

Report on the participation of IUPESM in ICSU activities

Submitted by Dov Jaron, Chair, IUPESM ICSU Liaison Committee and member of the IFMBE International Liaison Committee

In 2000, IUPESM and its two constituent organizations, IFMBE and IOMP, were admitted to the International Council of Science (ICSU). IUPESM had tried for more than a decade to gain admission and was turned down repeatedly. Dov Jaron and Keith Boddy, the then President of IUPESM, launched a major awareness and educational campaign to receive recognition and get full membership in ICSU. This effort was successful. Membership in ICSU is providing enormous recognition and prestige to biomedical engineers and medical physicists as full partners in scientific contributions to humankind and as major policy players on the global scene.

Appointed by both IUPESM and IFMBE, and beginning in 2002, Dov Jaron assumed a leading role in establishing a major trans-ICSU Unions initiative on “Science for Health and Well Being” (SHWB). The birth of this initiative took place at the General Assembly in Rio, during a meeting of ICSU’s bio-related Unions. During this meeting Dov Jaron proposed the formation of the initiative and has participated in extensive discussions and in a series of meetings that followed the formation of the initiative.

These discussions and the meetings brought about a major addition to the 2006-2011 Strategic Plan for ICSU with the addition of a new emphasis on health: “to ensure that health considerations are duly taken into account in the planning and execution of future activities (of ICSU)...”

An ad hoc Scoping Committee, composed of members from the Executive Committee of ICSU plus representatives from leaders of health-related initiatives was established to coordinate efforts between health activities of the Unions and ICSU headquarters. The committee identified the SHWB initiative as a major future thrust for the ICSU Unions.

The Mission and Scope of the SHWB initiative were defined as:

The Science for Health and Well-Being Initiative (SHWB) seeks to improve and advance human health and well-being. It will marshal expertise from the natural, social, behavioral and engineering sciences into a coordinated program designed to attain new insights into research and policies that affect the health and well-being of people, mindful always of their intimate links to the health of the fauna, flora, and environmental systems among which humankind abides. SHWB will organize programs and projects that transcend scientific boundaries and are most effectively pursued by multidisciplinary teams, including teaching and research units to explore real life problems of various communities. SHWB will identify unmet needs and work within a distinctive conceptual niche that complements research conducted in other international initiatives. SHWB will build upon existing synergies

among international scientific organizations affiliated with the International Council for Science (ICSU), seek to foster new synergies among them, and welcome links with other international programs.

Dov Jaron submitted a proposal for a grant, which was approved by ICSU to launch the initiative. He has just been named Co-Chair of the SHWB Executive Committee. Seventeen ICSU Unions and a number of ICSU Interdisciplinary bodies have joined the initiative and will participate in various programs and policy matters related to health and well-being. IUPESM, as a Union most closely related to the new strategic focus of ICSU, should retain a leading role in ICSU's programs on human health.

Concurrently with the launching of the initiative, Dov Jaron applied for a grant from the United States National Science Foundation to organize the first symposium, as part of a series of symposia to be developed as a major component of the initiative. The symposium, titled "Science and Engineering Principles Applied to the Control of Hypercommunicable Diseases" is being held in conjunction with the World Congress on Medical Physics and Biomedical Engineering in Seoul. Fourteen world-renowned participants will be taking part in this symposium, scheduled for the 29th of August.