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Board Meeting of COMIUCAP San Francisco, 3-6 of November, 2016

REPORT

The annual meeting for 2016 of the governing body of COMIUCAP took place at the University of San Francisco (San Francisco, California) between 3-6 of November 2016. Present were the following Professors and Members of the Board: João J. Vila-Chã, President; Salomón Lerner, Vice-President for Latin America; Janis Ozolins, Vice-President for Asia/Oceania; Brendan Sweetman, Vice-President for North America. Justifiably absent were the Vice-Presidents for Europe (Prof. Miguel Garcia-Baró) and for Africa (Prof. Joseph Agbakoba). The meeting was called for San Francisco and on this date in order to make it coincide with the Annual Meeting of the ACPA (American Catholic Philosophical Association) and in the hope of achieving some visibility for the network in North America. Accordingly, and for the second time in its history, COMIUCAP organized a Satellite Session as part of the ACPA Meeting.

As usual, we started with an analysis, and the corresponding reports, pertaining to the situation in the different Regions of COMIUCAP. Professor Salomón Lerner presented a detailed account of the activities organized by COMIUCAP-Latin America in the last two years. Emphasis was given to the following realizations: 1. International Seminar on *“Identity, Mission and Organization of the Catholic University today”*, an event that took place in Lima, at the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, between 16-17 of november 2015 and in order to commemorate the 50 anniversary of the Document from Vatican II *“Gravissimum Educationis”* as well as the 25th of the *“Ex corde Ecclesiae”*; 2. Third Regional Congress for Latin America of COMIUCAP on *“Postsecularization and the Encounter of Cultures”*, an event that took place in the ancient city of Cuzco from 19-20 of November, 2015; 3. Creation of a directory of Catholic Universities with Programs in Philosophy throughout the continent of Latin America; 4. Creation of a web-page dedicated to the activities of the Comiucap-Region of Latin America (www.comiucap-al.net); 5. Completion of all the editorial work pertaining to the upcoming publication of the book *Postsecularización: Nuevos escenarios del encuentro entre culturas*; 6. Active participation in the organization of the V World Congress of COMIUCAP, which shall take place In Bogotá, Colombia, from 4-9 of July, 2017. The Vice-President for Latin America also informed about the ongoing organization of an academic event in the name of COMIUCAP on the occasion of the International Congress *“El conflicto de las Facultades: Sobre la Filosofía y la Crisis de las Humanidades”*, an event that shall take place in Lima from 5-8 of september, 2017 on occasion of the celebrations of the 100th anniversary of the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú (1917-2017). Furthermore, the

COMIUCAP is the Sectorial Group for Philosophy of the *International Federation of Catholic Universities (IFCU/FIUC)*.

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board was also informed that from 25-27 of September, 2017, the UNISINOS (São Leopoldo, Brasil) in collaboration with COMIUCAP will realize an International Congress entirely dedicated to the Work of Francisco Suarez on occasion of the celebration of the 400th anniversary of his death. Finally, the Vice-President for LA expressed the felt need for Programs capable of fostering the interchange of graduate Students among the Catholic Universities present in the continent.

The Vice-President for Asia/Oceania reported on the activities of COMIUCAP in the Region, whereby the main event discussed was the realization of the Regional Congress of COMIUCAP for Asia/Oceania at the Australian Catholic University from 20-22 of July, 2015 on "*Civil Society and Human Formation: Philosophy's Role in a Renewed Understanding of the Meaning of Education*". The volume corresponding to this important event of COMIUCAP will be published by Routledge in 2017.

The Vice-President for North America reported on the apparent difficulty of many Catholic institutions to be associated with organizations such as ours endowed with "catholic" in the name. But mentioned was also the fact the majority of the scholars that come to events such as the ACPA have a sense of mission, an indication that our network should come up with an adequate strategy for reaching out to the many individual faculty members that in North America are committed to the Mission of the Church. In this regard, we agreed on the need to organize an event in the United States of America capable of bringing together as many professionals of philosophy as possible and so engage a reasonable number of departments at catholic institutions throughout North America. There seems to be a great interest in Christian Philosophy in the North America, while at the same time a certain climate of closeness seems to be imposing itself, something that does not correspond to the expectations of the younger generation. Hence the importance of making COMIUCAP better known in this particular Region granted the vocation of the network to explore the depths of thought present in the cultures of the world. Hence the importance of making known the multicultural dimension of our work. On the other hand, and taking into consideration the enormous importance of political thought in a country such as the USA, and all the more so in the context such as the 2016 Presidential Election, it was also decided that COMIUCAP should promote a Regional Conference on a topic such as the following: "***Educating for Democracy: Philosophy and Society at the Crossroads***". We are glad to inform that the process towards the organization of this event was promptly initiated and Boston College is now determined to take leadership in the organization of a conference on that topic to be held in November of 2017.

In the justified absence of the corresponding Vice-Presidents, João J. Vila-Chã informed on the initiatives of COMIUCAP in the Regions of both Africa and Europe. A report was offered on the Regional Congress of COMIUCAP for Europe on "*Philosophy and the Future of Human Formation in Europe*", which took place at the Pontificia Universidad Comillas from 17-19 of December 2014 and included a commemoration of the 150th Anniversary of the birth of Miguel de Unamuno. Regarding Africa, emphasis was given to the fact that COMIUCAP and the Catholic University of Eastern Africa are organizing and promoting an International Conference on "***The Role of Philosophy in Africa: Context, Traditions, Challenges and Prospects***", an event that shall take place in Nairobi, Kenya, from 20-22 of April, 2017. The Board was also informed of some first steps towards the organization, in 2018, of a new Congress of COMIUCAP for the Region of Europe. The idea is now to publish the qualifying

texts in the new journal that COMIUCAP will present to the Public in 2017 (see the point here below).

During the meeting, a considerable amount of time was spent in the discussion of the following matters: 1. Implementation of the desideratum expressed and approved in a previous meeting of the Board regarding the creation of a peer-reviewed Journal at the service of COMIUCAP's Mission under the title ***PAROUSIA: An International Journal for Philosophy and Culture***. The board was informed that in order for that to become possible it is urgent to proceed with the registration of an Association of Common Law in order to have the legal basis for the necessary registration process of the new publication(s). The President of COMIUCAP informed that the necessary steps will soon be undertaken in Portugal for reasons of practical convenience. Discussed were also the different proposals of names that should integrate both the Scientific Committee of the V World Congress in Bogotá as well as the Scientific Board of "Parousia" or other scientific initiatives to be undertaken by COMIUCAP.

The Board Meeting of our network for 2016 was concluded at the venue of the Annual Meeting of the ACPA-2016 in San Francisco with the realization of a Satellite Session of the said Congress under the following title: ***"The Catholic University and the Challenges of Global Justice"***. The event was presided by João J. Vila-Chã and the discussion was introduced by the three Vice-Presidents of the network present in San Francisco: Prof. Brendan Sweetman, Prof. Janis Ozolins, Prof. Salomón Lerner. The ideas presented were many and deeply appreciated in regard to issues such as the following: nature and identity of the Catholic University; the connection of the problem of Justice with the questions pertaining to the Common Good; the dangers of mercantilization in Higher Education and the negative effects of the market on the educational institutions; the unavoidable role that philosophy should play as a platform for dialogue, etc. Mentioned in the conversation were also the following aspects: the need to think through on how to understand global justice and so review the tasks of professors at Catholic Institutions, namely in terms of doing justice to the values that we ourselves claim to profess; to consider the importance of programs for Study Abroad as an important means for making our students more aware of the importance of issues as Justice and its integration with the search for Truth in our contemporary world; to consider the role to be played by a growing interaction of Faculty Members with the cultural diversity of the world, etc.

The Meeting of the COMIUCAP-Board for the year 2016 ended with the President expressing deep gratitude to all the Vice-Presidents, the ones that were able to come to San Francisco and those who were not and yet remain deeply committed to the mission of the network. Special thanks are also due to members of the staff at the Jesuit Community attached to the University of San Francisco for the assistance and help provided.