



Press Release

On 10-11 May 2018, the ICGEB Board of Governors held its annual session in the AREA Science Park, seat of the Headquarters and Trieste laboratories. The Board drives the Governance of the Centre and determines its direction and activities. This year's session registered a record number of participants: over 100 delegates from more than 50 countries, bearing witness to the interest that the organisation's activities have raised on the international biotechnology arena. Under the presidency of Victor Smirnov, of the Russian Federation, the session opened with statements being delivered by Philippe Scholtès, Managing Director of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), Vienna, who introduced new scenarios for interaction between ICGEB and UNIDO in the field of biotechnology and biofuels; Fabrizio Nicoletti, Head, Bilateral and Multilateral Scientific and Technological Cooperation Unit, DG for the Promotion of the Country System, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Italy and Mauro Giacca, Director-General of ICGEB. Special Guest, Prof. Stefano Fantoni, illustrated the ESO2020 project - Trieste European City of Science.

Breaking news from the Board included the presentations of the new Regional Research Centres of the ICGEB, by Dr. Dong Ruiping, Chief Scientific Officer of the China Medical City science park, where the new seat of the ICGEB will be established in Taizhou. The park already comprises more than 800 companies working in the biomedical sector, including the subsidiaries of several large multinational pharmaceutical companies. ICGEB will be the catalyst for research in the field of innovative pharmaceutical therapies for tumours and degenerative diseases. The second seat of the ICGEB will be in Panama City, also located within a science park allocated by the Panamanian Government thanks to goods (lands, facilities) originating from the Panama Canal and where research will focus on the use of molecules deriving from natural resources of the country to develop new pharmaceuticals against infectious and degenerative diseases.

During the Meeting, the Director General signed an important collaboration Agreement with Elke Anklam, Director, Health Consumers and Reference Materials of the Joint Research Centre (JRC), of the European Science Hub, the largest research institute of the European Commission. According to the Agreement, the ICGEB and the JRC will develop communal projects applying biotechnology in the fields of medicine and agriculture, with a view to harmonising the use of biotechnologies in Europe and Africa.

The Director-General announced his intention to not request renewal of his mandate beyond 2019, in order to dedicate activity exclusively to the pursuit of his scientific research. He will leave ICGEB for an academic posting at the School of Cardiovascular Medicine, King's College London, UK, where he will head a research team on the development of novel therapies for infarction and cardiovascular disease. The Board expressed great appreciation for his work and the wish that his association with the ICGEB continue, albeit in a different capacity. The Board has activated the procedure, on an international scale, to seek a new Director General for the organisation for the next five-year term: 2019-2024.

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