a discussion about the election of Vice-Presidents and President by the EC and not by the Council; this system is in use in other organisations. Harris expressed concerns that a quicker rotation of EC members implies a higher implication of more Council members in the IPA; the risk is that the election system could run out of candidates. Lewkowicz
considered that the degree of interchange between the EC and the Council is currently too low, and this situation is getting worse as the Council gets larger; the suggested changes could improve this situation.

Hayley discussed the suggested possibility for the Council to select an additional member (seventh) if the EC is unbalanced in some unforeseen and undesirable way (e.g. by regional representation or between science and engineering); he expressed concerns that the Council might not be able to determine whether the EC is functional or not. Vonder Mühll indicated that the nature of imbalances is unclear and should be better defined; Burgess and Lewkowicz agreed.

A small group of Council and EC members; Burgess, Harris, Hayley, Moorman, Perlshstein agreed to prepare a revised set of changes for discussion at the next Council meeting (with Prick as a member of Secretariat).

Since a vote on these suggested changes is desirable before the next NC is appointed and before the Council Meetings at the 9th ICOP in 2008, a mail ballot vote should be taken on this matter by the end of 2005 or the beginning of 2006. Under the present Constitution, a new Nominating Committee is required by June 2006.

12. ADJOURNEMENT
Brown invited Council members to reflect on the suggested changes to the IPA constitution and postponed further discussions until the Seventeenth Council meeting. Vonder Mühl made the motion to adjourn and Moorman seconded; approved unanimously.