Concluding remarks: Back to IYA2009

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Introduction: CAP2007

The CAP2007 meeting was very well attended, with wide representation from all over the world. The enthusiasm was palpable everywhere. It has been a pleasure to see how this highly motivated assembly is wishing to exchange and share. We have heard about successful outreach programmes on astronomy at all levels.

Special thanks are due to Minella Alarcon for bringing UNESCO to our meeting.

The path to IYA2009

The CAP2007 conference also gave us a golden opportunity to have a side meeting with the numerous Single Points of Contact (SPoCs) for the IYA who were in attendance. From their reports, we have been reassured that the original concept of IYA2009, namely to organise a few global events and to establish guidelines for a number of independent national/regional activities and events, is working.

The emphasis is on history and culture, but mostly on the present scientific revolution. And of course the IYA2009 is not only about optical astronomy, but about ground and space astronomy at all wavelengths, and also about high energy particles (cosmic rays). Many new ideas have emerged, which we all now need to digest and bring to fruition. I will record some of them here, for future reference for the SPoCs, in alphabetical order.

- **Art**: Art should have a place. We could foster presentations of the *Life of Galileo* or other astronomy related plays, concerts with astronomy related music (Holst’s *Planets*, Herschel’s music, Mozart’s *Jupiter* symphony, etc), visually outstanding astronomy related movies (e.g. the beautiful planet series of Jose Francisco Salgado shown at this conference), paintings (e.g. Van Gogh’s *Starry Night*) or other art forms (e.g., batik, as we heard in this conference) which can be presented in conjunction with real astronomical images.

- **Asteroids**: (to be discussed with the IAU Executive Committee): We could use the naming of asteroids as a prize for popular contests related to astronomy; also, we could name an asteroid “Galileo” on Galileo’s birthday.

- **Astrology**: We should make clear the distinction between astronomy and astrology in an obvious way in our website.

- **Cartoons**: Some relevant cartoons have been created or are in preparation. We should
foster translations and exchanges among the participating countries, whenever possible.

- **Comet**: A periodic comet will become visible in 2009. We should capitalise on it, at least in the countries from where it can be seen.

- **Cornerstone 100 hours of astronomy**: It was decided to extend the Cornerstone 24 hours of astronomy over four days to become 100 hours of astronomy, to take place over four days, from Thursday, 2 April, through Sunday, 5 April.

- **Children’s books**: The IYA is a good opportunity to introduce children to astronomy through highly attractive books (e.g. those of Cecilia Scorza).

- **Developing countries**: There should be a special IYA Cornerstone, Developing Astronomy Globally, for countries and regions that do not have strong astronomy communities. The implementation would focus on fostering astronomy training and development of young people at the high school and/or university level.

- **Galilean moons**: Excellent community astronomical projects can be built around the theme of the Galilean moons.

- **Galileoscope**: Yes, but also foster gifts of bigger telescopes to schools, or to libraries for loans.

- **Indigenous populations**: Special projects could be created towards specific indigenous populations in different parts of the world.

- **New Year events**: There has been a fruitful exchange of ideas for national events at the 31 December/1 January level. In this context, it was suggested to emphasise the link between astronomy and time keeping.

- **Opening event**: The opening event is targeted to take place at UNESCO, in Paris, 19–21 January.

- **Pollution/dark skies protection**: In picture exhibits, show also pictures of light pollution. The protection of radio-frequencies should also be emphasised.

- **Solar eclipse**: Try to capitalise on the 2009 solar eclipse, even though it is difficult in places where it cannot be seen.

- **Sun**: An important part of astronomy, which should not be forgotten.

- **Tourism**: Organise tours to historic/current astronomy locations.

- **Culture**: Don’t forget the cultural links to your own country.

- **Weather reports**: Weather reports on television: astronomy news and ephemerides could be added.

In conclusion, I wish to thank again the organisers of this meeting, and particularly Manolis Zoulias, for this extraordinarily fruitful exchange in preparation for the International Year of Astronomy 2009.