

ICRANet Scientific Committee
Fourteenth Meeting
November 28th - 30th, 2016

The meeting starts at 10:30 am of the 28th of November 2016 in the ICRANet Headquarters in Pescara (Italy).

The following members are present:

Felix Aharonian (Representative of Armenia, Chairman)

Carlo Luciano Bianco (Representative of ICRA)

Massimo Della Valle (Representative of Italy, Co-Chairman)

Gabriele Gionti (Representative of the Vatican State)

John Mester (Representative of Stanford University, via Skype)

Jorge Rueda with the proxy of Chris Fryer (Representative of the Arizona University)

Remo Ruffini (Director of ICRANet)

For Brazil is present Prof. Marcelo Guzzo from the University of UNICAMP as an observer.

The meeting is chaired by Prof. Felix Aharonian and the minutes are taken by the Director.

The Director is given the word and starts by presenting the three volumes of his report to the Committee.

The presentation of the report by the Director starts at 10:30am. The Director specifically illustrates:

- After recalling the initial establishment of ICRA (1985) and of ICRANet (2005), he recalls how the 2016 has been one of the most productive years both in the history of ICRA and of ICRANet.
- Particular important has been the award to Prof. Roy Kerr (Yevgeny Mikhajilovic Lifshitz ICRANet Professor) of the Crafoord Prize 2016 in Astronomy by the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, and the following celebrations at ICRANet Nice and ICRANet Pescara where Prof. Kerr received his honorary citizenship.
- From the scientific point of view, he recalls the 7 press releases corresponding to outstanding scientific contributions of ICRANet scientists.
- Prior to the traditional illustration of the 17 lines of research of ICRANet and recent developments, he underlines the special progress which has been obtained in the establishment of the ICRANet Armenia Center, the Brazilian major effort toward the Universities collaborating with ICRANet, as well as the establishment of two new ICRANet Centers, one at the Academy in Minsk (Belarus) and one at the University of Isfahan in Iran.
- In addition to the above new ICRANet Centers, a special mention is dedicated to the activities in Argentina, in Colombia, and in Mexico toward a major ICRANet expansion in Latin America. He also recalls the “Distinguished Former Student Award” granted to Prof. Jorge Rueda by the Universidad Industrial de Santander (Colombia) in view of his intense activity in favor of Colombian institutions and students.
- He recalls as well the Scientific Meetings organized, in particular the Fourth Bego Rencontres in Nice from May 30th to June 3rd and the Adriatic Workshop in Pescara From June 20th to June 30th.
- Concerning the outreach program, he recalls the public lectures given by Prof. Ruffini in João Pessoa (Brazil) and in Ferrara (Italy), the ones by Prof. Jorge Rueda in

Almaty (Kazakhstan) and in Bucaramanga (Colombia), the ICRANet participation to the event “Notte dei Ricercatori” in Pescara, and the beginning of an outreach program dedicated to the high school students of Pescara.

Despite these positive results, the Director recalls:

- the request for the reestablishment of the 150,000.00 Euro contribution cut in 2015 and 2016 by Italy,
- the extreme situation of the delay of the deposit of the contribution of Brazil for 2015, 2016 and 2017,
- the missing appointment by MCTIC of its representative in the Scientific Committee of ICRANet.

The Director also recalls:

- the new and already existing Agreements with Universities and Research Centers;
- the large number of Students and the growth of the International Relativistic Astrophysics PhD Program (IRAP PhD), promoted by ICRANet;
- that the IRAP PhD has grown through the official recognition of the Erasmus Mundus program of the European Commission, and Armenia joined the French, German and Italian Universities in granting the degree;
- attention has been given to the procedures for the adhesion of Argentina, France, Germany, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, and South Korea to ICRANet.

The Director also notes:

- the contributions obtained in kind for the ICRANet Centers by the Municipalities of Pescara and Nice, and by the CBPF in Rio de Janeiro, as well as by the Academy of Science of Armenia in Yerevan, by the Academy of Science in Minsk (Belarus) and by the University of Isfahan in Iran;
- The support given by the Erasmus Mundus program of the European Commission to the IRAP PhD program has been globally of 5,768,200.00 Euros for the years 2010-2017;
- The contribution of eight positions (One professor, three Ph.D.s, two students, one technician, and one secretary) of the State Committee of Science of Armenia.

The Committee:

- thanks the Director for his presentation and appreciates the scientific achievements of ICRANet;
- expresses its concerns about the Brazilian contribution and about the missing nomination of the Brazilian representatives;
- recognizes the ample expansion of topics of Scientific Research at the highest international level and the many results obtained. Particularly important are the developments in the traditional fields of research, such as the Physics and Astrophysics of white dwarfs, neutron stars, and black holes;
- takes note of the very large number of scientific publications from ICRANet scientists in high impact factor international scientific Journals, as evidenced in the concluding remarks of the Volume 1 of the scientific report;
- notices as well the great progress in the understanding of Gamma-Ray Bursts;

- witnesses the broadening of scientific activities in Argentina, Armenia, Brazil, China, Colombia, France, Germany, Italy, Kazakhstan, Mexico; it welcomes the action by the Director to obtain funding, local premises and support of the local Authorities, which adds a substantial increase to the assets of ICRANet;
- recognizes the strategic value of the activities in Brazil with the development in the ICRANet Center in Rio of the BSDC (Brazilian Science Data Center), which should soon be extended to the BRICS countries;
- asks the Director to address the attention of the Foreign Ministers of the ICRANet Members States on obtaining the Seat agreement for the Center in Villa Ratti in Nice; the entrance of Colombia, France, Germany, Iran and Kazakhstan in ICRANet should be also considered with priority in view of the many common scientific interests with ICRANet;
- recognizes the strong commitment of teaching at graduate-student level, promoted by ICRANet in establishing the IRAP PhD in connection with some of the leading Astrophysical and Physical research Institutions of Europe, directly related to the activities encouraged by ICRANet in Argentina, Brazil, China, Colombia, India and Mexico;
- recognizes that, in order to keep pace with these scientific developments and with its scientific goals, as well as with the teaching to a vast number of IRAP PhD students all over the world, an expansion of the Faculty, visitors and research Members, both in Europe and in Brazil, is necessary and recommends the Director to open new appointments.

In conclusion given the strength of the Organization, the Committee is pleased to comment on their results with the intent of driving for excellence:

- takes note of the scientific achievements of ICRANet, led by its Director, in advancing in all the planned research topics and goals;
- acknowledges the contributions by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Italy, for its continuous support of ICRANet;
- acknowledges as well the contributions obtained in kind for the ICRANet Centers by the Academy of Science of Armenia in Yerevan, by the Academy of Science in Minsk (Belarus), by the CBPF in Rio de Janeiro, by the Municipalities of Pescara and Nice, and by the University of Isfahan in Iran;
- is thankful to the Members of the Italian Parliament elected from Abruzzi for their support to the ICRANet activities in the Pescara Centre;
- looks forward to reaching full operation of the ICRANet Centers in Isfahan and in Minsk;
- supports the Director on the establishment of a stronger and wider link with the seventeen Universities and Research Centers in Brazil;
- supports the development of the BSDC, which will become a cornerstone for the activities of ICRANet in Brazil possibly to be extended to other South and Latin American Countries and to the BRICS countries;
- supports further contacts with Argentina, Belarus, China, Colombia, Hungary, India, Singapore, South Korea;
- supports the ICRANet activities within the IRAP-PhD and supports the possibility to extend the IRAP-PhD to some Brazilian and Mexican Universities;

- Recalls how the presence of students from Albania, Argentina, Armenia, Belarus, Brazil, China, Colombia, France, Germany, India, Italy, Russia, Serbia, and Sweden has fostered the scientific atmosphere in the Pescara Center and their participation in many of the scientific reports has been very positive;
- urgently requests the designation of the Brazilian MCTIC representatives in the ICRANet Board and in the Scientific Committee;
- convincingly supports the decisions of the ICRANet Board regarding the unanimously voted financial commitments and expects that they will be duly fulfilled;
- finally, recognizes the continuously improving tone and content of the scientific discussions and it must credit the Director, Prof. Remo Ruffini, and his staff, with the follow up to its recommendations of recent years.

The meeting ends at 4:00 pm on the November 30th 2016 after the reading and unanimous approval of this report.



Prof. Felix Aharonian
Chair of meeting for the Scientific Committee

Prof. John Mester
Representative of Stanford University



Prof. Remo Ruffini
Director of ICRANet