



REPORT FOR FEDERATION ASSEMBLY JUNE 2023

Chair of the International Stewardship Board

In June 2017 in Belfast the new configuration of the ISB was confirmed by the Federation Assembly.

I was reconfirmed as chairperson, Viviane le Polain was confirmed as Vice Chair, Jacques Jaubert as Treasurer and we were joined by 4 new members Andrew Kennedy, Habib Cachecho, Natalia Bordun and Sylvain Brabant.

It has always been my way of working to hear everyone's view and to work in a consensual manner. This we managed to achieve over the last six years.

I have been greatly aided by the support and cooperation of all board members in and about our work.

The ISB works in close collaboration with the International Leaders. We worked well with Stephan and Stacy. They kept the Board informed about the internal workings of the Federation throughout the mandate. We supported them and we continue to do so.

1. Finance

Under the Constitution we are entrusted with the financial integrity of the finances of LAI and legal probity of the Federation. Our source of income is from the dues levied and the financial support from the 4 Confirmed Countries, the middle countries together with monies fundraised throughout the Federation. For many years we were in deficit. Indeed our deficit would have been greater if not for the extra financial help provided by France. LAI is and continues to be very grateful to France for its generosity.

I am pleased to inform you that we have currently a balanced budget. We kept firm oversight and review the finances each month.

Jacques will give further details on the finances.

2. The death of Jean Vanier

Like everyone we were all saddened by the death of Jean in May 2019. The death of a founder always has a profound effect and L'Arche was no different from other organisations or movements

3. The revelations

The revelations regarding Jean Vanier caused huge sadness, a sense of betrayal and incomprehension. It was like a second death.

Despite these deeply troubling events work continued in each community in each country to make L'Arche communities what they are today. L'Arche Communities are places where people with and without disability live together, where deep relationships are made. They are places of safety.

Due to the incredible energy of Stephan and Stacy we have an internationally approved Safeguarding policy in place. This policy is evaluated annually.

4. CRM Policy

We also started a policy for CRM and hopefully it will be up and running shortly.

5. Evaluation of our structures

A study was made of the Middle Countries. Again this work shows the need for ongoing understanding and evaluation of our structures.

6. The Study Commission was started

The report was published last January. It was difficult reading, again opening doubts, anger, sense of betrayal and incomprehension.

The press reaction was fair, it separated the actions of Jean Vanier from the legacy of the L'Arche Community. Again, we must show our indebtedness to Stephan and Stacy for their steady and secure handling of the entire affair. The effects will be felt for a considerable time.

7. Legal probity

It is the duty of the ISB to keep a firm eye on the legal affairs of the Federation, this includes preparing contracts for the International Leaders and ensuring the proper oversight of all items of legal concern from Intellectual Property to who is to vote in the Federation Assembly to Membership of the Federation to interpretation and advice on issues such as different interpretations of the Constitution. All of these matters have been considered by the ISB.

It is no secret that there have been disagreements on governance. We have upheld our view at all times that the Constitution is clear –that the International Leaders hold authority with the advice and counsel of the International Leadership Team together with the ISB. There has been a difference of opinion regarding the use of that power of authority and there has been a resulting difficulty in acting and deciding in a consensual manner. The issue is ongoing and is a priority to be resolved in the next Mandate.

8. International Leader Nomination – UPDATE

After our meeting in Rome in March of this year it was clear that we will not have International Leaders nominated in time for voting in the Federation Assembly. We will vote on a Mandate, members of the International Stewardship Board, the Charter and a transition plan.

The International Stewardship Board will lead the Federation until new international Leaders are in place.

Conclusion

We have lived through a turbulent time in this mandate. We have survived. It has been very difficult at times. However, we have an inner strength, a belief in what we are doing and this belief shines through. This belief is our future.

Finally, I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone from the International Leaders, International Leadership Team, Delegates and Envoys and Support Team, and my many friends on Boards and in Communities throughout the Federation for their work and kindness to me over the last number of years.