

The first meeting of the new EuroSEAS Board elected during the 5th Conference took place on 19th November 2007 at University of Naples 'L'Orientale'.

The Board meeting started at 11.15am.

The Board meeting was attended by **Pietro P. Masina**,(Chairman), **Victor Sumskyi** (Russia), **Marco Ceresa** (Italy), **Paulo Castro Seixas** (Iberian Peninsula), **Susanne Schroter** (Germany), **Louis Bakker** (Benelux), **Anne Guillou** (deputy for France) and **Gabriele Weichart** (deputy for Central and Eastern Europe). Due to work reasons, **Fiona Kerlogue** (UK), whose deputy had to be elected in December, could not attend the meeting, while the representatives of the Nordic countries had to be elected yet. For family reasons, **Michela Cerimele** (EuroSEAS Secretary) was not able to participate in the meeting.

Since this was the first meeting of the new Board, each participant was asked to briefly introduce her/himself. The revised website (see point 11) will provide a short bio of the Board members.

The Board discussed the following issues:

1. Conference accounts

Pietro Masina provided a preliminary oral report on the conference accounts. A formal report will be presented to the next Board meeting.

Besides the conference fees and the fees paid by the publishers, the other main contributions came from:

- Regione Campania: €120.000
- Provincia di Napoli: €10.000
- Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs: €10.000

As it was anticipated, the conference was run with a deficit of about € 20.000. However, this deficit – as previously agreed – was absorbed by the University of Naples "L'Orientale". For EuroSEAS the conference accounts will break even.

The part of the conference fees corresponding to the EuroSEAS membership fees were transferred to the Secretariat to support the running costs of the association.

Pietro also underlined the importance of the cooperation with the Regione Campania through the organization of a Business Workshop within the conference, as this made possible to obtain such a large financial contribution from the regional government.

2. Conference assessment

The Board agreed that the scientific content of the Conference was of very high standard and could be regarded as an important contribution to the development of Southeast Asian studies.

As for previous EuroSEAS conferences, it is expected that Naples conference will result in the publication of a substantial number of edited books and scientific articles. It was noted, however, that EuroSEAS has so far not monitored the scientific outcomes of its conferences. The Board thinks that it would be important to keep track of the publications resulting from the conference workshop as this would both make our conferences more appealing and demonstrate (also to potential sponsors) the relevance of our work.

Gabriele Weichart accepted to contact all the panel organizers from the 5th conference and as far as possible of previous conferences to get information about the publications.

The Board discussed the possibility to update the current conference website with the final version of the papers and eventually decided that this would have been counterproductive for future publication plans.

The Board also approved the idea of publishing on the EuroSEAS website - once it will have been modified and improved (see point 11) - the articles (two or three) about the 5th EuroSEAS Conference written on Jakarta Post and on other media.

3. Board's functions

The new Board does not have an executive committee and it is agreed that all the Board will assume a direct responsibility in the management of the association. To facilitate the work is suggested that specific functions are assigned to individual members (and deputies) or group of them.

4. Secretariat's accounts

The Chairman presented a brief account of the current Secretariat's financial situation/management. The Association fees, included fees collected and transferred by AFRASE, have been maintained and are being managed by the EuroSEAS Secretariat. The Conference fees plus financial contributions received by national and regional government bodies have been entirely used to cover the Conference's expenses (see also point 1).

A big challenge for the next future (2008) will be to promote new registrations and have the old one re-confirmed through the payment of the Association fee. It was noted that traditionally the number of members in years in which there is no conference has been very low in the past. Initiatives must be taken to secure a wide membership also in those years.

5. Next conference venue – proposal from Lund and Göteborg

The Board agreed that, as already previously suggested, the next EuroSEAS Conference should be held in a Nordic country. The Secretariat received two proposals, one from Lund and the other one from Göteborg, and assessed them on the basis of both substantial and logistical considerations. Although both venues seemed to be perfectly suitable for the organization of the next EuroSEAS Conference, the Board expressed its preference for Göteborg. Firstly, the latter's proposal resulted to better structured and richer in details. Secondly, Göteborg's has a particularly strong community of scholars involved in Southeast Asian studies. Thirdly, Lund poses more logistical problems as its closest international airport is the Copenhagen's airport and this could create VISA problems to Asian scholars (in case they obtain a Swedish visa and not a Schengen visa).

None of the representatives of the universities that proposed themselves as candidates attended the Board meeting.

6. Plans for teaching collaborations

The Board agreed that a 'new activism' on its part is highly desirable in order to revitalize the Association and that, to this end, the EuroSEAS' Agenda for the next three years should focus on two main areas: cooperation in research and teaching activities. Given the noticeable similarities in the organization of didactics at European level, it was agreed that the easiest arena to start cooperation from could be student exchange at Master and PhD levels; the needs of the broader community of students involved in Southeast Asian studies could also be addressed, through the organization of other activities in different fields, from language courses to special courses on specific topics, including a Summer School held by the Association. Funding, obviously represents the main obstacle for the organization of such activities, as universities would not be able to cover the related expenses. With this regards, it was agreed that Anne Guillou and Susanne Schroter will coordinate activities in the above mentioned fields and will also take charge of fundraising. For the next year, the main goal will be the organization of the first EuroSEAS Summer School (September 2008).

The Board also discussed the proposal recently received from INALCO, Paris, to be the co-organizer of a working meeting to promote cooperation in the teaching of Southeast Asian languages in Europe. The proposal was accepted; this should be regarded, indeed, as a first step towards a new role for the Association. The Board agreed that, as the Chairman of the Association, Pietro Masina will maintain contacts with INALCO, together with the French members of the Board.

7. Coordination with other country/discipline level Southeast Asian studies groups in Europe - Networking with disciplinary associations (joint seminars or activities)

The Board discussed several possible forms of cooperation with other European associations and groups either working on single Southeast Asian countries (e.g., EuroViet) or on the entire region from a disciplinary perspective (e.g., the European Association of Southeast Asian Archaeologists). On the one hand, EuroSEAS could provide support to these associations, for instance, through its (new) website and the mailing list. On the other hand, a closer cooperation with these associations would increase the visibility of EuroSEAS in the periods between one general assembly and the other.

Besides these associations, the Board discussed possible cooperation with other disciplinary oriented associations which do not have an area studies profile. Joint workshops and seminars could be discussed, bringing together scholars from both associations. For instance, EuroSEAS could try to organize a joint seminar on development studies in cooperation with EADI.

8. Networking with other European Asian studies associations – possible EU lobbying

The Board decided to try to liaise with other European Asian studies associations (dealing with China, Japan, India, etc.). The idea would be not only to verify possible joint activities but also to strengthen the ability to represent the Asian studies community in Europe, including possible in relation to the European Commission.

The Board gave mandate to Pietro to explore these contacts.

9. Journals (old project to merge existing journals in a more prominent one)

The Board resumed a discussion left over from the previous Board: i.e., a possible merging of a number of European journals into a stronger European journal of Southeast Asian studies. The Board recognized that such goal is quite ambitious and very hard to be reached, as existing journals are locally rooted and are financed in different ways. Moreover, it would not be easy to obtain new funds from national and

European authorities and universities to support the project. For these reasons, the Board agreed not to proceed with any concrete proposal at this stage.

10. Mailing Lists

The Board discussed the communication system currently used within the Association – two mailing lists: one for all the Association’s members and the other one for the Board’s members – and possible ways to improve it. The proposal of also having a blog as a main interface between the Association’s members – and between the Association and the outside – was well welcomed: it would facilitate communications (about conferences, funding opportunities and so on) and “open a window” on South East Asian studies on the web.

The Board agreed on delegating Paulo Seixas to open and implement the blog, in collaboration with the Secretariat.

11. Website reorganization

The Board agreed that also the reorganization of the EuroSEAS website is vital to strengthening the visibility of the Association on the web. One of the problems to be sorted out is that the Association’s Secretariat is currently based in Naples and the webmaster lives in France (and cannot guarantee a regular update of the site). The possibility of rebuilding the website – instead of simply restyling it – in order to make any change easier and quicker was discussed and approved. More in particular, it was agreed that the management of the website will shift to the Secretariat and, if possible, be hosted on the server of the University of Naples ‘L’Orientale’. It was also agreed that the entire rebuilding of the website could be ordered to L’Orientale, as it would certainly be less expensive. Pietro Masina took on the charge of contacting the University’s IT centre.

12. Next Board meeting

The Board agreed that the next meeting will be held in Passau on 7th June 2007.

The session closed at 6.35 pm.