

THE EUROPEAN PEPTIDE SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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36th EPS

European Peptide Symposium

12th IPS

International Peptide Symposium

Sitges

Barcelona

August 28 - September 2
2022

9th Bulgarian Peptide Symposium
10th Austrian Peptide Symposium
2nd EPS Peptide Highlights
17th Naples Workshop on Bioactive Peptides
Vadim T. Ivanov (1937–2022)
Society News
Society Officers



Cover photo: Melià Sitges, Spain: venue of the forthcoming 36th European Peptide Symposium

IN THIS ISSUE

9th Bulgarian Peptide Symposium
10th Austrian Peptide Symposium
2nd EPS Peptide Highlights
17th Naples Workshop on Bioactive Peptides
Vadim T. Ivanov (1937–2022)
Society News
Society Officers

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SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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9th Bulgarian Peptide Symposium



The International Conference of the Bulgarian Peptide Society (9th Bulgarian Peptide Symposium) was held during the period 27–29 August 2021 in the conference halls “Kleptuza” and “Jundola” at Kamena hotel, which is situated in the beautiful mountain resort Velingrad. The Governing Body of the Bulgarian Peptide Society was delighted in succeeding to organize this International Conference on the very edge of COVID-19 pandemic situation.

The aim of the symposium was to bring together all the research scientists who work on different aspects of the field of peptide science and present a part of the research of peptides which is carried out in the scientific community in Bulgaria. Besides presentations of research results, the organizers wanted to stimulate all forms of collaboration and networking, especially for younger colleagues and students.

There were 53 registered participants in the International Conference of the Bulgarian Peptide Society, among them 10 scientists from 8 foreign countries (Italy, Israel, Portugal, Turkey, Greece, France, Romania, and Lebanon). Bulgarian participants were from the University of Chemical Technology and Metallurgy, different Institutes at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Medical University of Sofia, and South-West University in Blagoevgrad (35% of participants were PhD students, postdocs, and few young students before master's degree).



Participants of the 9th Bulgarian Peptide Symposium

The interesting and dynamic scientific program, fruitful discussions during Conference sessions, and coffee-brakes provided opportunities to build research collaborations with colleagues from neighbor countries, to exchange ideas, to explore updates in the field, to build new bridges between scientists working in the field of Chemistry, Biology, and Pharmaceutical industry, and to check indeed the saying: “Science is organized knowledge, wisdom is organized life.”



A view of the lecture room

The scientific program began with three splendid plenary lectures delivered by appreciated professors from the field of chemistry and pharmacy of peptides: Prof. Anna Maria Papini (Italy) *Aberrantly modified conformational peptide epitopes specific for antibodies, biomarkers of immune-mediated diseases, can be reminiscent of an early infection: the chicken or egg dilemma*; by Prof. Illana Gozes (Israel) *Peptide-based drug development based on the autism/Alzheimer's-linked activity-dependent neuroprotective protein (ADNP)*, and by Prof. Paula Gomes (Portugal) *Antimicrobial peptide-based strategies to tackle chronic skin and soft tissue infections*.

Keynote lectures were presented by Assoc. Prof. Tamara Pajanova (Bulgaria); Prof. Dancho Danalev (Bulgaria); Prof. Vasile Gradinaru (Romania); Prof. Selma Vardar (Turkey); Prof. Nurettin Aydogdu (Turkey); Assist. Prof. Lubomir Vezenkov (France); and Assoc. Prof. Alessandro Pesaresi (Italy). Other lectures were presented by Assoc. Prof. Tatyana Dzimbova (Bulgaria); Postdoc Petya Hadzhibozheva (Bulgaria); Assoc. Prof. Lyudmila Velkova (Bulgaria); Postdoc Sirine Jaber (Lebanon); Postdoc Mihaela Belouhova (Bulgaria); and Clinical doctor Momchil Kermedchiev (Bulgaria), covering different topics in peptide chemistry and biology.



Professor Selma Vardar during her lecture

The lectures and posters covered different topics such as structure-activities studies on bioactive peptides, peptidomimetics, cell penetrating peptides, physiological studies on bioactive peptides, antimicrobial peptides, synthesis and physiological studies on modified amino acids, enzymatic transformation of polypeptides, computer modelling of ligand–receptor interaction, structural analysis of peptides, theoretical studies on peptide bond formation, and biological activity of peptides and proteins.

Along with oral presentation, there were four e-poster sessions. Young scientist competition was organized, evaluated by Prof. Reni Kalfin, Assoc. Prof. Tamara Pajpanova, Prof. Nikolay Vassilev, and Prof. Ivanka Stoineva. Two best young scientist awards were given to postdocs Sirine Jaber from Lebanon and Petya Hadzhibozheva from Bulgaria.



Best young scientist awards. The winner Dr. Petya Hadzhibozheva

The financial support from the European Peptide Society, Bulgarian Peptide Society, National Science Fund, Institute of Neurobiology at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, University of Chemical Technology and Metallurgy, and private company “ELTA” makes it possible to invite several distinguished scientists and 8 young scientists and students.

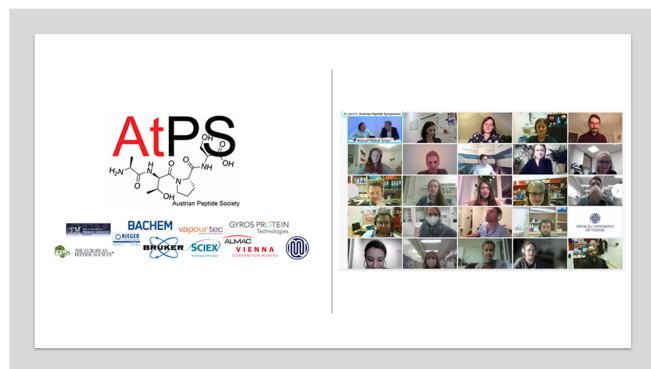
Finally, the International Conference of the Bulgarian Peptide Society (9th Bulgarian Peptide Symposium) was a great success to the lecturers, participants, to our sponsors, and already looking forward to the next 10th Peptide Symposium.

Contributed by Reni Kalfin and Emilia Naydenova.

10th Austrian Peptide Symposium

Virtual meeting, 2 December 2021

As with other conferences in the past 2 years, the 10th Austrian Peptide Symposium (2nd of December 2021) faced the trouble of last-minute change from an on-site event in Vienna to a virtual meeting. At the very least, the co-organizer Christian Gruber (Medical University of Vienna) and Christian Becker (Austrian representative to the EPS, University of Vienna) were able to chair the event from a live studio via an online WebEx meeting. As usual, the Austrian Peptide Symposium was held as one-day symposium: this time without the dinner/networking sessions, but including invited lectures given by renowned national and international speakers; short oral presentations mainly from Austrian early career investigators, which were selected from the submitted abstracts; and a virtual poster session with prerecorded 3-min flash talks, covering manifold aspects of peptide research. Overall, we had over 100 participants attending the virtual meeting. As one of the highlights, we presented the very first “Bachem AtPS Award for Peptide Science”—for details, please check below.



Screenshot of selected participants attending the 10th Austrian Peptide Symposium online.

The first morning session focused on the chemistry and biology of peptides and included the following speakers: Alexander Hauser (University of Copenhagen, Denmark) “From physiological peptide hormones to a better understanding of human genetic variations” and Ashraf Brik (Technion Haifa, Israel) “Metals in peptide and protein synthesis and beyond.”

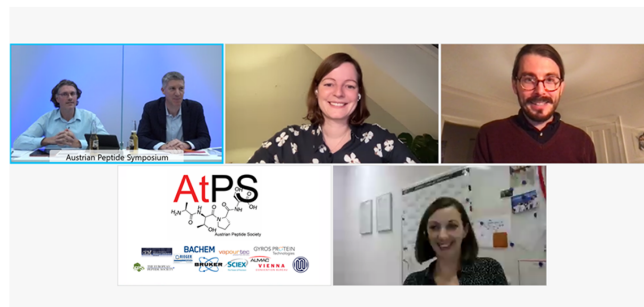
The second morning session focused on peptide pharmacology, and we had talks from Dagmar Zwegitck (University of Graz, Austria) “Multiple effects of antitumor peptides in treatment of melanoma” and Peter Gmeiner (University of Erlangen-Nürnberg, Germany) “Neurotensin-based GPCR ligands.”

The poster session, which was held after the lunch break, features 23 pre-recorded 3-min poster flash talks that were presented by

early-career researchers. There was also a poster award competition, and awards were given away based on online voting of all meeting participants.

The first afternoon session included six excellent short oral contributions selected from the submitted abstracts. Talks were given by Somnath Mukherjee (University of Vienna, Austria), Khadija Daoudi (Pasteur Institute of Morocco), Roland Hellinger (Medical University of Vienna, Austria), Bernhard Jandl (University of Vienna, Austria), Stavroula Melina Sakellakou (University of Vienna, Austria), and Julia Kriegesmann (University of Vienna, Austria).

The final session of this meeting focused on “Peptide Synthesis and Structural Analysis” addressed by four speakers, including two short talks by industry (see below) and the first presentation of the Bachem AtPS Award for Peptide Science in D/A/CH. The first speaker, Dennis Kurzbach (University of Vienna, Austria), reported on advances in NMR technology to elucidate structural dynamics in peptides and intrinsically disordered proteins. The last session was concluded by a presentation of the first Bachem AtPS Awardee Nina Hartrampf (University of Zurich, Switzerland) discussing her contributions to developing flow-based methods for the synthesis of peptides and proteins. The Bachem AtPS Award was announced for the first time in 2021 and is aimed at early career scientists (postdocs or junior group leaders) who have made outstanding contributions to the chemistry and/or biology of peptides in the 3 years preceding the date of selection and who have worked in or originate from the D/A/CH region (Germany, Austria, and Switzerland). The field of applicants in 2021 was excellent, and we decided to also honor the runner-up Alexander Hauser (University of Copenhagen, Denmark). Now, we are already looking forward to the 2022 call.



Screenshot of the Bachem award winner 2021 (Nina Hartrampf, top-middle) and runner-up (Alexander Hauser, top-right); the award is sponsored by Bachem AG (Switzerland) and was presented by the company representative Caroline Lechner (bottom-right). Co-hosts of the meeting were Christian Gruber and Christian Becker (top-left).

The scientific part of the symposium ended with the announcement of four winners of the poster award competition: Thomas Kremsmayr (University of Vienna, Austria), “Development of oral gut-specific peptide drug leads”; Jasmin Gattringer (Medical University of Vienna, Austria), “Cyclotides isolated from violet plants are inhibitors of human prolyl oligopeptidase”; Alanca Schmid (University of Vienna, Austria), “Synthesis of Homogeneously Glycosylated Soluble Fas Ligand Variants”; and Judith Görlich (University of Vienna, Austria), “Semisynthesis of alpha-Synuclein with nPTM implicated in Neurodegenerative Disease.”



List of poster award winners by online voting.

In addition, we had short company presentations from selected sponsor's throughout the day, including Christian Baumann (ABSciex) about the Sciex Xeno TOF, Monika Swiontek (CEM GmbH) about advancements in peptide synthesis and purification, Luisa Aguiar (Gyros Protein Technologies) about the Symphony X, and Victoire Laude (Vapourtec) about continuous flow-based peptide synthesis.

Last but not least, we concluded the event with a virtual social hour, which was fun, and announcement of the next symposium to be held on the 1st of December in 2022, hopefully this time again and as usual as on-site event in Vienna.

We are grateful to everyone, in particular to our sponsors, who helped making the online event of the Austrian Peptide Symposium 2021 possible, despite all difficulties during the Covid pandemic. Sponsors of the symposium are Bachem, Bruker, CEM, Vapourtec, Gyros Protein Technologies, Sciex, Almac, Rieger-Industrievertretungen GmbH, and the European Peptide Society. Without their generous financial support, all this would not have been possible!

Contributed by Christian W. Gruber and Christian Becker

2nd EPS Peptide Highlights

Virtual Symposium, Portugal, 2 March 2022

The 2nd EPS Peptide Highlights, held on 2 March, focused on “Peptide-based approaches to fight crop diseases” and covered topics such as functional and cyclic peptides to combat plant pathogens and venom-derived peptides as bioinsecticides. Speakers were **Volker Herzig** from the University of the Sunshine Coast and **Stefano Rosa** from the University of Milan. The keynote lecture was given by **Emílio Montesinos** from the University of Girona. The symposium was moderated by **Cátia Teixeira** from the University of Porto and was supported by **Ruben Ragg** and **Paolo Rovero**, the Editors-in-Chief of *ChemBioChem* and the *Journal of Peptide Science*, respectively.

The EPS Peptide Highlights Virtual Symposium opened with a welcome session by EPS Chair **Norbert Sewald**. **Volker Herzig**, who holds the position of Associate Professor, gave the first talk. His research focuses on the biodiscovery of novel arthropod venom components, particularly peptides, for potential, selective, and environmentally safe bioinsecticides. In his talk entitled “The search for arachnid venom-derived peptides as eco-friendly bio-insecticides,” he explained why arthropod venoms are a great source for novel bioinsecticides and presented some examples from his group of research with emphasis on Spear®—the first spider-toxin bioinsecticide on the market. Volker Herzig’s talk was followed by **Stefano Rosa**, a PhD student at the FruitTOP Lab led by Dr. Simona Masiero at the Department of BioSciences of the University of Milan. His work is focused on the peptide aptamers identification from combinatorial libraries and their application for sustainable agriculture. In his talk entitled “An in vivo platform for the isolation of cyclic peptides with antimicrobial activity toward plant pathogens,” he presented an overview of his work with combinatorial libraries of cyclic peptides and their use to identify novel antimicrobial peptides as safer alternatives to some polluting fungicides. **Emílio Montesinos** is one of the world’s leading scientists in the field of antimicrobial peptide development as biopesticides, contributing to an integrated approach to control fruit tree diseases. In his outstanding keynote lecture on “The potential of functional peptides for the control of emerging diseases caused by plant pathogenic bacteria,” which closed this event, he presented his latest research on natural-based antimicrobial, plant elicitors, and multifunctional peptides to fight *Xylella fastidiosa*, a plant pathogen that has been devastating olive trees for over a decade.

This 2nd edition of the EPS Peptide Highlights was a great success with ~70 participants. The talks were very interesting and

engaging, and, although the topic of this virtual event was a very timely subject, it is also a subject, which is usually not considered to be the focus of peptide science, but it was evident that there are many promises in the application of peptides in fighting crop diseases. The problem of peptides’ large-scale production and inherent costs was also discussed with emphasis that, in addition to the traditional methodologies used, that is, fermentation and recombinant plants, synthetic large-scale preparation of peptides is growing fast and presenting interesting opportunities.

We look forward to the next edition of the EPS Peptide Highlights Virtual Symposium!

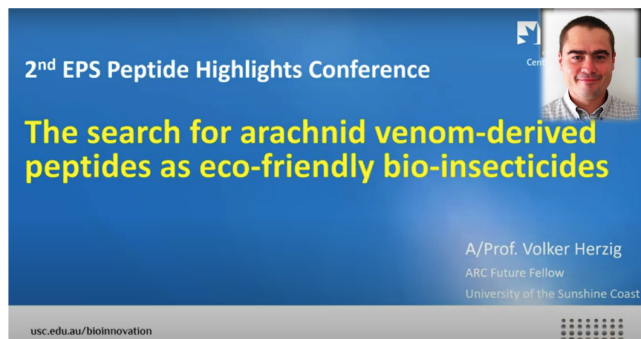
Online version of 2nd EPS Peptide Highlights Virtual Symposium “Peptide-based approaches to fight crop diseases”: <https://youtu.be/3boVBICZnQY>



Moderators and supporters of the 2nd EPS Peptide Highlights Virtual Symposium (first row: Norbert Sewald, chair of the EPS; Ruben Ragg, editor-in-Chief of *ChemBioChem*; second row: Paolo Rovero, editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of Peptide Science*; Cátia Teixeira, Porto University)



Keynote lecture by Emilio Montesino presenting his latest research on natural-based antimicrobial, plant elicitors, and multifunctional peptides to fight *Xylella fastidiosa*



Volker Herzig presents his work on the biodiscovery of novel arthropod venom-based peptides for potential, selective, and environmentally safe bioinsecticides.



An *in vivo* platform for the isolation of cyclic peptides with antimicrobial activity toward plant pathogens

Stefano Rosa, PhD student
Department of Biosciences, University of Milan
2nd EPS Peptide Highlights Virtual Symposium



Stefano Rosa presents his work on peptide aptamers identification from combinatorial libraries and their application for sustainable agriculture.

Contributed by Cátia Teixeira

17th Naples workshop on bioactive peptides

Naples, Italy, 16–18 June 2022

The 17th Naples Workshop on Bioactive Peptides has been held at the Congress Center of the University of Naples 'Federico II' on June 16–18, 2022. The event has had a high attendance of over 200 peptide scientists of different countries from all over the world. The workshop was held under the auspices of the European Peptide Society (EPS) and of the Italian Peptide Society (ItPS) and has been organized by a joint effort of the Interuniversity Research Center on Bioactive Peptides (CIRPEB) and by Department of Pharmacy at University of Naples 'Federico II', by the Institute of Biostructures and Bioimages, and the Institute of Crystallography of the Italian C.N.R. The theme of the workshop 'Emerging Peptide Science in 2022' was covered by several plenary lectures, oral presentations, and poster presentations.



Group photo on the building stair.

The workshop has been organized in 10 sessions to cover the different scientific topics. The first day was essentially dedicated to 'Antimicrobial Peptides' and to 'Peptides in Diagnostic and Therapeutic Applications'. The plenary lecture of Prof. Roger Raines (USA) entitled 'Lessons from collagens' opened the workshop. The same day hosted the plenary lecture of Sam Gellman (USA) entitled 'Impact of Backbone Modifications on Informational Properties of Polypeptides' that joined the meeting in remote modality from his study. The second day started with the plenary lecture of Kalina Hristova (USA). The plenary lectures of Meritxell Texeido (Spain) and Helma Wennemers (Switzerland) concerning peptides for new therapeutical applications were also hosted on Friday 17th. In the same day was also organized a *peptide showcase* session to give opportunity to companies developing peptide therapeutics and related technologies to present their results to symposium participants. The last day of the meeting was dedicated to peptides in chemical biology, peptides in immunology and to bioconjugation, folding and aggregation of peptides. The lectures from Alessandro Moretto (Italy), Roger Cone (USA), Christian Becker (Austria), Maurizio Pellecchia (USA) and Christian Heinis (Switzerland) were presented. At the end of the scientific sessions, the gala dinner was also much appreciated by the participants. Finally, on Sunday 19th, was organized a special trip in Capri with visit of the marine caves from a boat and relaxing and interesting tours in Capri and Anacapri.

A total of 10 invited plenary lectures and 48 oral presentations were given in the 3 days of the workshop. Furthermore, a rather substantial number of poster presentations were also enriching the program, covering the various aspects of peptides as therapeutics, diagnostics, vaccines, and in material science. The scientific content of the invited lectures, short oral, and poster presentations certainly reflected the state of the art in several specific aspects of the topic of the workshop; the investigations presented were indeed representative examples of emerging subjects, which highlighted the field of continuously increasing biologically important and 'man-made' peptide systems. One common feature, which ideally connected the different subjects covered, was the 'molecular approach' used by the various authors in tackling the problem of understanding the structure–activity relationships of bioactive peptides.



The chairmen: Michele Saviano, Giancarlo Morelli, Menotti Ruvo and Paolo Grieco (from left).

The Naples meeting has been, once again, a highly successful forum for the exchange of ideas on hot subjects and trends in peptide science and an important and decisive stimulus for future work in the area. The pleasant weather of Naples, offered to participants, beside science, the occasion of enjoying the city with its museums, monuments and natural beauty.

Contributed by Giancarlo Morelli

In memoriam: Vadim T. Ivanov (1937–2022)



The European Peptide Society mourns the passing away of Vadim T. Ivanov, Professor and Academician of the Russian Academy of Sciences. He graduated from the Moscow State University Chemical Department in 1960. After that, he started his work at the Institute of Chemistry of Natural Products, which now is the Institute Bioorganic Chemistry, Russian Academy of Sciences (IBCH RAS), Moscow. Since then, the research career of Vadim T. Ivanov has been associated exclusively with this institute, where he received Ph.D. in Chemistry in 1963 and Dr. Sci. in Chemistry in 1974. In 1971, Professor Vadim Ivanov became the Head of the Laboratory of Peptide Chemistry at IBCH RAS. In 1987, Professor Vadim T. Ivanov was elected a full member of the USSR Academy of Sciences. From 1988 to 2017, Professor Vadim Ivanov was a Director of the IBCH RAS, coordinated Institute research activities, and was Head of the Peptide and Protein Technology Department of the Shemyakin and Ovchinnikov Institute of Bioorganic Chemistry RAS. He was a member of the Scientific Affairs Board of the European Peptide Society from 2002–2006.

All research activities of Vadim T. Ivanov were associated with an expansive area of peptidomics, such as peptide synthesis, determination of chemical and spatial structures of peptides and proteins, structural-functional correlations, molecular mechanism studies, and other fields of bioorganic chemistry. He started his research career in the studies of peptide conformations in solutions, design, synthesis,

and structure evaluation of cyclic peptides in the 1960s. Then, he turned to the elucidation of ion transport mechanisms through membranes by peptide ionophores. In the last years, Professor V. Ivanov naturally turned to peptidomics research and founded the peptidomics research School in Russian Federation located in the IBCH RAS. Besides his fundamental research, Professor Vadim Ivanov was engaged in developing peptide-based pharmaceuticals and synthetic vaccines, such as Deltaran, Licopid, and peptide vaccine against foot-and-mouth disease.

Professor Ivanov was an internationally recognized expert in peptide chemistry and biology. For many years, he was a representative of Russian Federation in the European Peptide Society, a member of the American Peptide and Protein Society, a foreign member of the Indian Academy of Sciences, an Honorable Professor of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, and editorial board member of various international journals.

Being a distinguished scientist, Professor Vadim T. Ivanov had a broad scientific horizon vision and was interested in new developments in various research and technology fields. As a Professor at Lomonosov State University in Moscow, he was always prepared to communicate with students and colleagues. Let us keep him in good memory.

Contributed by Ekaterina Kolesanova.

Extract from the Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting—Part I, 17 of March 2022

(Teleconference)

Part I

17/03/22, 12 to 17 h (CET)

Participants at start: Norbert Sewald (NS), Krzysztof Rolka (KR), Fernando Formaggio (FF), Florine Cavelier (FC), Paula Gomes (PG), Luis Moroder (LM), Paolo Rovero (PR), Meritxell Teixidó (MT), and Johan Elgersma (JE)

1. Welcome

The President (NS) welcomed all participants and opened the meeting, and proposed that points 3 and 4 of the Meeting Agenda were discussed ahead of point 2 of the Agenda, which was consensually agreed.

3. Update on the organization of the upcoming European Peptide Symposium

NS invited Mr. Johan Elgersma (JE) to discuss the ESCOM Foundation planning of their support and participation to the forthcoming 36th European Peptide Symposium (36EPS). JE mentioned that the same amounts would be allocated to support ESCOM-sponsored events in the 36EPS, though a change in procedure was required, namely, regarding invoicing (invoices would be needed describing in detail all supporting modes—awards, mixer, etc.) and the awards delivery (check or bank transfer, instead of cash). JE further mentioned that 3000 euro or, at most, 4000 euro, would be available to support the Mixer, but a slight deviation to this top amount could be considered, if needed.

The 36EPS chair, Meritxell Teixidó (MT) then asked what would be the best moment to deliver the YIMS awards, and it was consensually agreed that the Mediterranean Night Dinner on Sep.01 (included in the registration fee) would be the most appropriate. MT further proposed that the selection of participants to the Mixer, totalizing around 100 people, should include, besides around 30 senior participants from Academia&Industry, all the 14 young scientists selected for the oral communications in the YIMCS, then a selection of those awarded with the EPS grants, provided their early career status was confirmed.

The Scientific Affairs Officer, Florine Cavelier (FC) asked how should she constitute the jury for the ESCOM awards, and NS clarified that it was her prerogative to determine that, eventually recruiting jury members from the Scientific Committee of the 36EPS. MT added that she would arrange a room for the jury to meet and deliberate about the awards, and that poster award applicants should be warned that they should stay by their posters during the poster sessions, otherwise they would not be eligible for the awards.

NS further suggested that the format of the Mixer should be defined in advance, eventually keeping the “speed dating” model used before, which received the agreement of both JE and MT, who asked FC to chair this ESCOM-sponsored event. FC agreed and added that any changes to the award splitting procedures, if needed, could only be decided upon onsite evaluation of the communications presented.

JE then informed that he would bring one more person from ESCOM, and asked what should be the procedure for their registration, to which MT replied that she would take care of that and get in touch with them in due course.

As nothing else had to be discussed with JE, he left the meeting at 12:40 h.

MT then went on providing more details about the 36EPS, namely, regarding the number of abstracts submitted and registrations thus far received, as well as the geographical distribution of participants, which was more or less similar to that of previous Symposia. She also advanced that 157 applications for EPS grants had been received, whereas the 50,000 Euro support from the EPS would cover roughly 143 of them. It was consensually agreed that, if more than 143 applications are confirmed to belong to early career scientists and to have suitable quality standards, the EPS would cover the additional amount in order to award all grants requested.

MT provided information on the 36EPS sponsors and booths, of which only 4 are vacant at this point. One of these will be for the EPS and it was consensually agreed that this booth would be shared by the EPS and the Journal of Peptide Science (JPS). The recruitment of the Young Testimonials to be in the EPS/JPS booth was next discussed. Considering the relevance of passing on the knowledge/experience from one Symposium to the next, it was consensually agreed that five Young Testimonials should be recruited, comprising: one of the Young Testimonials who already served in the previous Symposium, one Young Testimonial appointed by the current Symposium Chair, one Young Testimonial (preferably, a 1st year PhD student) appointed by the Chair of the forthcoming Symposium, two Young Testimonials to be proposed by the General Assembly.

FC proposed that, in case a booth is left vacant till shortly before the event, the possibility of inviting the other Peptide Societies to share it could be considered. This idea was well received, although NS alerted that such offer should have in return the guarantee from those Societies that the booth would never be void. It was agreed that, if 3 weeks before the event there is a vacant booth, MT would make

such an offer to the Peptide Societies, asking in advance for their contacts to the Secretary, Paula Gomes (PG).

MT then asked how to proceed with the Book of Abstracts and the Proceedings Book. In regard to the Book of Abstracts, to be published as a Special Issue of JPS, NS warned about possible copyright issues. KR mentioned that, in the case of the EPS Symposium in Gdansk, JPS only provided the cover, the rest was the Symposium Chair's responsibility, and MT agreed that this was the idea she got from her initial contacts with Wiley. NS and PR suggested that MT should get in touch with Ruben Ragg to clarify this matter. Concerning the Book of Abstracts, it was considered that a pdf document to be made available online through the EPS website would be the best option, but that a digital object identifier should be associated to it, to enable proper citation. It was suggested to ask for the help of Michal Lebl, who co-edited the Proceedings of the last Symposium, and KR volunteered to contact him on MT's behalf.

In regard to the Opening Session and different types of awards, NS mentioned that he would update the "opening session choreography" document, whereas PG volunteered to take care of the Award Certificates. Lastly, MT said she would send registration codes to the EC members in brief course. As nothing else was to be discussed about the organization of the 36EPS, MT left the meeting at 13:30 h.

4. Report of the Editor-in-Chief of Journal of Peptide Science

The Editors-in-Chief of Journal of Peptide Science (JPS), Luis Moroder (LM) and Paolo Rovero (PR) were invited to present the report of JPS (Annex I.2). PR intervened, reporting that an increased number of submissions was received in 2021, but a significant proportion did not have enough quality to be accepted for publication; so, the percentage of rejections was significant, although similar to those observed in other Wiley journals. PR stressed that stronger efforts should be made to attract contributions from Europe and other Northwestern regions, as these are much scarcer than those from other regions, e.g., Asia.

Several possible interventions were suggested in order to increase the journal's impact factor. FC considered that advancing for an Open Access model would be important. NS reminded that this was being already addressed by Ruben Ragg, who had previously agreed to send a simulation of costs and revenues associated to such model. FC also suggested that a short (one slide) presentation could be useful to disseminate the journal in small/regional events held under the auspices of the EPS, and that the journal's Deputy Editor-in-Chief, Christian Becker, could incentive the General Assembly members in their forthcoming meeting to contribute to JPS and to invite EPS members from their countries to do the same.

LM outlined that good review papers are also an effective way to increase the visibility and the impact factor of the journal, and NS suggested that Special Issues could also be of interest, advancing one possible topic, "Next Generation Peptide Chemists", for which contributions from the young speakers at the YIMS in the 36EPS could be asked. NS also proposed that good quality papers focused on peptide chemistry that are rejected by other Wiley journals could be given the possibility of being transferred to JPS. PR informed that this is an ongoing discussion with Ruben Ragg. KR also mentioned the

relevance of the EPS Highlights, but considered that a redesign of the submission process was needed, which was consensually agreed.

LM highlighted that, by being 50% part of the EPS, JPS cannot participate directly in the Chemistry Europe Consortium, but could have a participation in virtual issues. He further suggested that a renaming of the journal to cover also protein science could be considered, provided there is a focus on Chemistry. Also, LM proposed that a 5–10 minutes' slot should be given to PR in the 36EPS for presenting the journal and inviting the Symposium attendants to contribute. This was consensually agreed and NS suggested that the ideal moment for that would be the Opening Session, before the Awards ceremony. NS further proposed that Ruben Ragg should be invited to participate in the 36EPS with a waived registration, which was consensually agreed.

As nothing else had to be discussed on this matter, LM and PR left the meeting at 14:20 and a 10 minutes' break took place.

2. Approval of the minutes of the EC meeting held in March 2021

The minutes of the EC meeting (videoconference) held in March 2021 (Annex I.1), were unanimously approved by the EC members who had attended the meeting. The Treasurer, Fernando Formaggio (FF), reminded that he should soon send the respective version in Italian, to be signed by the President and the Secretary.

5. Report of the Communication Officer

The Communication Officer, Krzysztof Rolka (KR), was invited to present his report (Annex I.3). KR mentioned that, in the past 12 months, only two "Highlights" papers were uploaded to the JPS website, considering that a change in the submission process is needed, and should be discussed with Ruben Ragg or other editorial staff member from Wiley. KR next showed the new layout for the EPS website, elaborated by Sarah Hickman with the collaboration of Ruben Ragg, and to be put online in due course.

NS suggested the website to include a link to the EPS YouTube channel, and KR confirmed that this is to be soon implemented. NS also asked if the video recording of the 1st Peptide Highlights virtual event could be uploaded into the YouTube channel, as recently done for the 2nd edition of this event, but KR clarified that not all speakers of the 1st edition gave their permission for that.

6. Report of the Scientific Affairs Officer

The Scientific Affairs Officer, Florine Cavelier (FC), was invited to present her report (Annex I.4). FC informed that no applications to EPS Mobility Fellowships were received in 2021, and that these EPS-sponsored grants should be advertised in the Opening Session of the forthcoming 36EPS.

In regard to support to small/regional Peptide Meetings, FC reported that the organizers of the Italian Peptides Society Meeting held in November 2021 duly presented the report (with pictures) of the event, and that the amount granted by the EPS had been already transferred. In turn, the organizers of the Austrian Peptide Symposium did not send the illustrated report of the event, despite warnings were sent; as such, the grant was not yet transferred, and it was agreed that FC should get in touch one last time with the organizers. Likewise, despite several contacts in that regard, the organizers of the Bulgarian

Peptide Symposium did not send an updated request for support (the event was originally planned for 2020, but postponed to 2021), and the report presented did not contain any pictures; thus, the grant was not yet transferred, and it was agreed that FC would make one last attempt to ask the organizers to regularize the situation. As for the forthcoming French/Belgian joint meeting, to be held in May–June 2022, FC explained that an exceptional support in 2000 euro was approved, considering that this is a long duration event (one week) that is co-organized by two national peptide societies.

Concerning the virtual “Peptide Highlights” meetings, there is consensus in keeping this initiative alive and schedule one more edition for the Fall 2022. NS asked EC members to think about possible Chairpersons, keeping the original idea that they should be early career researchers. KR suggested that proposals could be asked to General Assembly members in the forthcoming meeting, and NS considered that a discussion/decision could be made in the EC in-person meeting to be held in Sitges, during the 36EPS.

7. Report of the Secretary

The Secretary, Paula Gomes (PG), briefly presented her report (Annex I.5), highlighting new membership applications over the past 12 months, and the “pass on the baton” (ceasing to new National Representatives) event to take place in the next in-person General Assembly to be held in Sitges during the 36EPS. She further reminded that elections must be organized in countries where National Representatives are ending their 2018–2022 mandate. In this regard, she briefly reminded EC members about the usual procedure and proposed to start the process by mid-April, which was consensually agreed. NS suggested that efforts could be made to reactivate the participation of Latvia, Norway, and Sweden, and PG said she would ask Jarosław Ruczyński for help to gain access to the lists of EPS members from those countries. KR volunteered to get in touch with a Swedish colleague that might help as well.

8. Report of the Treasurer

The Treasurer, Fernando Formaggio (FF), was invited to present his report (Annex I.6). FF started by addressing the Budget for year 2021, and shared a few comments from Dr. Gori regarding the large savings of the EPS. In light of the comments, it was consensually agreed that the EPS should increase the support to relevant events, e.g., cover additional expenses with the Mixer in the 36EPS that might not be fully covered by the amount granted by ESCOM, among other similar actions. KR also mentioned the investment on promotional materials for the EPS Booth, and that the organizer of the 36EPS, MT, could get in touch with Natalia Ptaszyńska to know how this was arranged for the 35EPS.

EPS Awards were discussed, and FF provided updated information regarding their respective amounts:

- *Josef Rudinger Memorial Lecture Award*: 5000 Euro, which is handed directly by the sponsor (PolyPeptide Group) to the laureate, and has to be requested in every edition of the EPS;
- *Leonidas Zervas Award*: 3760 Euro, sponsored by Rao Makineni, who transferred to the EPS the full amount required to cover the awards till 2032; noteworthy, two Leonidas Zervas Awards will be

delivered in the 36EPS, which does not alter the global sponsorship schedule, as no EPS Prizes were awarded in 2020;

- *Miklós Bodanszky Award*: 2000 Euro, sponsored by BCN Peptides, who transferred to the EPS an amount that covers till the 2022 event, and has agreed to soon transfer the full amount needed to cover the next three editions (2024, 2026, and 2028).

Expenses with the Josef Rudinger Medal, as well as with Medals for Service to retired EPS Officers, namely, the former President (David Andreu), Treasurer (Anna Maria Papini), and Secretary (Dirk Tourwé), were also discussed. It was agreed that NS will once again take care of the Josef Rudinger Medal, and specifications for the Medals for Service remained an open issue. It was consensually decided that the reference in the EPS Bylaws, of granting Medals of Service in addition to the Certificates to ceasing National Representatives, should be erased in the forthcoming revision of the Society's Statutes and Bylaws. In this regard, FF informed that the participation of a Notary that is required for the approval of the revised Statutes and Bylaws by the General Assembly can be arranged by videoconference till the 31st of July 2022, but will forcibly have to be in-person from this date onwards. Therefore, it was consensually settled that the approval of the revised Statutes/Bylaws should integrate the agenda of the forthcoming General Assembly meeting that has to be held in late May 2022.

Any other business

FC informed EC members that she was liaising the members of a COST Consortium on Venoms and Toxins with the 36EPS organizer, MT, to evaluate the potential of the organization of a Satellite Meeting focused on the COST Action, to be held 1.5 days before the 36EPS, also in Sitges. The COST Consortium would take care of the necessary arrangements/expenses. It was consensually agreed that this could be a good initiative.

As nothing else had to be deliberated, and no other members asked to intervene, this part of the EC meeting was closed at 17 h. The present minutes were elaborated, approved and signed as they stand.

Norbert Sewald, President of the
EPS

Paula Gomes, Secretary of the
EPS

Annexes:

- I.1. Minutes of the EC meeting, Florence, March 2021
- I.2. Report of the JPS EoC
- I.3. Report of the Communication Officer
- I.4. Report of the Scientific Affairs Officer
- I.5. Report of the Secretary
- I.6. Report of the Treasurer

Extract from the Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting—Part II, 30 of March 2022

(Teleconference)

Part II

30/03/21, 12:00 to 3:45 pm (CET)

Participants at start: Norbert Sewald (NS), Krzysztof Rolka (KR), Fernando Formaggio (FF), Florine Cavelier (FC), Paula Gomes (PG), Pietro Bottani (PB), Paolo Gori (PG)

1. Welcome—NS

The President (NS) welcomed all participants and opened the meeting. NS then invited Dr. Pietro Bottani (PB) to intervene regarding his analysis of the proposed changes to the Society's Statutes and Bylaws, and on the organization of the forthcoming Extraordinary General Assembly where such changes would be put to the consideration of the EPS Effective Members in the presence of a Notary. After a brief discussion on the subject, the meeting moved forward according to the pre-established Agenda.

2. Approval of the Financial Statements of the year ended on 31/12/2021 (Annexes II.1–II.3)

The Financial Statements of 2021 were thoroughly analyzed and consensually approved.

3. Approval of the Budget for fiscal year 2022 (Annex II.4)

The Budget for 2022 was discussed and approved.

4. Call for the next General Assembly (extraordinary)

Considering that the availability of the Notary was still pending, three possible dates were identified for the next General Assembly (GA): 23rd of May from 2 pm onwards; 24th of May from 3 pm onwards; 25th of May in the morning. PB took charge of contacting the Notary to set the final date and hours for the 1st and 2nd calls, and report back to the EC. PB also mentioned that it would be important that at least one of the EC members should be together in-person with the Notary for the Extraordinary GA, and it was agreed that the Treasurer (FF) would join both the Notary and PB in Milan for the meeting.

As no other matters required the intervention of either Dr. Bottani or Dr. Gori, these two participants left the meeting at 1 pm.

5. Proposed changes to the Society's Statutes and Bylaws

A few additional amendments to the Society's Statutes and Bylaws were made, at the light of Dr. Bottani's comments, and also to update a number of issues, including the (i) recognition for years of service to GA and EC members, (ii) requirements to apply for Mobility Fellowships, and (iii) possibility of an Effective Member being represented in General Assemblies if unable to participate in them. In regard to (i), it was decided that, in agreement with the current (to be updated) version of the Statutes and Bylaws, both a Medal and a Certificate would be attributed to the former President, Secretary and Treasurer, but only Certificates should be awarded from now on. Concerning (ii), it was agreed to open applications to Mobility Fellowships also to early career scientists holding a PhD degree (obtained in the past 3 years) and to increase the maximum grant amount to 5000 Euros (see 6.2); it was also decided that applicants should be

EPS members at the time of application and that their supervisors/lab heads at their Home Institution should be EPS members for at least 12 months. As for (iii), it was established that an Effective Member unable to participate in a General Assembly might, based on relevant documents provided in advance, express his/her votes through a written statement sent to the President or Secretary. NS took charge of sending the final versions of the Statutes and Bylaws to Drs. Pietro Bottani and Paolo Gori.

6. Any other business

6.1. Young Testimonials for the EPS Booth in Symposia

On the basis of a recent communication from Paolo Rovero, who was told by a former Young Testimonial that at least six Young Testimonials should be recruited for the EPS Booth in each Symposium, to ensure a good service, it was consensually agreed to recruit six instead of five Young Testimonials, according to the following criteria: one Young Testimonials who already served in the previous Symposium, one Young Testimonial appointed by the current Symposium Chair, one Young Testimonial (preferably, a 1st year PhD student) appointed by the Chair of the forthcoming Symposium, three Young Testimonials to be proposed by the General Assembly in its meeting to be held in May 2022.

6.2. Financial situation of the Society

As the bank savings of the EPS remain too high for a regular non-profit organization, EC members discussed possible investments that were in line with the mission of the Society. After a brief debate, the following were considered as relevant actions: (i) open Mobility Grants also to early career researchers holding a PhD degree (obtained not longer than 3 years ago); (ii) allowing Mobility Grants to have a maximum budget of 5000 instead of 3000 Euros; (iii) increase the budget allocated to the promotional materials for the EPS Booth; (iv) create the "EPS Poster Prize competition" to award 10 prizes of 200 Euros each; all YIMS participants would be eligible—it was agreed that the Scientific Affairs Officer (FC) would see the best way to organize this initiative.

6.3. Update on EPS "travel grant" applicants

EC members discussed about an e-mail update sent by the 36EPS organizer, Meritxell Teixidó (MT), regarding the applicants to EPS "travel grants" (registration fee waivers). According to MT, there were 154 applications to these grants, whereas maximum YIMS applicants to be selected would be 14, so a maximum 168 registration waivers should be expected. In the view of the EC, there is no link between being selected to participate in the YIMS and having a registration waiver, so it was agreed that the Secretary (PG) would ask MT for clarification.

6.4. Position of the EPS regarding the Russian aggression to Ukraine

EC members consensually agreed that the EPS should make a public statement, through its official homepage, regarding the Russian aggression to Ukraine. It was decided to publish the following statement:

"The EPS condemns the military attack of the Russian Government at Ukraine, which breaches international law and causes a

humanitarian catastrophe. Therefore, the membership rights of scientists with affiliation to a Russian and Belorussian organization will be suspended until the aggression has been stopped and the conflict has been solved by diplomacy.

In particular, this refers to participation to EPS events, applications for EPS support (travel grants, small meetings, mobility fellowships), and applications for membership.”

In consequence of the above statement, it was further decided that the President (NS) would notify:

- the 36EPS organizer (MT) that any registrations and submissions/grant applications from scientists affiliated to Russian or Belorussian institutions should be cancelled and denied, respectively. Any reimbursements of registration fees already paid by such scientists would be the EPS responsibility;
- the National Representative of Russia, Prof. Ekaterina Kolesanova, that her involvement in any type of EPS activities, such as

participation in the General Assembly, among others, would be suspended until the Russian aggression on Ukraine has been stopped and the conflict solved by diplomacy.

As nothing else had to be deliberated, and no other members asked to intervene, this part of the EC meeting was closed at 3:45 pm, and Part III scheduled for the 31st of March 2022, was cancelled. The present minutes were elaborated, approved and signed as they stand.

Norbert Sewald, President of the
EPS

Paula Gomes, Secretary of the
EPS

Annexes:

II.0. Detailed Minutes of Part II of the EC Meeting; II.1. Financial Statements for 2021; II.2. Notes to the Financial Statements for 2021; II.4. Budget for 2022

Extract from the minutes of the general assembly of the European Peptide Society of May 23, 2022

On May 23, 2022 at 14:30 (CEST), the members of the Council of the European Peptide Society participated via Zoom, according to the attendance sheet herein attached, to deliberate on the following agenda:

On May 23, 2022 at 14:30, the members of the Council of the European Peptide Society participated via Zoom, according to attendance sheet herein attached, to deliberate on the following agenda:

1. Welcome – N. Sewald
2. Apologies for absence – P. Gomes
3. Approval of the minutes of the GA meeting of May 2021 (Annexes 1&2) – P. Gomes
4. News and information – N. Sewald
5. Report of the Secretary (Annex 3) – P. Gomes
6. [Re-]Election of National Representatives for the 2022–2026 term (Annex 11) – P. Gomes
7. Society's Statutes (Annex 12) – N. Sewald/P. Bottani/P. Scalamogna
8. Report of the Communication Officer (Annex 4) – K. Rolka
9. Report of the Treasurer (Annexes 5–8) – F. Formaggio
10. Report of the Journal of Peptide Science Editor-in-Chief (Annex 9) – P. Rovero
11. Report of the Scientific Affairs Officer (Annex 10) – F. Cavellier
12. 36th European Peptide Symposium & 12th International Peptide Symposium – N. Sewald/M. Teixidó
13. Any other business

The President welcomed all participants, and opened the meeting with a vote of condolence for the premature departure of Ulf Diederichsen, a long-time member of the Society and of its General Assembly, a prominent and highly respected peptide scientist, and Deputy Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Peptide Science.

Apologies for absence or delay, received from Luis Moroder, Christian Becker, Jeffrey Bode, Knud Jenssen, and Roderich Süßmuth (delay), were then presented by the Secretary. After all participants connected via Zoom confirmed the possibility to intervene in real time at the discussion, and to have timely analyzed all documents that had been previously sent by the Secretary, all matters of the agenda were thoroughly discussed, with deliberations as follows.

MINUTES OF THE LAST GENERAL ASSEMBLY (MAY 27TH, 2021)

The minutes (Annexes 1 and 2) were approved by unanimity.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY (P. GOMES)

The report of the Secretary (Annex 3), including information on new members joining the Society in the past 12 months and the ongoing [re-]elections of National Representatives for the General Assembly was briefly discussed, after which it was unanimously approved.

PROPOSAL OF A NEW VERSION OF THE STATUTES OF THE EPS (N. SEWALD)

After confirming that at least 2/3 of the members of the General Assembly were present, enabling deliberations on the Statutes of the Society, the President welcomed the Notary, Dr. Pierluigi Scalamogna, and the Society's legal advisor, Dr. Pietro Bottani, into the meeting. The Notary identified all participants and confirmed that all requirements for a valid deliberation on the Statutes were fulfilled. Then, the Notary asked the President of the Society to explain the proposed changes (Annex 12) to the audience and, once everyone was duly clarified, an electronic vote was set and the changes to the Statutes were unanimously approved. Drs. Pierluigi Scalamogna and Pietro Bottani informed they would elaborate the minutes for this specific point of the agenda, and then left the meeting (3:30 pm).

REPORT OF THE COMMUNICATION OFFICER (K. ROLKA)

The report of the Communication Officer (Annex 4) was presented, emphasizing the "Peptide Highlights" initiative and the possibility of converting it into manuscripts (e.g., reviews) suitable for submission to Journal of Peptide Science. The report was next approved by unanimity.

REPORT OF THE TREASURER (F. FORMAGGIO)

The Treasurer explained in detail all relevant documents regarding the financial situation of the Society, including Bank Transactions and Financial Statements in 2021 and a Budget Plan for the next 5 years (Annexes 5–8). Following a brief discussion to clarify doubts raised by some of the participants, the report was unanimously approved.

36TH EUROPEAN PEPTIDE SYMPOSIUM AND 12TH INTERNATIONAL PEPTIDE SYMPOSIUM (N. SEWALD/M. TEIXIDÓ)

The Secretary informed that the Chair of the 36EPS, Meritxell Teixidó, asked to intervene earlier than scheduled, as she had to catch a flight in brief course and would not be able to join later. The President and all other participants consensually agreed to anticipate the discussion of this point in the agenda and Meritxell Teixidó was invited to join the meeting at this stage (3:55 pm). Meritxell Teixidó updated the participants regarding the organization of the forthcoming 36EPS&12IPS, with emphasis on the quite encouraging numbers of participants from diverse geographical origins, the possibility to award grants to all young peptide scientists who applied, the portfolio of invited speakers, and the significant number of sponsors and booths, all of which were already booked. After the discussion came to an end, Meritxell Teixidó took the opportunity to volunteer to act as liaison to the EPS in the American Peptide Symposium to be held in Whistler – Canada, in June 2022, which was consensually accepted. Meritxell then left the meeting (4:10 pm).

REPORT OF THE JOURNAL OF PEPTIDE SCIENCE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF (P. ROVERO)

The Editor-in-Chief of JPS made a brief presentation of the status of the journal and also of changes made in consequence of the untimely departure of its former Deputy Editor-in-Chief, Ulf Diederichsen. The ongoing transition process for the modernization of the Journal was highlighted, and a brief balance on the number of manuscript submissions, rejections and approvals was made. Actions to increase the

journal's impact factor and the number of contributions from European peptide scientists were proposed, including advancing special issues or collections devoted to specific topics, such as those from, e.g., “Peptide Highlights” events, the Young Investigators Mini Symposium embedded in European Peptide Symposia, among others. It was also proposed to organize a special honorary issue in memoriam of Ulf Diederichsen. All these proposals were briefly discussed and consensually accepted, and the report of the Editor-in-Chief of the JPS (Annex 9) was unanimously approved.

REPORT OF THE SCIENTIFIC AFFAIRS OFFICER (F. CAVELIER)

The Scientific Affairs Officer briefly presented changes made to the requirements to apply for Mobility Fellowships, to counteract the fact that these remain quite underexplored by potential candidates. An update on support given to regional meetings was made and, after being briefly explained, the report (Annex 10) was approved by unanimity.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The president resumed the discussion on the organization of the 36th EPS & 12th EPS, as it would still be necessary to appoint three young researchers to collaborate in the Society's booth. Basically, six young researchers—the so called Young Testimonials—will be recruited to help in the booth and, in return, have their registration fees waived. Three such collaborators would be recruited from current and next Symposium organizers, to promote the passing of testimony between the previous, the current and the next events, whereas the other three should be nominated by General Assembly members. Therefore, all participants were asked to send their nominations as soon as possible, in no case any later than the end of June 2022.

As no other members asked to intervene and nothing else had to be deliberated, the meeting was closed at 4:50 pm. The present minutes were approved as they stand.

The Secretary	The President
Prof. Paula Gomes	Prof. Norbert Sewald
May 23, 2022	

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