

Memorandum

Re: Site Visit Pre-Congress

Date: May 10, 2016

To: WCCES Bureau Members, Members of the WCCCS Executive Committee, Members of the WCCES Standing Committees

From: WCCES President Carlos Alberto Torres, Interim Treasurer Kanishka Bedi, and Chair Congress Committee Cristian Perez Centeno

Dear colleagues

From April 24 to April 30, we visited our CCES colleagues at BNU, Beijing, China. We spent a whole week of ample deliberation and learning about the upcoming congress. Please see as attachment-I the agenda for our meetings. What follows is our site visit report for your information.

1. The right of Hospitality. As we emphasized in our closing comments after the different presentations of the large and efficient team assembled for the coordination and organization of the XVI Congress, we were very well received resembling what Kant entitled the right of hospitality. That is, we were so well received in such a hospitable and gracious manner, that we felt immediately 'citizens' of BNU and close collaborators in the coordination and organization of the World Congress. Our personal and professional thanks for such professional and warm reception, attention, and gestures of camaraderie and collegiality.
2. Facilities. Having visited the extraordinary and efficient facilities of BNU we were immediately convinced that the congress will take place in a very modern, efficient and we would add, beautiful venue. There are not red lights; with exception that one of the buildings in which the meetings will take place have no elevator. There is no discrimination of any person with mobility constraints, it is simply an older building, and our colleagues will try to schedule meetings mostly in the first (ground) floor, though there might be occasions (to be listed in the program) that people with disabilities or mobility restrictions may not be able to attend if meetings are scheduled in the upper levels of this building.
3. Human Capital. The large number of colleagues involved in the organization committee (more than 50 per our account) and the large number of bilingual volunteers that will be convoked to help in the Congress (200 students and 60 scholars are estimated) shows an extraordinary gamut of qualified individuals. There is no question that there is a very efficient human capital involved in the organization under the able leadership of Professors Wang and Baocun.
4. Language issues. English will be the official language of the Congress.

The plenary sessions (opening session, keynote speakers and WCCES General Assembly) will be held in English and Chinese (simultaneous translation).

Parallel sessions can be accomplished in other languages, but they are expected that visual aids be prepared in English (PPTs and/or handouts).

We noticed also some language issues that pertain to the local culture and vernacular topics. For instance, several times it was suggested that the promotion and dissemination of information for the Congress was termed 'propaganda'; we suggested other terminologies such as the creation of a Press Office.

5. Congress program. 1015 papers proposals have been submitted, and more than 1000 people are expected. We discussed the lag in evaluation of the papers by the International Conveners, and noting that deadlines to notify about papers were rapidly approaching our committee suggested to proceed with the information that was already collected.

That might have implications for discounts in registrations for the Conveners who couldn't deliver their evaluations on time. That accounts for a complex congress program. Four keynotes are contracted, and listed in the website, which should be fully operational by now, with dashboard providing information, etc. Two keynotes will be back to back in the first and second day of the Congress, with 40 minutes each, including 10 minutes for questions from the audience. A fifth keynote speaker has to be confirmed as the replacement of Mrs. I. Bukova; Mr. Qian Tang -UNESCO Assistant Director-General for Education- is a possibility to be explored. At this point the Congress Standing Committee suggested a different organization with different slots for each keynote speakers distributing them along the week, giving them a wider space of time and promoting the attendance of delegates during the whole congress week.

Considering the need to incorporate in significant positions few of the opinion leaders in our profession, the organizers decided to create what they called "plenary" panels, one panel per cohort of panels (there will be 16 cohort panels or 16 panel sessions). We recommended that instead of plenary panels they should be called "highlighted" panels. CCES agreed to use highlighted panels instead of plenary panels or sessions. In the context of our negotiations, a specific request from the Korean society for the deputy prime Minister of Korea and as well Secretary of Education to become keynote speaker was made to Professor Torres. After explaining to our colleagues in Korea that it was not possible to modify the list of keynote speakers, Professor Torres proposed to the Korean society and to the organizers, and was accepted by both institutions that there will be a WCCES Presidential Highlighted Panel entitled Korean Educational Policy: The Semester Test Free Program. President Torres will be the Convener and Chair of the highlighted panel, and the Minister of Education of Korea will be the central speaker for 20 minutes, with two respondents for 10 minutes in total, and debate through Q&A afterwards.

6. Publications. Our inquiry about the publication of proceedings, papers and or books resulting from the World Congress showed that the organizers have not discussed the topic with the Executive Board of our Publication Standing Committee, and they were urged to do so immediately. We were glad to learn of the good disposition of the Organizing Committee to discuss with our Publications Committee. President Torres has already sent a memorandum to the Executive Board of the Publication Committee so that they discuss with the Organizing Committee how to proceed with publication, with the goal of publishing several books in English, French, Spanish and Chinese. These topics require careful monitoring because the members of the organizing committee were not aware of the reorganization of the Publication Committee.
7. Food. There will be a reception and a gala dinner. CCES have two suggestions: lunch in the canteens on campus, or lunch-boxes outside of the conference rooms in the beautiful and shaded gardens. If the second suggestion is approved, they can also open some rooms for lunch.
8. Parallel events: Visit to Schools. Three visits to schools settings have been organized, and we visited one of the schools to test the system. It was a remarkable experience. Though children and youth will not be present (they will be on vacation during our congress dates, as it is also the case with university students) we will recommend to members of WCCES to take advantage of the opportunity and visit the three schools, take the school tour, and learn from the tour guides (professors from BNU and students) about the teaching and learning process in the schools.
9. Parallel events: Tourism. The organizers have contracted with China International Travel Service CITS, a government agency to be the official Tour Agency of the Congress. Like in other parts in China, the availability of English speakers in the travel agency is limited. President Torres tested the system by sending on Thursday an email to the Assistant General Manager asking for a meeting before he departed but received no response. Payment of the day or extended tours need to be made via bank wire beforehand, and only upon arrival in Beijing at the desk of the travel agency—depending upon availability—could be made through credit card.
10. Money issues. Airlines and main hotels serving international passengers apparently accept International Credit Cards, but our experience showed that are not readily available for local services (e.g. restaurants). We shall recommend that people take with them debit cards (access to local currencies via debit cards in international hotels is a distinct possibility), exchange money at the airport, or carry substantial amount of cash in Yuan RMB currency. On May 1st, one Chinese Yuan equals 0.15 dollars.
11. Hotels. We discussed the question of hotel rooms reserved for the event. The organizers recommended many hotels on the website, and also reserved with promotional fares some rooms in the university hotel (Jingshi Hotel / located inside

- the BNU campus) and in the Holiday Inn (3 blocks away) for WCCES officers, keynote speakers and other urgent uses.
12. Booths and advertisement. There will be several booths that institutions and people can reserve for a fee. The organizers requested the help of the Bureau in seeking more donations and or reservations of paid advertisement.
 13. Travel grants. The organizers will not grant discounts beyond the established discounts for different type of societies to the six recipients of the travel grants that will be provided per recommendation of the Special Projects Standing Committee—empowered by the Bureau to make the selection criteria and selection of the candidates to receive the travel grants which will be reimbursed after the participation in the Congress.
 14. Special designation of board members. Per our recommendation, all members of the Executive Committee, and members of the Bureau will have a special code/color in their registration labels for the event. The Bureau will provide organizers with a list of the members of the Bureau and of the Executive Committee.
 15. WCCES meetings. The first meeting will take place on Tuesday 23, with a second meeting on Wednesday 24. The original idea of a meeting on Sunday 21 was cancelled per multiple concerns rose that with such a long flight Sunday's rest was a requirement for attending the congress. The Assembly will take place on the 26 of August. Election of New Leadership will take place mostly via electronic voting with a final voting of those who choose to do so in Beijing in the afternoon of Tuesday 23 August.
 16. An obituary for Marta Luz Sisson de Castro, former president of the Brazilian society of comparative education will be provided in the information package of the congress.
 17. Revenue projections for the congress indicated surplus, a portion of which would be transferred (as per the agreement between WCCES and CCES) to the WCCES bank account after the culmination of the congress.

APPENDIX-1: WCCES SITE VISIT MEETING SCHEDULE

April 24th Morning Sunday

- 11:10 am Pick up at the airport
Prof. Carlos Alberto Torres

April 24th Afternoon Sunday

- 2:20pm Pick up at the airport
Prof. Cristian Perez Centeno:
Prof. Kanishka Bedi
-Students will hold a placard of your names, if you cannot find the students, contact Miss Yin Huijuan (+8610 58805294/+8615201409916)
- 6:00 pm Dinner (meet at 5:50pm at the lobby of Jingshi Hotel ; Dinner at Lanhui Hotel)

April 25th Morning Monday

- 9:50 am meeting at the lobby of Jingshi Hotel
- 10 : 00-11 : 30am, Welcome Meeting: Main Buliding A414
Introduction (10 minutes)
BNU Vice president Welcome address (15 min+translation)
WCCES address (15 min+translation)
Congress Preparation Review and Site Visit Schedule (30min)
Q&A (20 min)
- 12:00am Lunch (Lanhui Hotel)

April 25th Afternoon Monday

- 2:30pm Yingdong Building 723
Report on Academic program & WCCES Activity in Beijing (30min)
Discussion (120 min)
- 6:00 pm Dinner (Jingshi Hotel)

April 26th Morning Tuesday

- 9:00 am meeting at the Jingshi Hotel Lobby
- 10:00am Visit to UNICEF China (arrange transportation, accompanied by a volunteer)
- 12:00 am Lunch: Jingshi Hotel

April 26th Afternoon Tuesday

- 2:30pm Yingdong Buliding 723

- 2:30pm-3:00pm: Finance issues
- 3:00pm-3:30pm: Exhibition issues
- 3:30pm-4:30pm: school visit & tourism & one night in Beijing
- 4:30pm-5:00pm: Q&A

April 27th Morning Wednesday

- 9:00 am Yingdong Building 723
- 9:00-9:30 Hotel Logistics
- 9:30-10:00 Venue Logistics
- 10:00-10:30 Welcome Reception, Gala Dinner and Institutional Reception
- 10:30-11:00 Food and Tea Break Logistics
- 11:00-11:30 Keynote speakers and Key WCCES officers pick-up transportation Logistics
- 12:00 am Lunch (Jingshi Hotel)

April 27th Afternoon Wednesday

Free Time

- 5:50 pm (meet at the lobby of Jingshi Hotel)
- 6:00 pm Dinner (at Lanhui Hotel)

April 28th Morning Thursday

- 8:00 am meeting in the lobby of Jingshi Hotel
- School visits: Kindergarten, Elementary, Secondary School, High School
- 10:00 am Venue visit to Teaching Building 8, Teaching Building 9, Jingshixuetang, Gymnasium
 - 12:00 am Lunch at Jingshi Hotel

April 28th Afternoon Thursday

- 2:30pm meeting in the lobby of Jingshi Hotel
- 2:30pm-5:30pm Visits to Jingshi Hotel, Holiday Inn, Main Building, etc (hotel rooms, gala dinner room, reception rooms, exhibition hall, restaurant)

April 29th Morning Friday

- 9:00am Yingdong Buliding 723
- 9:00am-9:30am promotion issue
- 9:30am-9:50am: Language Service
- 9:50am-10:30am: Volunteer issue
- 10:30am-11:00am: Q&A
- 11:00 am- 11:50 am wrap up: Summary, comments and suggestions by

WCCES; Response from CCES.

- 12:00 am Lunch at Jingshi Hotel

April 29th Afternoon Friday

Free Time

- 9:00 pm pickup to the airport: Prof. Cristian Perez Centeno

April 30th Morning Saturday

- 9:00 am pickup to the airport: Prof. Kanishka Bedi
- 1:30 pm Pick up to the airport : Prof. Carlos Alberto Torres