



# Confédération Internationale de Généalogie et d'Héraldique International Confederation for Genealogy and Heraldry

Bologna 7 September 2018.

## MORAL REPORT

I was elected President of the Boards of Directors of the International Confederation for Genealogy and Heraldry during the Oslo XXXI *International Congress of Genealogical and Heraldic Sciences* in 2014, and after 4 years I think it is time to review the work we have done and also to take a look on the work that lies ahead I think that is needed to go forward with our world umbrella organization.

The CIGH: “was founded in Brussels (Belgium) on 13 November 1971 with the aim of creating and maintaining sustainable collaborative links between associations and federations dedicated to the study of genealogy and heraldry, defending the interests of the genealogical and heraldic sector before national bodies and supporting national associations and federations in their relations with the official bodies of their respective countries. Its purpose is to promote the hosting of international genealogical and heraldic science congresses and the implementation of the motions that are voted on therein”. Since Duc de la Force founded the CIGH in 1971 - in other words under the presidency of M. *Michel Teillard d'Eyry* - the CIGH has been an organisational structure that limited its actions to meetings of the Board and Biennial General Meetings, whose most important event was, thanks to *Szabolcs de Vajay* (1921-2010) the granting of the CIGH Awards and Medals. Finally, a new impulse came under the presidency of Michel Teillard d'Eyry, who began to really operate in the context of a global vision by gathering the great associations that dealt with our subject matters.

Michel is credited with having close ties with the South American associations (thanks to the establishment of the *Confederación Iberoamericana de ciencias Genealogica y Heraldica*, which organises important biennial congresses in South America), and to have opened up to African associations.

When I assumed the Presidency in 2014, I immediately wanted to achieve a better understanding of what CIGH represented and what it was in practical terms. Among its members, the CIGH now includes 2 international academies, 64 associations on 4 continents, and 2 corresponding members. Unfortunately, in addition to simple membership, there are very few associations that are interested in common activities, so I wondered why contacts among the various associations were almost non-existent. I think it is because the majority of CIGH members are the same entities who organised the world genealogy and heraldic congresses, and therefore their international interest remains limited to the congresses they realised, immediately returning to their national reality. In addition,

so far CIGH has not proposed meetings, talks, conferences or congresses outside of those organised by the Bureau of International Congress of Genealogical and Heraldic Sciences, except for a few sponsored events in Italy, South America, Spain, France and San Marino.

The reality of 2018 is very different from 1971 because in almost 50 years the world has changed dramatically thanks to the advent of the digital and multimedia world. These considerations made me reflect and I wanted to check out how the existence of the CIGH was perceived by other organisations in various countries, so in these 4 years I came into contact with over 400 associations on the 5 continents; this helped me to understand what heraldic-genealogical associations in different parts of the world offer and realise, and (by logic) I have found a huge diversity of cultures and ways of achieving their aims, and a fragmentation of new associative concepts that were unthinkable when the CIGH was founded. I remember that the genealogical associations include the traditional ones that we are used to seeing in the Congress, but also those with very different goals and expectations.

From my contacts I learned that associations in different parts of the world have different characteristics and there are few dynamic ones that base their interactions on the web; unfortunately, many are “clubs” of amateurs who think they know the truth from all points of view. A characteristic common to all associations is the lack of members from the new generations, in other words *Millennials*, and this is without doubt because our traditional approach cannot be understood by generations who have had a different cultural education.

Thus, also among the heraldic associations, in addition to the traditional ones that deal with heraldic understanding as an historical-antiquarian reality, there are those that try to create new coats of arms for current society, and precisely to prevent this increasingly widespread language of imagery from dying out, I think it is not wrong to open up to an emblematic approach. Among our associations, we must also include those that are indirectly involved in our studies, such as associations of descendants of immigrants in new countries, genealogical genetics, economy related to family assets, and (why not?) also associations with important company archives, or archives of military data, or information systems associations of genealogical and heraldic studies, etc.

For the first time in our history, in order to maintain real contact with members of the CIGH, during my presidency I also called Ordinary General Meetings during the Heraldry and Genealogy Colloquies, and I consider myself satisfied with the results. A cooperative relationship with universities was also initiated in order to organise conventions, and sponsorship was granted for numerous events in Italy, San Marino, Spain, Germany, Belgium, France, USA and South America. There are 7 historic CIGH Awards to be distributed to the Congress, and 2 Extraordinary Awards linked to the Historical Awards have been added. The *CIGH Bulletin* also continued its publications, providing a vision of what is happening all over the world.

I think time has come to expand possible memberships of CIGH to associations with adequate requirements in the 5 continents. It is also necessary to create a global BLOG that contains information on events organised by trustworthy and reliable associations, and articles of great general interest written by experts in our subjects, because unfortunately we find blogs in the network that offer a mix of untrustworthy news and series presented in the same way, thus causing great confusion among those who are getting interested in our subjects for the first time. I already have volunteers in some countries, but it is necessary to broaden our range of action to provide really useful news to users.

This year, in Italy in Rome, I organised the 1<sup>st</sup> Genealogy and Family History Conference in collaboration with the Università degli Studi E Link University, which was a great success with the

public, and I think that it is time to make this event global so as to bring together a large number of interested parties. Therefore, we must rely on existing structures in the various countries and work with them to organise a one-day event which aims to arouse new interest in our studies.

The associations in the CIGH includes a member that stands out from the others without comparison for its profitable and widespread activities around the world: FamilySearch! Thanks to its efforts, 2019 will see the start of a very important event that will bring the varied mass of those interested into direct contact with the parties who manage our subjects. On 28<sup>th</sup> August it was announced that Europe will also have its *Rootstech* (the American annual event that brings together 30,000 people) and the first edition of Rootstech in Europe will take place in London from 24<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> October 2019. It will be an event that will give new impetus to all our associations if they wish to participate in or follow it. I end my four-year term with this moral report and I am sure that the CIGH will elect a valid Board able to wisely advance the work of my predecessors and mine, exclusively performed for the sake of an idea that I can summarise as follows: all of us has the right to know where we come from in relation to documental correctness, the history and traditions that have accompanied us and that allow us a future full of new possibilities that must make our studies ever more scientific and at the same time useful for all levels of humanity.

PIER FELICE DEGLI UBERTI  
PRESIDENT