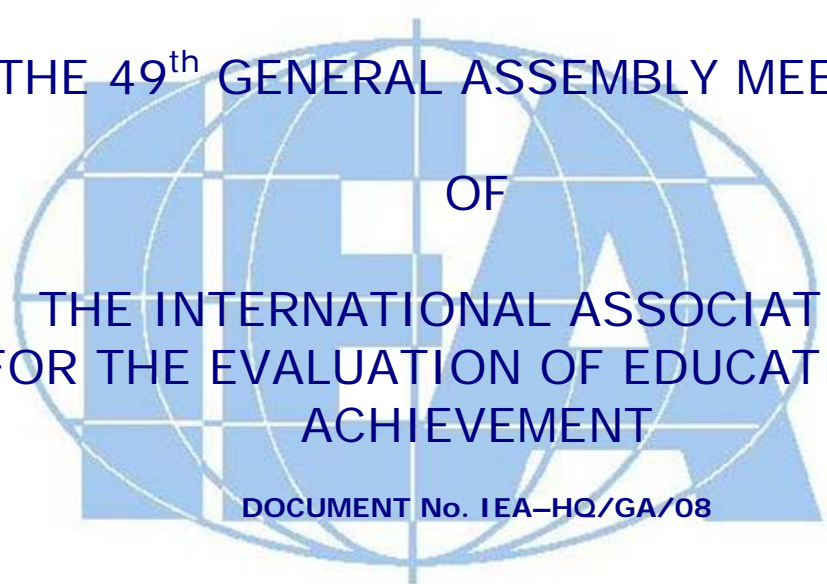


MINUTES
OF
THE 49th GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING
OF
THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION
FOR THE EVALUATION OF EDUCATIONAL
ACHIEVEMENT
DOCUMENT No. IEA-HQ/GA/08



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6-9 OCTOBER 2008

Berlin
GERMANY

.....

HOSTED BY
GERMAN INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH
AND
HUMBOLDT UNIVERSITY OF BERLIN

LIST OF ATTENDEES (GA-49/B)**General Assembly Members**

1. Australia	i/a John Ainley, ICCS, ICILS
2. Austria	Mark Német
3. Belgium (Flemish)	Maddy Bollen
4. Botswana	Serara Moahi
5. Canada	Pierre Brochu
6. Chinese Taipei	Hue Chih-Wei
7. Cyprus	i/a Constantinos Papanastasiou, Honorary M.
8. Czech Republic	i/a Lubomir Martinec
9. Denmark	Lars Qvortrup
10. Egypt	Nagib Khouzam
11. England	Lorna Bertrand
12. Estonia	Anu Toots
13. Finland	Jouni Välijärvi
14. France	Claude Sauvageot
15. Georgia	Maia Miminoshvili
16. Germany	Eckhard Klieme
17. Greece	Georgia Kontogiannopoulou-Polydorides
18. Hong Kong SAR	Frederick Leung, SC
19. Hungary	Sándor Brassói
20. Iceland	Júlíus Björnsson
21. Iran	Hajar Tahriri Niksefat
22. Ireland	i/a Gerry Shiel
23. Italy	Piero Cipollone
24. Japan	Ryo Watanabe
25. Kazakhstan	Bazar Damitov
26. Korea	i/a Soojin Kim
27. Latvia	Andris Kangro
28. Lithuania	Rita Dukynaitė
29. Luxembourg	Michel Lanners
30. The Netherlands	Paul van Oijen
31. New Zealand	i/a Jit Cheung
32. Norway	Anne-Berit Kavli, SC
33. Qatar	Adel Al-Sayed, SC
34. Russian Federation	Galina Kovaleva
35. Scotland	Fiona Fraser
36. Slovak Republic	Július Hauser
37. Slovenia	Janez Justin
38. South Africa	Anil Kanjee
39. Spain	i/a Rosario Sánchez
40. Sweden	Kerstin Mattsson
41. United States	Tom Loveless, SC

Honorary Members

42. Christiane Brusselmans-Dehairs
43. Tjeerd Plomp
44. Neville Postlethwaite
45. Alejandro Tiana
46. Judith Torney-Purta

IEA Officers

47. Jens Gomolka, DPC
48. Eugene Gonzalez, DPC
49. Ann-Kathirn Guzy, DPC
50. Jur Hartenberg, Secretariat
51. Dirk Hastedt, DPC
52. Seamus Hegarty, Chair
53. Juliane Hencke, DPC
54. Katrin Jaschinski, DPC
55. Steffen Knoll, DPC
56. Barbara Malak-Minkiewicz, Secretariat
57. Suzanne Morony, Secretariat
58. Oliver Neuschmidt, DPC
59. Leslie Rutkowski, DPC
60. Heiko Sibberns, DPC, TEG (*ex officio*)
61. Hans Wagemaker, Executive Director, TEG Chair

IEA Publications and Editorial Committee (PEC)

62. David Robitaille, Chair, Honorary Member

IEA Technical Executive Group (TEG)

63. Jan-Eric Gustafsson, Göteborg University, Sweden
64. Larry Hedges, Northwestern University, Chicago, United States
65. Marc Joncas, Statistics Canada
66. Christian Monseur, Liège University, Belgium

Study International Coordinators

67. Julian Fraillon, ICCS
68. Michael Martin, PIRLS, TIMSS, TIMSS Advanced, TEG (*ex officio*)
69. Ina Mullis, PIRLS, TIMSS, TIMSS Advanced, TEG (*ex officio*)
70. Wolfram Schulz, ICCS
71. Jack Schwille, TEDS-M
72. Teresa Tatto, TEDS-M

Observers

73. Hermann Abs (DIPF, Germany)
74. Alhaja Mulikat Bello (WAEC)
75. Wilfried Bos (Technical University Dortmund, Germany)
76. Jasminka Buljan Culej (NCEEE, Croatia)
77. Abdullah Thabet Ghalib (ABEGS)
78. Cesar Guadalupe (UNESCO Institut for Statistics)
79. Güenter Haider (BIFIE, Austria)
80. Fatma Janahi (Knowledge and Human Development Authority, Dubai)
81. Ali Al Karni (ABEGS)
82. Johannes König (Humboldt University, Germany)
83. Paulína Koršňáková (National Institute for Education, Slovak Republic)
84. Iamze Kutaladze (NAEC, Georgia)
85. Rainer Lehmann (Humboldt University, Germany)
86. Oren Pizmony-Levy (Indiana University, USA)
87. Yul Nazaruddin (Indonesian Embassy, Germany)
88. Tomonori Nishii (Ministry of Education, Japan)
89. Valena Plisko (NCES, United States)
90. Hendrik Van der Pol (UNESCO Institute for Statistics)

91. Jeffrey Puryear (PREAL)
92. Sue Rossiter (NERF, England and Wales)
93. Agus Rubiyanto (Indonesian Embassy, Germany)
94. Christopher Sands (Knowledge and Human Development Authority, Dubai)
95. Knut Schwippert (Hamburg University, Germany)
96. Masako Shinohara (NIER, Japan)
97. Goran Sirovatka (NCEEE, Croatia)
98. Jerzy Wiśniewski (Ministry of Education, Poland)

APOLOGIES (GA-49/I/03)**GA Representatives**

Abdughani Albazzaz (Kuwait)
Michal Beller (Israel)
Christiane Blondin (Belgium, French)
Ibrahim Demirer (Turkey)
Žaneta Džumhur (Bosnia and Herzegovina)
Karine Harutyunyan (Armenia)
Seoung-Yul Kim (Korea)
Munther Masri (Jordan)
Ester Ogena (Philippines)
Mansyur Ramly (Indonesia)
Enrique Roca (Spain)
Lynne Whitney (New Zealand)
Pavla Zieleniecová, SC (Czech Republic)

International Coordinators/Members of the Committees

Lawrence Ingvarson, TEDS-M

Honorary Members

Zoltan Báthory
Robert Garden (PEC)
Torsten Husén

Observers

Ayshah Al Roudhan (Ministry of Education, Kuwait)
Sigrid Blömke (Humboldt University, Germany)
Marguerite Clarke (World Bank)
Anders Hingel (European Commission)
Kenneth Ross (IIEP UNESCO)
Larry Suter (NSF, United States)
Pierre Varly (PASEC)

MONDAY, 6 OCTOBER 2008**09:00 – 10:30 Session 1*****Opening and Welcoming Addresses***

The chair, Dr Seamus Hegarty, opened the General Assembly and welcomed the delegates to Berlin, noting that this year marks the 50th anniversary of the meeting in 1958 in Hamburg, which led to the creation of IEA. The 50th General Assembly is co-hosted with the Humboldt University, the oldest university in Berlin, which plays an important role in higher education. The Humboldtian model instituted a new way of combining teaching and research in higher education that was very influential especially on North American and European universities.

Ms Kornelia Haugg from the Federal Ministry of Education and Research congratulated IEA on its 50th anniversary and was pleased that Germany was chosen as the venue for the anniversary celebration. She noted that IEA had been a prominent contributor to educational research and that this represented both a challenge and an opportunity. The German Federal Ministry together with German states have developed strategies for measuring education competence over the life course. The aim is to measure a cross-sectional distribution of competencies over the course of life, taking into respect other countries.

Mr Erich Thies from the Standing Conference of Ministers of Education reported that the Ministries of the German states have set up a significant research potential, which through cooperation of scientists and policy makers helps to make use of available empirical evidence. He also stressed the importance of developing testing standards for assuring the quality of education. Mr Thies appreciated the contribution of IEA to educational research.

The co-host of the General Assembly, Prof. Dr. Rainer Lehmann from the Humboldt University of Berlin, welcomed participants to Berlin and invited them to visit the university.

Memories of IEA

Dr Hegarty invited Professor Neville Postlethwaite, Honorary Member, to share his memories of IEA.

Professor Postlethwaite told the story of IEA from the first meeting (in Hamburg, 1958), through to the first study, referring also to wider historical events that were influential. He spoke about his first meeting of IEA, at which the “giants” of measurement and evaluation research were present: Benjamin Bloom, Arnold Anderson, Lee Cronbach, Arthur Foshay, Torsten Husén, Gaston Mialaret, Harry Passow, Douglas Pidgeon, Robert Thorndike, and William Wall.

Prof. Postlethwaite expressed his contentment with the development of the IEA DPC which emerged from a very small data processing unit he set up. Also noteworthy are developments of the IEA studies, among others testing at tertiary level, i.e. TEDS-M. He thanked IEA, and expressed his hope that the next 50 years may be as good in ideas and quality as the last 50 years.

Looking forward, Prof. Postlethwaite reminded delegates about the constant need for new conceptions and innovations as well as a need for the highest standards of technical quality.

Opening statements

Dr Seamus Hegarty, the Chair, summarised 2008 as a successful year for IEA which included, among others, a very interesting 3rd IEA International Research Conference and impressive research projects. He also indicated the IEA inputs to important international meetings of educational researchers. Those were demonstrations of how IEA studies are contributing to the policy/practice agenda and the science of educational measurement.

Executive Director Dr Hans Wagemaker briefly outlined the progress on existing studies. He noted that PIRLS 2006 was released in December 2007 and that in March 2008 results of SITES 2006 were presented. At present IEA prepares itself to finalize the fourth cycle of TIMSS (2007). Dr Wagemaker pointed to three areas in which IEA had been innovative: TIMSS Advanced 2008 had been conducted and interesting results might be expected; ICCS has offered regional modules, and these have been implemented successfully; TEDS-M initiated IEA studies on tertiary education level. There will be also new initiatives for a PIRLS 2011 study reflecting changing needs of increasingly diverse participants. At this meeting IEA will be inviting its members to discuss a new proposal on ICT in education.

New publications include the TIMSS 2007 Encyclopedia and the first volume of IERI, the monograph series on the science of large-scale assessment. Selected papers presented at the IRC 2008 will be published in the next monograph. The fourth IEA conference is scheduled for Gothenburg, Sweden, 22-26 June, 2010.

Dr Wagemaker thanked the IEA funders, the World Bank, UNDP for Arab states, US Department of Education, and reported that NCES recently concluded contractual arrangements for the support of PIRLS and TIMSS 2011. He thanked all IEA members and especially the governments of the Netherlands, Norway and Japan for their support and thanked German colleagues for hosting the meeting.

Honorary Membership for Prof. Dr. Rainer Lehman (GA-49/I/21)

Dr Hegarty referred to the document presenting the candidacy and gave a short biography of Rainer Lehman, outlining his significant achievements and contributions to IEA.

Prof. Dr. Rainer Lehman accepted the honorary membership with appreciation.

Approval/Amendment of Agenda (GA-49/I/01)

A revised Agenda was distributed resulting from the discussions at the recent meetings of the Technical Executive Group and the Standing Committee. These changes will be reflected in the Minutes of the meeting.

That the Agenda be approved:

Moved: Pierre Brochu (Canada)

Seconded: Lorna Bertrand (England)

Carried: Unanimous

The Agenda was adopted.

Approval/Amendment of Minutes of the 48th GA in Hong Kong, SAR (GA-49/I/02)

No changes were proposed to the Minutes from Hong Kong.

That the Minutes be approved without amendment:

Moved: John Ainley (Australia)

Seconded: Eckhard Klieme (Germany)

Carried: Unanimous

The Minutes from Hong Kong were adopted.

Apologies (GA-49/I/03)

The chair referred to the list of apologies (*see page 5 of the Minutes*).

Approval of New Standing Committee Members (GA-49/I/04)

Ms Anne-Berit Kavli (Norway) concluded her term as Standing Committee member and Mr Jürgen Horschinegg completed his mission as General Assembly representative for Austria. The Chair paid tribute to the exceptional contribution made by Anne-Berit to the work of the Standing Committee and to the IEA more generally during her period of office. The Standing Committee proposed Ms Kerstin Mattsson (Sweden) and Mr Paul van Oijen (Netherlands) as new candidates.

That Ms Kerstin Mattsson, GA Representative for Sweden, be approved as a member of the Standing Committee (GA-49/I/04.1):

Moved: Anne-Berit Kavli (Norway)

Seconded: Tom Loveless (United States)

Carried: unanimously

Ms Mattsson was approved as a member of the Standing Committee.

That Mr Paul van Oijen, GA Representative for the Netherlands, be approved as a member of the Standing Committee (GA-49/I/04.2):

Moved: Lorna Bertrand (England)

Seconded: Ryo Watanabe (Japan)

Carried: unanimously

Mr van Oijen was approved as a member of the Standing Committee.

11:00 – 12:30 Session II**Approval of New IEA Members (GA-49/I/05)**

The Standing Committee recommended to the General Assembly the candidacy of the *Knowledge and Human Development Authority*, of Dubai, and the *National Centre for External Evaluation of Education*, Croatia.

The *Knowledge and Human Development Authority* was presented by Ms Fatma Janahi. Ms Janahi introduced the KHDA, stressing that the Authority believes that a sustainable future of Dubai is in people development, and that learning takes place life-long. She thanked IEA for guidance and encouragement and also thanked neighbour Qatar for its support.

That the *Knowledge and Human Development Authority*, Dubai be admitted to membership of IEA (GA-49/I/05.1):

Moved: Anil Kanjee (South Africa)

Seconded: Tom Loveless (USA)

Carried: unanimously

The Knowledge and Human Development Authority of Dubai became IEA member on behalf of the United Arab Emirates. The General Assembly Representative will be Ms Zulaikha Mohamed.

The candidate from Croatia was presented by Dr Jasminka Culej. Dr Culej introduced the work of the National Center for External Evaluation of Education, which is responsible for providing quality in all primary and secondary schools, and which conducts regular national and state assessments.

That the *National Centre for External Evaluation of Education*, Croatia be admitted to membership of IEA (GA-47/I/05.2):

Moved: John Ainley (Australia)

Seconded: Constantinos Papanastasiou (Cyprus)

Carried: unanimously

The National Centre for External Evaluation of Education of Croatia will be represented by its Director, Mr Goran Sirovatka.

The Chair welcomed Dubai and Croatia to IEA and noted that this brought the number of member countries to 65, which do not include countries that participate in the IEA studies and are not IEA member yet, and benchmarking educational systems.

IEA Awards 2008 (GA-49/I/06)

The Chair commented that the IEA awards were becoming better known and the number of applications was increasing each year. In 2008 two Bruce H. Choppin awards were presented, in addition to the Richard M. Wolf Award.

The winners of the Bruce Choppin Award 2008 were:

Pasi Reinikainen for his doctoral dissertation: "*Sequential Explanatory Study of Factors Connected with Science Achievement in Six Countries: Finland, England, Hungary, Japan, Latvia and Russia. Study based on TIMSS 1999*", completed at the Institute for Educational Research of the University of Jyväskylä in Finland. This award was presented to Dr Reinikainen at the 3rd IRC in Taipei.

Anne McDaniel for her master thesis: "*Cross-national Gender Gaps in Adolescent's Educational Expectations, 1970-2003*", completed at the Department of Sociology, Ohio State University in United States.

In 2008 the winners of Richard Wolf Award were:

Judith Torney-Purta, Carolyn H. Barber and Britt Wilkenfeld for their paper: "*Latino Adolescents' Civic Development in the United States: Research Results from the IEA Civic Education Study*" published in *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* (2007) 36: 111–125.

Dr Torney-Purta was present to accept the award. She considered it a privilege and acknowledged the partnership of her doctoral students, thanking all involved.

Announcements (GA-49/I/02)

Dr Wagemaker informed the assembly that Dr Larry Hedges, a member of TEG, has been inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He noted that this was an endorsement of Dr Hedges' contribution to the area of educational statistics and evaluation.

The Chair presented a letter to IEA from its Honorary Member Prof. Torsten Husén:

*Dear Colleagues,
My deep-felt thanks for the kind invitation to join you in Berlin for the General Assembly and the 50th anniversary celebrations of the IEA.*

Unfortunately, my age (92) and physical condition does not allow me to travel. Instead, I would like to convey my greetings and best wishes for a most successful meeting in this letter.

*More than 50 years ago I was among the group of researchers who took the initiative of launching cross-national surveys of educational achievement and later functioned as the chairman of IEA 1962-78. The first years the project was located at the UNESCO Institute in Hamburg and the office was then moved to Stockholm in the late 1960s. Data for the first international pilot study were collected in 1961 and the results published in 1962. The first large-scale comprehensive study of mathematics achievement in 12 countries was published in 1967. Over the years I have published several books and articles based on or related to IEA results. In a volume of essays *The Learning Society Revisited* published by Pergamon Press in 1986, I discuss, among other issues, the spirited debate on the relative standards achieved by the students in some countries. I will send you by regular mail my bibliography.*

With kindest regards, sincerely,

*Torsten Husén
Professor*

On behalf of IEA Dr Hegarty expressed his gratitude to Professor Husén for this letter and acknowledged him as one of the "Titans of the IEA past".

ICCS Progress Report (GA-49/I/08)

John Ainley, International Coordinator & Wolfram Schulz, Research Director of ICCS, outlined the status of the project and its next steps. They presented an overview of the study, the institutions involved in the international coordination, the advisory committee, and timelines. The ICCS focuses on aspects of knowledge, understanding and perception related to civic and citizenship, with the aim of describing how young people in participating countries are prepared to undertake their roles as citizens. Development work was completed in the summer of 2008 and participants are preparing themselves for the main data collection, translating and adapting survey instruments. The innovation in ICCS is the introduction of regional modules, designed to capture region-specific information. The European and Latin American module instruments have been completed and the Asian module questionnaire is currently being piloted. Data will be collected in 2008/2009. The international reports, regional reports, technical report and international database will all be released in 2010.

The questions concerned various aspects of the study implementation, data analysis and instruments. Ms Lorna Bertrand (England) and Dr Jit Cheung (New Zealand) raised the issue of difficulties with achieving the required response rate of teachers. The study directors indicated that the required cluster size for teachers is the minimum acceptable advised by the sampling team and that also the teacher questionnaire has been already

been reduced in size. Only two countries have experienced difficulties achieving the required response rates, and the International Study Center recommended strategies to raise teachers' interest in the study.

Dr Neville Postlethwaite (Honorary Member) asked about the analysis of the data for regional reports. Dr Schulz informed that outcome variables would not be rescaled for each region, but regional cognitive items would be used to give some regional descriptive statistics. He added that the model is not for analysis purposes, but simply recognizes that outcome measures will affect civics and citizenship learning collection. He also answered questions concerning out-of-school influences, indicating that they are addressed in both international-core and regional questionnaires.

The Chair thanked the study directors and adopted the report.

TEDS-M Progress Report (GA-49/I/09)

The study was presented by Dr Teresa Tatto and Dr Jack Schwille, representing the TEDS-M Joint Management Committee. Dr Tatto, the Director of TEDS-M, traced the development of the study since its inception in 2006 and thanked all involved for their support in this study of mathematics teacher education in 17 countries. She indicated that in 2008 TEDS-M reached the phase of main data collection. Participating countries received final research instruments. The processes of their translation, adaptation and international verification were completed in March 2008. All participating countries collected the data by June 2008 and the achieved response rates have improved significantly since the Field Trial. The outline for the international reports, which will be released in 2010, has been drafted. Forthcoming publications include the conceptual framework and the *Teacher Salary Study* report, which compares salaries of mathematics teachers with salaries of other occupations requiring a similar level of mathematics education in 20 countries.

Dr Tom Loveless (USA) asked about consecutive vs. concurrent routes for teacher preparation – specifically, whether teachers who were pursuing a consecutive route on their own initiative would be included in the sample. Dr Jack Schwille, TEDS-M Co-director, explained that programs at each institution are identified as either consecutive or concurrent and are tracked as such within the sample.

The Chair thanked the presenters and adopted the report.

14:00 – 15:30 Session III

New International Computer and Information Literacy Study (ICILS) (GA-49/I/10)

The proposal for a new international study on computer and information literacy (CIL) was presented by Drs John Ainley and Julian Fraillon from the Australian Council of Educational Research (ACER). The focus of ICILS is on students' use of computers as information tools. The construct recommended as frame for the CIL study is divided into two strands, each of which contains three constituent elements: strand 1 – collecting and managing information (knowing about and understanding computers, accessing and evaluating information, managing information), and strand 2 – producing and exchanging information (transforming, creating and sharing information). This construct would be used as the framework for preparing the ICILS instruments and for later use of student achievement data to develop an overall CIL achievement scale. The assessment tool should be authentic and therefore computer-based. For development of interactive ICT simulation and live application assessment materials, the authors proposed to use the expertise of ACER in implementing CIL assessment at a national level in Australia. As in all IEA studies other instruments associated with CIL assessment will be student,

teacher and school questionnaires. The ICILS is proposed for Grade 8 students and – optionally – also for Grade 4. Data are to be collected in 2011/2012.

The Chair thanked them for the presentation, and noted that the study proposal had been endorsed by the IEA Standing Committee (SC) and Technical Executive Group (TEG). He opened the floor for discussion.

Questions and comments concerned main components of the study and their relation with education within school as well as some aspects of measurement. Dr Lars Qvortrup (Denmark) observed that the focus is on computers, rather than on information, i.e. on tools rather than on content, and Ms Anne-Berit Kavli (Norway) noticed that communication with the use of computers plays a more important role than is evident in the proposal. She also mentioned that it would be interesting to look at the use of ICT in specific subjects to see how it is used within schools. Dr Eckhard Klieme (Germany) expressed the opinion that it would be conceptually important to be clear about how this study in general is related to the school-based education. Are there issues related to learning ICT literacy and how effectively students learn these skills? What is the relationship between ICT literacy and traditional school subjects? Is there an expectation that students leaving schools should be able to use computers effectively, regardless of whether computing is in the curriculum or not? Dr Klieme also asked about the psychometric structure of the domains and building scales. Dr Jit Cheung (New Zealand) observed that the learning process involved in this area is self-directed learning, the majority of which takes place outside school. In this context he asked about the general goals of the assessment, limitations to the kind of data collected and the rationale behind focusing on Grade 8 and Grade 4.

Dr Ainley, Dr Fraillon and Dr Wagemaker addressed those questions and comments.

Dr Ainley observed that the link between computer and information literacy might be a dimension of its own. It represents an extension of what happens in more traditional subject domains. Considering what students learn outside school and whether this limits the within-school assessment - it could do, but the modules that were set up were tied to thinking skills rather than to school materials. The intent is to capture the way young people use information technology across their lives. Dependence on exposure – “more familiar” students do better than “less familiar” students – should be considered an explanatory variable, not a measurement issue. Dr Ainley also indicated that the choice of grades was made to include target grades of typical IEA studies.

Dr Fraillon explained that the authors of the proposal were considering a one-dimensional construct and trying to map its components. Concerning the notion of ICT in subject areas – the assessment design encompasses a series of modules of thematically-grouped tasks. There is nothing to prevent themes that are more strongly linked to learning areas. He also noticed that there is a precedent of working in an IEA study with a subject not defined by a curriculum, i.e. the ICCS study in which problems were addressed through a highly cooperative development of constructs. Also in ICILS content of the assessment has to be determined through a different process.

Dr Wagemaker observed that while it is still a dilemma how to disentangle effects of ICT use in schools from subject matter knowledge, there is also a question important for generations of students who are going through the education systems: is the ICT skill component an impediment (or not) to understanding? Dr Wagemaker suggested that IEA, with its strong research tradition, is a proper organization to meet the challenge and to address the reality of grade 8 and 4 classrooms in terms of these skills, which is proposed by ICILS.

Dr Wagemaker provided also some indicative figures concerning costs of ICILS. The total required international fee will be 140,000 (half in EURO, half in USD), spread over 4 years (i.e. 35,000 per year). The national costs will be probably comparable to the costs of TIMSS.

16:00 – 17:30 Session IV***Small group discussion (1): ICILS proposal*****TUESDAY, 7 OCTOBER 2008****09:00 – 10:30 Session V**

Opening the session, the Chair reminded the Assembly that TIMSS 2007 results which will be presented at this session are highly confidential.

TIMSS 2007 Progress Report (GA-49/II/11)

Dr Mick Martin, TIMSS Co-director, started the TIMSS 2007 overview from noting that TIMSS is being incorporated into the assessment strategies of an increasing number of countries and provides an impetus to revise curricula. Dr Martin stressed that TIMSS 2007, as its predecessors, was a big collaborative enterprise, and he thanked the many contributors: maths experts, science experts, questionnaire experts, development teams and assessment specialists, task-forces, ISC staff, Statistics Canada, IEA Secretariat, IEA-DPC, IEA PEC and TEG committees, and the NRCs. Major activities of 2007 included data processing and database construction, sampling adjudication, item analysis and review of psychometric characteristics, scaling the achievement data, scale anchoring, and writing the reports. The TIMSS 2007 encyclopedia was published for the first time since 1995 including one chapter for each country that describes country context, curriculum and instruction, examinations and assessments. There will be two TIMSS 2007 international reports, one for mathematics and one for science (each with 3 chapters on achievement and 5 background chapters) and a technical report. They will be distributed in November 2008 and released by webcast on December 9, BC, 10 a.m. EST. The last (9th) NRC meeting will take place in February 2009 and will be devoted to training on the international database. 59 countries and 8 benchmarking educational systems participated in TIMSS 2007.

The Chair handed the floor to Dr Ina Mullis for a confidential preview of the TIMSS 2007 results. After this presentation the Chair opened the floor for questions and comments.

Ms Lorna Bertrand (England) suggested that the top performing countries might expect a lot of interest and visitors from abroad to learn about their policies and practices in teaching mathematics and/or science. She also emphasised the importance of attitudinal data, which are rich source of information for understanding student achievement. Ms Anne-Berit Kavli (Norway) enquired about the strategy to present the results, noting that in many countries trend analyses are the most interesting parts of the study. It would be also very interesting to look at what is typical for countries that improve or decline.

Dr Mullis responded that, on the basis of encyclopedia information, a number of improved countries are engaged in substantial reforms and putting a lot of efforts in areas of improvement, for example curriculum reform, targeted programs for high achievers, efforts to bring more to the intermediate level, and others. Dr Mullis also explained there is no single "main message" from the brief information in her presentation. Detailed reports for each county will identify issues with policy relevance.

The Chair thanked Dr Mullis and commented that the real value of the study lies in the many specific analyses that will be conducted at national level. He thanked the co-directors and the teams that made TIMSS 2007 such a success and reminded participants that the next session of small group discussion will provide an opportunity to exchange experiences on dissemination and maximising impact of study results on policy-making.

TIMSS Advanced 2008 Progress Report (GA-49/II/12)

Dr Mick Martin, Co-director of the project, presented the status of TIMSS Advanced, reminding delegates that it is replicating two special populations from TIMSS 1995 (i.e. students taking courses in advanced mathematics and physics). Trend data has been collected for countries that participated in both and have comparable populations. Ten countries are participating in TIMSS Advanced and data collection was completed in May 2008. Currently, data are being processed and checked (only one country did not submit the data yet). The ISC started work on the technical report and on creating the prototype tables for the international report. The report will be released in December 2009.

The Chair thanked Dr Martin and opened the floor for questions. Mr Paul van Oijen (the Netherlands) asked whether it was possible to create comparable groups of students in advanced mathematics and physics or whether groups are differentiated between countries, e.g. because of the percentages that are studying at an advanced level.

Dr Martin explained the position taken in TIMSS Advanced was to offer countries flexibility in approaching selected populations. The details will be known after sampling adjudication. A small number of participating countries will permit more detailed analysis on the level of preparation of the international report. It will be possible to look in more detail at the content of assessment as described in framework and curricula of tracks and see how this defines advanced students; there will also be a measure of opportunity to study at the advanced level in different countries.

11:00 – 12:30 Session VI***PIRLS 2006 and PIRLS 2011 Progress Reports (GA-49/II/13 & 14)***

Dr Martin took the floor to summarise PIRLS 2006. He reminded delegates of the structure and purpose of this project and its participants, 45 educational systems. After the release of the international report in November 2007 the study was closed in February 2008 with the PIRLS 2006 International Database training. The products of PIRLS 2006 are framework, encyclopedia, international report, technical report and international database together with a user guide.

The Chair thanked Dr Martin, and since there were no questions or comments he handed over to Dr Mullis to present PIRLS 2011.

Dr Mullis informed the Assembly that PIRLS 2011 represents the third trend cycle, and – as the two previous – measures reading comprehension at 4th Grade. The PIRLS framework identifies 2 major purposes (literary and informational) and 4 processes of comprehension (retrieve, infer, interpret, evaluate), which will be reflected in the data analysis. The scope will be the same as in 2006 – 10 reading passages (5 of each purpose), and a total time 6 hours 40 mins. Each student takes 2x40 min sessions.

There are two new initiatives in PIRLS 2011. The first is “pre-PIRLS” – a less difficult version aligned with curricula, designed with the purpose to test basic reading skills that are prerequisites for success in PIRLS. This will meet the needs of countries where most children in the 4th Grade are still developing fundamental reading skills. Dr Mullis explained that the main difference between pre-PIRLS and PIRLS are shorter passages, and more focus on retrieval and straightforward inference with items distributed throughout text in the first case.

A working group was established for the second new feature in PIRLS 2011: a web-based reading component as a way to broaden the representation of informational reading in the PIRLS assessment. The assessment will be using a non-linear format, i.e. hypertext in the form of a website as a booklet equivalent. Responses will be collected with paper and pencil, so the assessment will be aligned with typical classroom activities.

The first PIRLS 2011 meeting was held in Madrid February 2008. NRCs endorsed the framework and design and recommended updating the contextual framework and reviewing background questionnaires. There is a plan to deliver teacher and school questionnaires on-line. The process of identifying appropriate cross-national materials (passages) to be used in the reading test has begun. The PIRLS 2011 Reading Development Group and the Questionnaire Development Group have been established and are ready to work. PIRLS 2011 activities in the next year will lead to a Field Test to be conducted early 2010. More than 50 countries are planning to participate in PIRLS 2011.

Dr Wagemaker informed the General Assembly about the international participation fees for PIRLS 2011. PIRLS/prePIRLS 2011 will cost USD 75,000 plus EURO 75,000 invoiced over the period of five years. The additional costs of the web-based assessment will be USD 50,000 and EURO 50,000 invoiced in two installments, starting 2008.

The Chair thanked for the presentation and opened the floor for questions.

Ms Lorna Bertrand (England) welcomed the progress towards online delivery (especially of questionnaires) because this makes it easier for NRCs and schools, and enquired about the sample size. Dr Mullis explained that the sample for PIRLS/prePIRLS is 4000 students, and the web-based sample will be 1000 students.

Ms Serara Moahi (Botswana) asked how scaling will be done between pre-PIRLS and PIRLS. Dr Martin replied that the ISC assume they will make a pre-PIRLS scale (if enough countries). There would be a possibility of linking the pre-PIRLS scale to PIRLS scale, but this requires lots of extra work so countries need to decide on the level of commitment they can make.

Dr Anil Kanjee (South Africa) observed that SACMEQ regional assessments which have been conducted for the past 10 years include Grade 6 students that might also be tested in PIRLS/prePIRLS 2011 and asked about the impact of another grade 6 survey in the Southern African region. Dr Wagemaker responded that he will meet with Dr Ken Ross of SACMEQ to discuss this.

PIRLS 2011 and TIMSS 2011

Dr Mullis reminded delegates that every 20 years TIMSS and PIRLS align, offering a unique opportunity at grade 4 to assess the same students in three core subjects: reading, mathematics and science. The major advantage will be an opportunity to examine school effectiveness in all three areas and a possibility to identify which policies are more effective for learning in which subjects and what the factors are behind this effectiveness. There will also be an opportunity to look at achievement gaps according to gender, instructional language, race/ethnicity, and the effect of home environment, including factors such as resources, activities, parental attitudes, and the home-school interaction. Finally, implementing both assessments will enable researchers to examine the impact of reading achievement on math/science achievement.

Statistics Canada and the ISC are looking to help countries with their data collection challenge. It is expected that most countries plan to include the same students (however, there will also be other options available).

Dr Mullis reminded participants that, while PIRLS 2011 (five-year cycle) is already under way, TIMSS 2011 (four-year cycle) will be initiated in February 2009 at the meeting in Egypt. Dr Wagemaker added that PIRLS and TIMSS are self-standing projects. They will evolve and new initiatives are already developing (eg web-based reading in PIRLS 2011) but without compromising the frameworks and time intervals of the studies. TIMSS 2011 is open for enrolment and that participation fees for this project will be 90,000 USD plus 90,000 EURO for one population and 130,000 USD plus 130,000 for two populations.

The Chair thanked Drs Mullis and Martin for the informative presentation and opened the floor for questions and comments. These concerned analysis of the achievement data for three subjects, background questionnaires and sampling.

Ms Kerstin Mattsson (Sweden) asked if there will be international analyses of student achievement in three different subjects. Dr Mullis responded that the ISC is prepared to conduct such analysis. A report would probably be released after the main international reports but more detailed planning will be possible when it is known how many countries participate.

Ms Valena Plisko (United States, NCES) asked about the relative importance of having data in PIRLS 2011 and TIMSS 2011 from the same vs. from different students. Dr Martin confirmed that some questions can be answered only when the same students take all three tests. Ms Lorna Bertrand (England) expressed some concerns about sampling, and especially about test delivery in the case of samples including the same students. The study directors replied that there is some concern; however, the study design allows for half the schools to start with PIRLS and half with TIMSS. The sample is large enough to observe this effect and adjust scales or sample in response.

There were also questions concerning questionnaires. Dr Jouni Välijärvi (Finland) asked about the possibility to integrate the curriculum questionnaires and Dr Tom Loveless (United States) asked about parental quantitative literacy in home questionnaires for countries that participate in PIRLS only. Dr Martin confirmed that inclusion of those questions would be optional. The curriculum questionnaires for both projects will be reviewed from the point of view of possibilities of some integration.

The Chair thanked PIRLS and TIMSS Co-directors for their work. He brought finance report forward.

Financial Report (GA-49/III/18-20)

The financial report was introduced by IEA's financial manager, Mr Jur Hartenberg. In his presentation Mr Hartenberg emphasized the main concern of the growth of receivables over the past five years, increasing from USD 1.2 million in 2003 to USD 3.7 million (excluding incidental World Bank receivables of 2.5 million) in 2007. The continued increase in our receivable position may cause serious liquidity problems for IEA in the future.

The total invoice value of our fixed assets is USD 1,260k, of which 70% has been invested in computer hard- and software. The consequence of the high receivable figure is a relatively low cash position of USD 3,271k and reduced interest income. The current assets are at the same level as in 2006.

In spite of considerable higher operating expenses as the result of increased activity levels, IEA could maintain its funds volume of USD 4 million. Presenting the profit and loss account, Mr Hartenberg showed the breakdown of operating expenses for the 6 international IEA projects and some 20 national DPC projects. Although the total expenditure increased by 17%, IEA was able to limit the Overhead growth to 5.5%.

The capital and reserve position in this reporting period 2007 has increased by USD 495k. A further increase of revenue of USD 2.4 million is expected for the current year 2008 as compared to the 2008 budget figure. The 2008 result is expected to be close to break-even.

Budget 2009 assumes that both income and expenditure will be slightly higher (3%) than in 2008.

A comparison of the key figures (revenue, expenditure and net assets) over the past 10 years confirms the fact that IEA's cost pattern keeps on following the revenue level. IEA is operating on very small margins and in order to manage our cash flow constraints it is of utmost importance that IEA members and study participants are timely in meeting their financial obligations.

The Chair thanked Mr Hartenberg and opened the floor for questions.

Mr Paul van Oijen (The Netherlands) expressed some concern that invoicing fees in two currencies caused problems with financial administrators and some countries cited this as a reason for failure to pay fees on time. Dr Wagemaker responded that IEA has only

been invoicing in two currencies since 2008, and that failures of some countries to pay fees go much deeper and much further back than that.

Ms Lorna Bertrand (England) noted that the upcoming TIMSS and PIRLS 2011 are conducted together and it will take ministries longer to consider the implications, which might contribute to delays. This led her to propose strategies to encourage countries to pay fees on time such as charging interest on late fees, implementing deadlines for study sign-up and fee payment, and creating an upward sliding scale of fees so that late payers pay more. Dr Wagemaker agreed that the idea of charging interests is worth consideration. The Secretariat will also continue to send a summary of outstanding fees twice a year to IEA's membership and study participants.

The Chair thanked Mr Hartenberg for the report.

14:00 – 15:40 Session VII

Presenting IERI

Dr Eugenio Gonzalez, Director of IERI, reminded delegates that IERI is a partnership between ETS and IEA, with the aim of improving the science of large-scale assessment and disseminating the results of such assessments. Some areas of common interest include: design and planning, data collection, data processing, data reporting, and use of the results. IERI is a "virtual" research institute and its research agenda is outlined on the website. The institute aims to provide help to researchers in identifying relevant policy issues, selecting analytic strategies, applying statistical techniques. He listed the priorities for the institute as follows: (1) make more scientific use of background questionnaires, (2) investigate new constructs, (3) measure cognitive domains, (4) study the effects of technology, and (5) work on thematic issues for secondary analysis. It is expected that the findings will contribute to further developments, provide direction to upcoming assessments, and contribute to enhancing the quality and interpretability of the data.

IERI offers two types of training: *The Autumn Academy*, which provides training on specific methodological issues, and *the Spring Academy*, which trains users of a specific dataset. Last May training was held for both PIRLS and PISA (2006). Lecturers talked about the research, and participants had two days to work with data, with expert assistance. The academies are getting very popular. For example, the November 2008 academy offered 25 places, and within two 2 weeks of its announcement there were 40 applicants. A new training has now been organised for January.

Dr Gonzalez informed the Assembly that the first issue of the IERI monograph series devoted to the science of large-scale assessment was just published.

The Chair thanked Dr Gonzalez for his report. He noted it was very important that IERI studies aim to contribute to both development of science of large-scale assessment and policy making.

Impact of PIRLS 2006 on Policy Making

The Chair invited four panellists: Ms Anne-Berit Kavli (Norway), Dr Galina Kovalyeva (Russian Federation), Dr Frederick Leung (Hong Kong SAR) and Mr Claude Sauvageot (France) to present on the dissemination of PIRLS 2006 in their countries.

Ms Anne-Berit Kavli informed the Assembly that participation in a number of international projects (PISA, PIRLS, TIMSS, ICCS, TALIS, SITES, TEDS-M) is an important part of quality improvement strategy in Norway in addition to the national quality assessment system. International studies in general contribute to increase focus on learning outcomes. In PIRLS Norwegian Grade 4 students were among the youngest tested and have had less teaching, thus Norway included a smaller sample of Grade 5 students as national option. Ms Kavli characterized the results of PIRLS in Norway as

weaker than expected. Especially the number of advanced readers was not satisfactory. PIRLS 2006 has then become an important element in the recent policy debate in Norway. Two main areas of this debate are: the teacher role (teacher competence, institution of “general teachers”, discipline and authority, and teachers’ education), and the organization of teaching (e.g. class organization, weak “learning pressure”, reform fatigue, early actions for weak learners). The results of this debate are two new *White Papers* on quality in schools and on teacher education for Parliament to consider.

Dr Galina Kovalyeva reminded the Assembly that Russia started with IEA studies in 1992 and since then has participated in all of them. This participation helped in preparing changes in education and developing a national evaluation system in accordance with international practices. Dr Kovalyeva mentioned milestones of reform, initiated in 2000, such as introduction of the national examination system and national education standards. Results of PIRLS 2006 in Russia indicated substantial improvement in student achievement in comparison to 2001. This improvement might be attributed to increase from three to four years of primary schooling, better pre-school preparation, more individual help for students, and others. The major effect of PIRLS 2006 was increased interest in in-depth analysis of the data (also from other high-achieving countries) but also complementary research on classroom practices and school textbooks. Those are expected to contribute to better understanding of the high reading comprehension skills of primary schools students, especially in comparison to lower achievement of students at the end of basic school, as shown by the results of the OECD PISA 2006 in Russia.

Mr Claude Sauvageot indicated that the results of PIRLS 2006 in France serve the evaluation and corrections of the educational reform implemented in 2002. The results did not show any significant decrease in achievement in comparison to 2001 assessment but they provide many warnings, in particular for the public sector where worsening of the achievement was noted. In addition, the score for French students, while still above the PIRLS scale average, is somewhat lower than the average for the European Union and the OECD countries. There was no press conference after the PIRLS 2006 release but results were mentioned in the speeches of the Minister of Education, media interviews with the PIRLS NRC, etc. The full document presenting conclusions from PIRLS 2006 will be published before the end of 2008. The planned actions are: changes in the 2002 reform by return to the fundamental competencies in reading and mathematics; decrease in the number of annual hours in primary education by deleting Saturday morning courses; and stronger support for students with problems in reading and mathematics.

Dr Frederick Leung reported on the impact of PIRLS on language education policies in Hong Kong. He mentioned the complex language situation in Hong Kong, i.e. common use of the Cantonese (spoken dialect) in a city which belongs to China where the official language is Putonghua and in which also English is very important due to its international character. Efforts were made to improve language education starting with the establishment of the Standing Committee for Language Education and Research in 1994. PIRLS 2001 results were not satisfactory (though significantly above international average). PIRLS 2001 results were widely disseminated to the press, the policy makers, and practitioners. Talks and workshops were also given to parents on how to set up a good home reading environment. In 2004 the PIRLS framework was adopted as the Chinese reading comprehension assessment framework and reading tests were developed by the Hong Kong Examination and Assessment Authority. The results of PIRLS 2006 confirmed that the reform of language education is moving in the right direction: Hong Kong students received the second highest average score (after the Russian Federation).

The Chair thanked panellists and invited questions and comments.

Mr Piero Cipollone asked about the grade vs. age effects in reading comprehension. Ms Anne-Berit Kavli (Norway) and Mr Júlíus Björnsson (Iceland) referred to the experiences of their own countries and claimed that, while it is difficult to separate those effects, they both play a role and age seems to be a rather meaningful factor. Dr Martin (PIRLS & TIMSS Co-Director) mentioned a study done by him, Dr Ina Mullis and Dr Pierre Foy using PIRLS 2006 reading achievement results to show how countries' policies on age of school entry and promotion/retention affect students' age within grade and result in a range of average ages for the PIRLS countries. In addition, the relationship between age within grade and achievement is complicated by the flexibility of school entry policies as well as policies regarding promotion/retention. Although in some countries older fourth grade students have higher achievement than younger students, older students do not necessarily perform better. The many different configurations of age-within-grade and reading achievement makes statistical adjustment of countries' average reading achievement for differences in age problematic¹.

Mr Michel Lanners (Luxembourg) asked about the role of teachers in reading improvement in Russia and Mr Paul van Oijen (the Netherlands) queried their financial situation. Dr Kovalyeva confirmed the meaningfulness of the teacher effect and indicated a number of actions taken to improve teacher performance, including economic incentives (though teacher salaries are still below average).

Questions concerning the presentation by Mr Sauvageot focused on reduction of teaching time. He confirmed that "less might be more" if the amount of time is decreased but the quality of teaching (including special support for low achievers) is increased.

Mr Van Oijen (the Netherlands) queried the effects of working with parents in order to improve their children's reading. Dr Leung called it "parent education" and considered it an important element of general change of attitude towards reading.

16:10 – 17:30 Session VIII

Small group discussion (2): Dissemination of the results of PIRLS 2006 and TIMSS 2007

WEDNESDAY, 8 OCTOBER 2008

09:00 – 11:20 Session IX

Presenting the Organization of Iberoamerican States (OEI)

The Chair informed participants that he had signed on behalf of IEA an agreement on partnership with the Organization of Iberoamerican States (OEI). The OEI will provide Iberoamerican countries information about IEA activities and projects and will seek IEA's participation in its programs as appropriate.

The Chair invited Dr Alejandro Tiana, Honorary Member and former Chair of IEA and Director General of the OEI Center for University Education, to present OEI.

Dr Tiana informed participants that OEI includes 21 members and two associate members, i.e. all Portuguese and Spanish speaking states in the region plus Portugal and Spain. The headquarters are located in Madrid with regional/national offices in several countries. The OEI receives funds from various sources to support programs in the areas of education, science and culture. Cooperation with IEA should increase the visibility of the Association in Latin America and facilitate its involvement in the evaluation activities in this region.

¹ M. O. Martin, I. V.S. Mullis, and P.Foy (2008) *Interrelationships among Reading Achievement, Grade level, and Age in PIRLS 2006*. Paper presented at the 3rd IEA Research Conference, Taipei.

The Chair thanked Dr Tiana and invited representatives of the IEA DPC to present their Center.

Presenting IEA Data Processing and Research Center (DPC)

Mr Dirk Hastedt, Co-Director of DPC, spoke about developments in the last few years, indicating an increase in the number of international projects the center is involved in, and the associated growth of staff, infrastructure and support. At present DPC is working in six IEA and two OECD international studies and a number of German projects (see *below*). The staff consists of more than 100 employees, some of them working at DPC more than ten years. The infrastructure includes over 200 computers and several software products have been developed to serve the studies. They are: • WinDEM (a Windows based software for data entering management) • WinW3S (a Windows based within school sampling software) • Survey System (a system for creating on-line versions of the questionnaires and administer them on line) • IDB Analyser (the International Database analyser to combine and analyse data from complex samples • ODA (On-line Data Analyser) • RMS (Repository Metas Search – on-line system to download data from IEA surveys. Mr Hastedt underlined that all this software serves to assure a better quality of data files and facilitates work with big and complex IEA databases. The software created by DPC constantly develops, concurrently with the developing needs of the IEA studies.

Ms Juliane Hencke introduced the IEA DPC Research and Analysis Unit (RandA). Founded in 2007 and building on the DPC experience with a variety of projects, RandA conducts research, training and analysis using IEA data, aiming at driving innovation and improvement into the IEA projects and methods. RandA works closely with educational researchers worldwide. Together with IERI, it organizes colloquia and training seminars in different countries (in 2008 training with the IEA data bases was conducted in Egypt, Spain, Bahrain, Botswana, Slovenia, Chinese Taipei and Germany).

The national projects at IEA DPC were presented by Mr Heiko Sibberns, DPC Co-Director. Working for different German organizations, including research institutes and universities, DPC provides a variety of services in the area of preparation and implementation of different projects, starting from sampling through survey implementation to data management and archiving materials. Up to 14 concurrent national projects of different size engage DPC expertise and work. Mr Sibberns indicated that a constant increase of tasks and their complexity generate a number of challenges, which require a creative approach to finding new solutions and stimulate further development in all service areas.

Dr Eckhard Klieme (Germany) stated that great advances in educational measurement in Germany would not have been possible without the DPC contribution. He also commended DPC as a professional partner in work with other international organizations such as OECD.

Mr Adel Al-Sayed (Qatar) and Mr Piero Cipollone (Italy) asked about training offered by IEA and possibilities for internship. Mr Hastedt confirmed that DPC can prepare training which addresses specific country requirements. Dr Wagemaker added that options for taking advantage of the DPC as an environment for learning are being discussed and internship/fellowships will be made possible.

The Chair thanked the presenters and noted that DPC is a remarkable organization and a big asset of IEA.

Report Discussion Groups on the ICILS Proposal

Group 1: Ms Anne-Berit Kavli (Norway) summarized the discussion in the group chaired by Dr John Ainley (Australia). Other participants were: Mr Sandor Brasso (Hungary), Mr Piero Cipollone (Italy), Ms Juliane Hencke (IEA DPC), Dr Anil Kanjee (South Africa), Dr Eckhard Klieme (Germany), Mr Mark Nemet (Austria), Mr Oliver Neuschmidt (IEA DPC),

Dr Tjeerd Plomp (Honorary Member), and Dr Neville Postlethwaite (Honorary Member). The major points of the discussion were: • a need of further work on the ICILS construct (among others it requires reflection on how broad the definition of Computer and Information Literacy should be) • addition of the national context study including an analysis of the curricula • consideration that the ICT is a rapidly developing field and that countries have very differentiated approaches and resources. There were also several practical issues raised: • the years 2011 and 2012 will be “crowded” with studies, this might be a problem for schools and for resource centers • because ICILS is not curriculum based, the possibility to consider a variety of target groups • it might be desirable to have a large teacher sample, and also to question parents • there is extensive need of piloting, both for testing material and technical solutions.

Group 2: Dr Frederick Leung (Hong Kong) spoke for the group chaired by Dr Constantinos Papanastasiou (Cyprus). The group also included: Maddy Bollen (Belgium), Julius Hauser (Slovak Republic), Michel Lanners (Luxembourg), Gerry Shiel (Ireland) and Anu Toots (Estonia). The discussion focused on the framework and on some methodological and technical issues. It was agreed that among six aspects in the construct of study only one is cognitive while other are technical. It was suggested that the construct should be more balanced. There were some concerns raised on the measurement of CIL skills vs. subject matter knowledge and this requires further clarification. There was also some consideration given to the population tested. Some countries would prefer testing at higher grade, such as Grade 10 instead of the proposed Grade 8. It was suggested to administer the test through the Internet but concerns were also raised in relation to reliability of computer connections and other security issues. Finally, the role of teachers was discussed and the difficulty of the teacher–student link in this study.

Group 3: Dr Jouni Välijärvi (Finland) was chairing this group and the results of discussion were presented by Mr Adel Al-Sayed (Qatar). Participants were: Dr Julius Björnsson (Iceland), Dr Bazar Damitov (Kazakhstan), Dr Steffen Knoll (IEA DPC), Mr Heiko Sibberns (IEA DPC), Ms Serara Moahi (Botswana). This group made an observation that while substantial sums of money are spent on ICT in education there are considerable differences between countries concerning existing infrastructure and implementation. It was suggested to start work in this area from an exploratory study about the ICT in different education systems. Such a study should use the methodology of focus groups (also of students) and comprehensive questionnaires. It could help to assess visibility of study as ICILS and to define better skills to be measured.

Group 4: Rapporteur for the group chaired by Mr Pierre Brochu (Canada) was Ms Kerstin Mattsson (Sweden). Other participants were: Dr Hue Chih-Wei (Chinese Taipei), Ms Soojin Kim (Korea), Dr Hajar Tahriri Niksefat (Iran), and Dr Georgia Polydorides (Greece). The group indicated a number of areas in which the proposal requires further development. First, there is a need of clarification and elaboration of the framework, the concepts and research questions. Second, since the measured CIL competence is not only cross-curricular but also extra-curricular, it is crucial to analyze how to link the assessment results to the school contribution. This group also reflected on big differences between countries and its consequences: there is a risk that the results in achievements will not reflect differences on quality of education but rather differences in infrastructure and wealth between and within countries. There were also some concerns related to on-line testing which might be a too demanding technique for some countries.

Group 5: Mr Paul van Oijen (The Netherlands) reported for the group chaired by Ms Lorna Bertrand (England) in which participated also: Dr Jit Cheung (New Zealand), Mr Lubomir Martinec (Czech Republic), Ms Valena Plisko (NCES, USA) Ms Sue Rossiter (NFER, England), Ms Rosario Sánchez (Spain), Mr Claude Sauvageot (France), Mr Ryo Watanabe (Japan). The group focused on three aspect of the ICILS proposal: its relevance, feasibility and design. The group was of the opinion that it is unclear what the benefits will be of a separate study on CIL for governments, schools and students. Since

CIL is not a separate school subject, such study might be seen as impractical. In addition, the proposed study requires substantial financial commitment and because of variability of technical capabilities between and with countries its implementation might be problematic. As Group 1, this group considered 2011/2012 for data collection as inconvenient. There were also design-related problems mentioned which are the consequence of subject specifics. First of all, the rapid changes in ICT make it difficult to construct an assessment that could be implemented a few years after research questions were developed, or repeated for trend purposes.

Group 6: This group's chair was Ms Rita Dukanaitė (Lithuania). Rapporteur was Dr Tom Loveless (United States) and participants were: Ms Fiona Fraser (Scotland), Dr Andris Kangro (Latvia), Ms Maia Miminoshvili (Georgia), and Dr Lars Qvortrup (Denmark). The group raised a number of issues that required further development and discussion, such as: • purpose of the study, its relevance and its connection to the school base knowledge need to be clarified • CIL seems to be defined primarily in terms of behaviors and attitudes, and literacy extends beyond behaviors and attitudes • the expected relation between two CIL construct strands and their elements is unclear (for example knowing about underlying working of computers and managing information) • the specifics of the students' interaction with virtual environment, such as often lack of supervision of adults (teachers), language "imbalance" (e.g. some searching services are not available in national languages) require consideration • selection of the grades 4th and 8th for testing is not justified (they do not seem to play any key role in ICT learning).

The Chair thanked participants for their contributions and summarizing them indicated that the discussion has brought a broad convergence of ideas. There is a clear understanding this is an important area and there is interest to take this further if problems can be resolved. He identified several conceptual issues (framework, relationship between ICT digital literacy and non-traditional school subjects) and practicalities (timing of the study, grade of testing, and costs) that need to be resolved.

Dr John Ainley identified six themes in the questions and comments that require further work: (1) the relationship between this cross-curricular construct and the traditional areas of knowledge; (2) the formulation of a set of explicit research questions; (3) the need for contextual information collected by the national context study and questionnaires; (4) practicalities such as grade level and delivery method; (5) multiple languages e.g. Google and closed web environments in the study; (6) costs.

The Chair took a "straw poll" and 15 countries indicated they might be interested in participating in the study. The Chair confirmed that IEA will work to prepare a more detailed proposal, taking account of comments and suggestions. This will be reviewed by TEG and the Standing Committee and presented at the next General Assembly.

11:50 – 13:00 Session X

Ensuring comparative validity. Quality control in IEA studies

Dr Ina Mullis started her presentation with a reminder of the two classic attributes of high quality achievement data, i.e. reliability and validity, and explained that in the case of IEA studies an additional dimension of international comparability must be taken into consideration. Referring to TIMSS and PIRLS studies, she indicated ten steps in which this process takes place: • assessment framework construction • test development • preparation of the national version of the instruments • defining target population • sampling • data collection • constructed response scoring • database construction • achievement scaling • reporting achievement data. Step by step Dr Mullis described the necessary activities, underlining their three characteristics: widespread collaboration with participating countries, preparation of detailed manuals and guidelines for each step, and reviewing and piloting all products. Dr Mick Martin continued the presentation focusing

on standards and control measures, such as using special software for within school sampling, international translation verification, independent monitoring of data collection, checking of the scoring reliability, and measures to verify data comparability. He also described how the IEA definition of grade-based population helps to assure comparability of students tested in different countries in the context of school education.

The Chair thanked the presenters and asked for questions and comments.

Dr Jouni Välijärvi (Finland) asked about trend items which can work differently due to changes of context (changes in curriculum but also in broader society). Among others it has an impact on motivation of schools to participate in studies and students' behavior in the testing situation.

Ms Serara Moahi (Botswana) observed that what is happening in the classroom goes often beyond curriculum, thus alignment between test and curriculum might be not sufficient for getting good measure of achievement.

Drs Martin and Mulls agreed that there are serious concerns but also indicated solutions, e.g. excluding items from trend analysis that do not correspond with a changed curriculum. They also stressed that the curriculum-test match is very important for a number of reasons, including policy making on education.

Ms Lorna Bertrand (England) commented on presenting deviations from procedures. She was of the opinion that they require more visibility than only annotations in reports (which often are not followed by non-experts). Dr Martin confirmed that IEA policy on reporting permits only comparable data. Annotations in the tables indicate deviation that does not compromise comparability. Data compromising comparability are not included in the table.

Dr Eckhard Klieme (Germany) raised the issue of the important role of questionnaires in IEA studies, noting that in some of them (e.g. ICCS and TEDS-M) the questionnaire data might be more important than data from the cognitive test. He also suggested a broader debate on technical issues related to the trend measures. Dr Martin agreed that such a debate is important and needed. Dr Hegarty encouraged it, among others, at the forum of the IEA International Research Conference and through publications in the Monographs series.

15:00 – 16:30 Session XI

Report Discussion Groups on disseminating PIRLS and TIMSS results

Group 1: Ms Anne-Berit Kavli reported there are many similarities between countries represented in this group (see page 21) as to interest of media and public in the results of the international studies as well as in the main strategies. These similarities include: • extensive national reports, targeted at schools, policymakers and researchers, • press material and press conferences, • dissemination conferences. Special attention needs to be given to schools and teachers to enable them to use the results constructively. Most countries stimulate secondary analysis of the data. Discussants suggest consideration of training for national researchers with databases. While it is difficult to indicate the impact of each individual study, in general they have stimulated more interest in educational outcomes, new national systems of educational monitoring and educational reforms.

Group 2: As reported by Dr Frederick Leung (Hong Kong), this group reviewed similarities and differences between dissemination activities in participating countries. They all prepared national reports and organized press conferences. In some case there was more than one report. In the case of Austria there was a separate report focusing on the study framework and methodology and a separate report with focus on the results. In Cyprus there are separate reports for mathematics and science in the case of TIMSS. Hong Kong also prepared individual reports for each of the participating schools. The results were also discussed at various fora. In addition to the educational policy makers

in all countries those were: academics (Luxembourg), teachers and teachers unions (Cyprus, Hong Kong and Luxembourg), individual schools and parents (Hong Kong).

Group 3: Mr Adel Al-Sayed (Qatar) informed that only three countries in this group participated in PIRLS 2006 (see page 21) and two of them decided for “high profile” dissemination and publicity for their results. In Iceland it triggered discussion about grade vs. age of tested students (including problems of grade retention). The group participants noted the importance of contextual factors in the between-country comparisons when discussing them on national fora. There was a suggestion of opening an e-library for storing/exchanging national reports. For TIMSS 2007 the group participants planned the preparation of the national reports with special emphasis on trends (when applicable) and the release of them to the press.

Group 4: Ms Kerstin Mattsson (Sweden) observed that the discussion in this group was to some extent difficult because of cultural and political differences between represented countries and because not all of them are PIRLS and TIMSS participants. However, all countries that have participated tried to find ways to make dissemination more efficient, taking the political and cultural context into account – via media, researchers, networks and politicians. The examples given were very similar to many of those discussed in the other groups. The discussion showed, however, that there is no common strategy to make national reports – while in some countries it is natural to prepare national reports, summaries etc, there is no encouragement for this in others. The group suggested that IEA could give important support by attending national workshops, showing the value of national reports, how data could be used on the national level and the benefits of the secondary analyses. More secondary analyses are needed also on the international, not only national level.

Group 5: Mr Paul van Oijen (the Netherlands) confirmed that, similar to other groups, participants presented a variety of ways in which their countries disseminated the results. Some countries deliberately adopted a low profile while some others actively promoted the findings via press briefings, according to country situation. Countries also contextualised findings, e.g.: trend results in the Netherlands, which had shown a decrease in students’ achievement, supported (earlier initiated) changes in the policy; England focused on selected issues of use of computers in reading, and the United States could illustrate that policy implemented over the past few years had some success. Some countries produced action plans detailing their educational response to the findings. The group agreed that often results are ignored and that more effort should be put into presenting them. There was also a request for IEA to prepare additional materials to be used for data release (e.g. more detailed info about individual countries and group of countries).

Group 6: Dr Tom Loveless (United States) presented a number of suggestions for facilitating dissemination of the findings. It was proposed that • countries which want to be compared coordinate a joint release of the results • some additional materials are prepared for this occasion such as selected secondary analysis of issues of special importance (this would require early access to the data) or videotaped panel discussions, illustrating how PIRLS and TIMSS influence policy in different nations. When results are released, policymakers (but also media) want to know what the message from the specific study is for their policy. It would be helpful therefore • to be more specific on this question and • to provide more direction on reforms and innovations that are effective. There were also suggestions to conduct a survey of stakeholders to get an idea of the market for various projects in the earliest stages of development, allowing the demand for research to shape the design and planning of projects from their inception.

The Chair thanked rapporteurs for the summaries and invited Dr David Robitaille and Dr Hans Wagemaker to present the PEC and TEG Annual Reports.

Publications and Editorial Committee (PEC) Annual Report (GA-49/III/16)

Dr Robitaille, PEC Chair, informed the Assembly that in 2008 PEC reviewed a number of important IEA publications. The committee helped to finalise two SITES 2006 reports. The first (international report) was published already; the second one (on ICT policies in a number of countries) will be published before the end of the year. A review of TIMSS 2007 publications was also conducted: the Encyclopedia and two international reports, on mathematics and on science. Also the first IERI monograph was reviewed by the committee. Dr Robitaille encouraged study directors to try to involve PEC as early as possible in the process of reports preparation and invited volunteers to the Committee in view of a number of publications from TEDS-M expected soon.

Dr Robitaille reminded the Assembly of the IEA awards and the submission process, noting that interest in the awards is growing. The deadline for submission is March 31 each year. There is an award for best Masters/PhD thesis and an award for best published paper using IEA data. He asked participants to ensure that researchers in their countries know about the awards and to encourage faculties that are directing graduate projects to consider submitting for awards.

Technical Executive Group (TEG) Annual Report (GA-49/III/17)

Dr Wagemaker, TEG Chair, reminded the Assembly that TEG performs a critical quality control function for IEA studies. TEG meetings offer a forum for study directors to bring in any issues of a technical nature that they need advice on, support with, etc. At the last meeting (3 October) two major issues were raised. The first was a new proposal for ICILS. TEG was satisfied with this proposal and recommended its review at the GA. The revised proposal will be reviewed again on April 18, at the TEG meeting in San Diego (United States) in conjunction with AERA. Second, considerable time at the last TEG discussion was taken by the TEDS-M project. This project has achieved remarkable outcomes and is a very ambitious study. There are 4 or 5 volumes about to be published – most of which are non-problematic. There are, however, serious reservations regarding one publication and TEG has recommended alternative strategies. There were also support mechanisms set up within TEG to ensure the publication meets quality standards.

The Chair thanked Drs Robitaille and Wagemaker and welcomed Anu Toots to present plans for the 2009 General Assembly.

Dr Toots announced that the 2009 General Assembly would be held in Tallinn, Estonia October 5-8, 2009. She invited all delegates to Tallinn and described the medieval old town, which is on the UNESCO World Heritage list and will be the cultural capital of Europe in 2011. English and German are both widely spoken. Dr Toots briefly described the Estonian school system and the unique environment of some older public and rural schools, and expressed her willingness to organise a school visit for participants.

The Chair thanked Dr Toots and gave advance notice for the General Assembly 2010, which will be held in Egypt.

The Chair thanked the 49th IEA General Assembly participants and organizers and then closed the meeting at 16:30.