



Extract from :

***Chairman's Report to the General Assembly
Louvain-la-Neuve, September 2008***

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5. Since 2006, and in addition to the day to day communication with members, there has been contact between IAUTA and U3As or similar organisations in over 20 different countries as well as with such international organisations as FIAPAⁱ and the OECD.ⁱⁱ About half of these contacts have taken the form of invitations to participate in events. Your Chairman has responded to such invitations by addressing conferences in Scotland, Poland, Portugal and England, as well as by participating in the *OECD Global Forum on Education* held in the Dominican Republic and, in China, by way of a paper for distribution to some 100 delegates at an international conference in Shanghai, which is taking place as I speak. (A further speaking engagement in the Czech Republic was only forestalled by illness.)
 6. Enquiries regarding possible collaboration or in respect of research have been received from Poland, the Czech Republic, Singapore, Vietnam, Korea, the USA and the European Community. Development of U3As and potential membership of IAUTA has taken place in Nepal, India and Japan. All of these contacts have underlined the value of IAUTA as perceived by many individuals and associations across the world. It is also the outcome of initiatives taken by individual colleagues to whom I would wish to offer the warm thanks of the Association.
 7. The combined efforts of U3As in a number of different countries which, under the leadership of Prof. Paulin Duchesne, produced "*Europe united in its Proverbs*", were applauded in my predecessor's report. To this I can readily add further congratulation on the publication of a second volume "*European popular wisdom at the dining table and in the workplace*" which again represents a multi-national collaboration facilitated through IAUTA membership. This type of multi-national collaboration is a developing feature in the field of 3rd Age learning and I am pleased to note the participation of IAUTA members in such projects e.g. the eLiLL project to support the development of e-learning among senior citizens, based at the University of Ulm, Germany.
 8. IAUTA itself has not neglected ICT development. In order to facilitate contact between Governing Board members dispersed in distant countries, agreement was reached with the UK Open University to have free access to its newly developed system of video-conferencing, known as "*Flashmeeting*". This has not only enabled low cost meetings of Board members but also participation in

ⁱ The International Federation of Associations of Older People (Fédération Internationale des Associations de Personnes Âgées)

ⁱⁱ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

seminars or conferences in Germany and India which, in the latter case, brought together simultaneously contributors from the UK, Australia and India.

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14. I can report that, in addition to the Namur publications referred to above (*para 7*), IAUTA has inspired a travelling exhibition, organised by the U3A of Vannes, France, related to popular wisdom in Europeⁱⁱⁱ and also the translation into Spanish and Catalan of another Namur document entitled “*Mythology in the housewife’s shopping basket*”. There has also been joint research into the pedagogy of gerontology (*known as gerontagogy*) involving Belgian and Canadian colleagues and resulting from work undertaken at previous IAUTA conferences. Further IAUTA inspired activities include exchange visits between French and Italian U3As and the promotion of IAUTA at U3A federal conferences in Italy.
 15. From all these various strands, what can be woven together to produce an image of IAUTA 2008 and a projection of its future development? As a voluntary organisation whose prime concern is development, collaboration and recognition of U3As worldwide, its achievements continue to fall short of its ambitions. However, this should not diminish the substantial impact it does have on an increasing number of organisations and individuals who recognise its unique position as an international representative body of 3rd Age learning.
 16. I wish to pay tribute to all the many colleagues who through their membership, voluntary support and interest in IAUTA’s affairs make a vital contribution to the increasing recognition of the important role played by the Third Age in many countries. Finally, let me add my personal word of thanks for their support to the members of the Governing Board and to our administrative assistant, Bérengère Delli, whose contribution goes well beyond the terms of her contract.

Stanley Miller
Evesham, September 2008

ⁱⁱⁱ Under the title “La Valse des Sentences” this exhibition is now being made freely available to U3As in other countries. Those interested should contact Vannes U3A.