



International Astronomical Union
Union Astronomique Internationale

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to:

Prof. Maria Christina Pineda de Carias, Presidenta
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Paris, 19 October 2007

re: your letter of 23 August 2007 and appendices

Dear Professor Pineda de Carias,

Thank you for your letter of 23 August 2007 and the documents attached to it, related to your much appreciated interest in National Membership of the IAU. Indeed, in the section "Precedents on the IAU and Central America", you present the current state of affairs:

- National Membership for the CAAA started in 1997 at the GA1997 (Kyoto); and
- National Membership for the CAAA, conform the IAU Statutes IV.9, was suspended after five years (by the end of 2002), because of lack of payment of dues by the CAAA to the IAU, as confirmed at GA2003 (Sydney).

However, as is also stated in IAU Statutes IV.9: "After five years of suspension of a National Member, the Executive Committee may recommend to the General Assembly to terminate the membership".

This implies that, if the CAAA will pay *before 31 December 2007* its dues to the IAU over the five years 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, and 2001, together CHF 7572.-, then, following the IAU Statutes, CAAA National Membership of the IAU will automatically be resumed.

We thank you for your efforts to motivate your CAAA members to prevent termination of IAU membership by complying with the IAU Statutes and paying the dues to the IAU. However, the IAU Executive Committee will, with much regret, consider the CAAA National Membership to the IAU terminated if the dues of CHF 7572.- have not been paid to the IAU before 31 December 2007.

As IAU President-Elect Dr. Robert Williams has informed you in recent email messages, the IAU Executive Committee is planning to submit to the IAU XXVII General Assembly in Rio de Janeiro, 2009, a proposal to introduce a new class of National Membership, so-called Prospective National Membership, free of dues for some years, for economically less-developed countries with only a few professional astronomers. As soon as that proposal and the subsequent changes in the IAU Statutes have been accepted by the IAU General Assembly, then perhaps some of the CAAA

countries could consider applying *individually* for Prospective National Membership of the IAU.

We hope that the above mentioned issues and the position of the IAU Executive Committee are clear to you and your colleagues.

In the meantime, the IAU notes with much satisfaction the participation of the CAAA countries in the planning for the International year of Astronomy 2009, with yourself (Honduras), Rodrigo Alvarado Marín (Costa Rica), Américo Mejía (El Salvador), Edgar Anibal Cifuentes (Guatemala), Javier Antonio Pichardo Ramirez (Nicaragua), and Vicente Forero Villao (Panama) as Single Points of Contact between these countries and the IAU. It may interest you that at the meeting on Communicating Astronomy to the Public in Athens, October 2007, it was decided to add a Cornerstone to the IYA2009 program, related to astronomy in developing countries, with as motto: *Enable as many developing countries as possible to have access to astronomical equipment and information.*

This bring to you my best wishes, as always,
your sincerely,



Karel A. van der Hucht

cc:

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