

**IEEE Information Theory Society Board of Governors Meeting**  
**Seoul, Korea, June 28, 2009**

João Barros

**Attendees:** Alexander Barg, João Barros, Matthieu Bloch, Helmut Bölcskei, Ezio Biglieri, Giuseppe Caire, Daniel J. Costello Jr., Michelle Effros, Abbas El Gamal, Hendrik Ferreira, Michael Gastpar, Andrea Goldsmith, Alex Grant, Bruce Hajek, Tracey Ho, Gerhard Kramer, Frank Kschischang, Hans-Andrea Loeliger, Muriel Médard, Prakash Narayan, Alon Orlitsky, Joachim Rosenthal, Anant Sahai, Paul Siegel, Sergio Verdú, Aylin Yener, Ken Zeger.

The meeting was called to order at 13:00 by Society President Andrea Goldsmith, who greeted the members of the Board and their guests.

1. By consent, the Board approved the minutes of the previous meeting (Baltimore, MD, September 23, 2008).
2. The agenda was approved by consent.
3. The President gave her report. The state of the Society is excellent with many vibrant initiatives and strong engagement by new members. The Society finances are in good shape with funds available to spend this year. The Society's publications and conferences are highly successful. Progress must be made to reduce publication delays. To achieve this goal, there has been an increase in the number of Associate Editors. The possibility of moving the Transactions to the Manuscript Central system, adopted by other Societies, is currently under consideration. The symposium and workshops this year have so far been highly successful. The new website, which is heavily utilized, is deemed to be a leap forward. The new committees are very active and engaging more members. New initiatives include Distinguished Lecturer and Mentoring programs. Members of the Society are frequently honored for their work. Membership has been steady with some increase in student numbers. Chapters are vibrant and growing, with new ones in New Zealand and Chengdu, China.

João Barros' term as Secretary of the Society ends after ISIT 2009. The President thanked him for his outstanding service.

The Officers nominated Aria Nosratinia for Secretary. The Board approved the appointment unanimously.

Anant Sahai's term as Treasurer ends in December 2009. The President thanked him for his outstanding service in a difficult fiscal year. There will be a soft transition to a new Treasurer.

The officers nominated Nihar Jindal for Treasurer. The Board approved the appointment unanimously.

The Board approved the slate of candidates for the Board of Governors put forth by the Nomination and Appointments Committee. Additional nominations were solicited. The candidates are Erdal Arıkan, João Barros, Martin Bossert, Ning Cai,

Max Costa, Rolf Johannesson, Grigory Kabatiansky, Ioannis Kontoyiannis, Li Ping, Muriel Médard, Aylin Yener and Ram Zamir. Helmut Bölcskei nominated Prakash Narayan. The Board approved the nomination. Sergio Verdu nominated Bruce Hajek, who declined.

The Board also considered the nominations for officers of the Society. Andreas Loliger proposed Frank Kschischang for Society President. The Board approved the nomination. Sergio Verdú proposed Giuseppe Caire for First Vice-President. The Board approved the nomination. For the position of Second Vice-President, Muriel Médard and Alex Grant were nominated by Michelle Effros and Dan Costello, respectively.

The President elaborated on the important role of the conference committee and presented a motion for the conference committee chair to become an ex officio Member of the Board of Governors. The Board approved the motion (Sergio Verdú and Michelle Effros voted against the motion).

4. Frank Kschischang gave the report of the Awards committee. Joint ComSoc / IT Society Award went to T. Ho , M. Medard , R. Koetter , D. Karger , M. Effros , J. Shi , and B. Leong , for their paper entitled "A Random Linear Network Coding Approach to Multicast", which appeared in the IEEE Transactions on Information Theory, October 2006.

Andrew J. Viterbi has been nominated by USC for the BBVA Award. This nomination was supported by the Society.

The committee recommended the following paper for the IT Paper award: V.R. Cadambe and S.A. Jafar, 'Interference Alignment and the Degrees of Freedom for the K User Interference Channel', IEEE Transactions on Information Theory, August 2008. Frank Kschischang presented a motion for the Board to accept this recommendation. The Board approved the motion unanimously.

5. Giuseppe Caire presented the Membership and Chapters Committee report. The committee proposed Amin Shokrollahi and Alon Orlitsky to be the first two Distinguished Lecturers for the period of 2009-2011. The 2009 Padovani Lecturer is Abbas el Gamal, who will present his lecture at the 2nd Annual North American School of Information Theory, in Evanston IL, August, 2009. There are several candidate organization teams for the next two editions of the North American Information Theory School. There is a proposal to hold an information theory school in South Africa.

A request about funding possibilities for an Information Theory Chapter in Iran had to be denied due to the restrictions on transactions from the United States to Iran.

6. Ezio Biglieri presented the report of the Editor-in-Chief. There will be a new comprehensive report on submission to publications (sub-to-pub) statistics. A survey of the Computer Society and the Communications Society with 2672 responses showed that authors are overwhelmingly satisfied. Sources of dissatisfaction were sub-to-pub time and time for review. There will be a new mobile version of Xplore. The Transactions on IT ranks 6th among the most accessed journals in Xplore. Plagiarism detection tools are currently under consideration. The Society has only one case per year on average. The Transactions ranks number one in total citations and 8th in impact factor

(the value is 1.842). The Editorial Board now consists of 46 Associate Editors (from 26 in June 2007). The Editor-in-Chief is working on reducing the sub-to-pub time by reducing the number of papers assigned to each Associate Editor. An ad-hoc committee formed by Alex Grant and Adriaan J. van Wijngaarden is working with IEEE on the transition from *pareja* to Manuscript Central.

There is a proposal by the ad-hoc committee on Transactions Growth in 2005 to split the Editorial Board by thematic areas, with a Sub-Editor-in-Chief appointed for each area. Bruce Hajek asked how one person can select 50 Associate Editors. Ezio Biglieri answered that the difficult part is to convince people to accept the job and commit to this service. Sergio Verdú argued that area editors introduce hierarchy in the Editorial Board without solving the most important issues. Giuseppe Caire pointed out that Associate Editors often ask for a second round of reviews although the authors were only required to make minor modifications. Muriel Médard reported on her experience with “scholar one”, which takes care of a lot of mechanical issues such as automatic reminders, leaving the editors more time for their intellectual contributions. Paul Siegel asked if there were targets for reducing the sub-to-pub time. Ezio Biglieri stated that the targets were already set by IEEE. He also highlighted that IT papers are different in nature from other papers (no page limit, extensive proofs) and take longer to review. Andrea Loeliger defended that quality is more important than sub-to-pub time. Andrea Goldsmith replied that the Society is under pressure by IEEE to satisfy certain metrics, and argued that it should be the Society deciding on these metrics, taking quality into consideration.

Based on the recommendations of the Editor-in-Chief, the Board approved the appointments of Mehul Motani (9 votes in favor, 5 opposed, 5 abstentions), Amos Lapidoth (unanimous vote for a four month appointment, with the information that Amos Lapidoth already served once as Associate Editor), Massimo Franceschetti (unanimous), and Syed Ali Jafar (one abstention).

7. Alex Grant presented the conference committee report, which included a few presentations.

Jong-Seon No presented a report on ISIT 2009. The Board thanked the organizers of ISIT 2009 for their successful efforts.

Michael Gastpar reported on the plans for ISIT 2010. The dates are June 12-18, 2010. Everything is going according to plan. ISIT 2011 and 2012 will take place in Saint Petersburg and at MIT in Cambridge, MA, respectively. Turkey is planned for ISIT 2013, the exact venue is not yet clear. There is an expression of interest for a 2015 ISIT at Hong Kong. In spite of the financial crisis, attendance of the workshops and conference is still increasing.

Joachim Rosenthal presented a proposal to hold an ITW in Dublin from August 30th to September 3rd, 2010. The co-chairs are Marcus Greferath and Joachim Rosenthal. The planned venue is the University College Dublin. The main organizers are affiliated with the Shannon Institute. The Board approved the proposal unanimously.

Bruce Hajek is taking over as Chair of the Conference Committee. Open issues include how to differentiate ITWs from ISITs and what kind of access should be granted to

local organizers.

The Board thanked Alex Grant for his service as Chair of the Conference Committee.

8. The Treasurer presented his report. The Society lost 1.2M USD with the financial crisis. Nevertheless, the Society's finances are healthy and there are about 40k USD for new initiatives. It is possible that there is a structural loss due to reduced subscription to the printed version of the Transactions. Revenue from Xplore access is also decreasing due to the new rules of IEEE.
9. Matthieu Bloch presented the report of the online committee. The web site has been running without any problems and the hosting infrastructure can be deemed as reliable. Coordination with the conference committee and chairs is required to host conference web sites. Some chapters started using the web site and this will be increased with the help of the Membership and Chapters committee. There were a number of requests to add functionality. These have to be prioritized due to budgetary constraints. Terms and Conditions will be added to the web site.

A motion was presented to approve an additional 15k USD for software development in 2009. The Board approved the motion unanimously.

10. Aylin Yener presented the report of the Student Committee. At ISIT there will be a panel and also roundtable discussions on various research topics. There is one more event planned for Allerton, possibly a student poster award. The Committee is looking for volunteers. The expected number of attendees for the North American Information Theory School lies between 160 and 170, most of which are students. The number of applicants increased by 40%. Junior faculty showed interest in considerable numbers, probably due to the quality of the speakers. It was insisted that the content be made available online.
11. Hendrik Ferreira presented a proposal for an African Winter School on Information Theory and Communications to be held in Kruger National Park in South Africa, June 2-4, 2010. The duration would be three days, back to back with ICC 2010 in Capetown.

The President presented a motion to grant 5000 USD of support for the African Winter School. The Board approved the motion unanimously.

12. Muriel Médard presented the report of the Outreach committee. There will be a Mentor/Mentee Breakfast during ISIT. The effort is led by Todd Coleman, Christina Fragouli, Bob Gray, Sid Jaggi, Tara Javidi, and Muriel Médard. The relationship is predicted to last for three years. Mentees must be Society members. An event will be held on the topic of women in information theory.
13. The President presented suggestions for new business to be discussed at the end of the meeting. Abbas El Gamal raised the issue that there is little involvement of our community within the funding agencies, which reduces the visibility of our field. He defended that having an experience person from our community as program manager (e.g. at NSF) would be the best way to change this. Michelle Effros said that based on her experience on the advisory board at CISE computer science dominated the

discussions. João Barros gave the idea of inviting program managers to panels in conferences. Andrea Goldsmith suggested thinking deeper about this issue and possibly appointing an ad-hoc committee.

The President introduced the topic of governance, which has been moving towards a more committee led structure. Sergio Verdú pointed out that discussions such as venues for conferences or awards have moved from the Board to committees. Muriel Médard suggested that Board members could be given a chance to joint committees out of their own initiative. The Board discussed whether the IT paper award should be discussed by the Board or in the awards committee. Sergio Verdú asked the question of what are the areas where the Board still actively participates in the discussion. Andrea Goldsmith pointed out that the Board still votes on the same matters as before. Sergio Verdú expressed concern that committees could become skewed for example if people from the same area decided to join the same committee. Abbas El Gamal stressed the benefits of having advocates for the nominated papers to give a short presentation at the Board. Bruce Hajek suggested that Board members be asked to express their preferences on which committees they would like to get involved in and that the Nominations committee takes this into consideration.

14. The President announced that the next Board meeting will be held in October in Taormina, Italy, in conjunction with ITW 2009.
15. The meeting was adjourned.