



MIAMSI

Mouvement International d'Apostolat des Milieux Sociaux Indépendants

International Movement of Apostolate in the Independent Social Milieus

Movimiento Internacional de Apostolado en los Medios Sociales Independientes

Lettre Carta Letter

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Mouvements Movimientos Movements

2023 - N°1 International Bureau 2022-2025

To the leaders of the members and affiliated movements of MIAMSI July 2023

I – EDITORIAL

The titular members of the International Bureau of MIAMSI met in Rome (Italy) from June 18 to 21, 2023. We share with you the conclusions of the various issues raised at this meeting.

The world in which we live is increasingly complex and there are many challenges for us all: solidarity, war, generalized violence, increasing inequalities that exacerbate social tensions and constitute a threat to democracy, the fight against all new forms of terrorism, unemployment, insecurity, respect for human life, global warming and the environment, migration, etc.

In a context of crisis, where we have not completely turned our backs on the pandemic with impacts still visible, and where the economic and social crisis as a result of the Russian-Ukrainian war is taking hold, it is difficult to make assumptions about the future but we must be attentive to the signs of the times and continue to take our commitments to heart. We dare to keep Christian hope and Christ Jesus at the heart of our lives, He who walks with us as in the time of the disciples of Emmaus.

Good luck to you all.

Prosper HONAGBODE

Président of MIAMSI

II – Main conclusions of the Bureau meeting of 18 to 21 June 2023

From Sunday 18 to Wednesday 21 June took place, face-to-face, the first meeting of the International Bureau of the 2022-2025 mandate.

The meeting began on Sunday, 18 June, at 17:00, with the President's welcoming remarks, followed by a prayer by the Vice-President for Europe.

Then, from the outset, due to current events, the members exchanged at length on the very critical situation of MIAMSI's finances with regard to the current Budget that was voted in September 2022. In a context where there is no subsidy or donation, all of our activities will have to be based on dues, hence the following reminder: according to the texts, the contribution per member per year is 5 dollars.

In the same path, the members of the B.I. exchanged on the future of the Movement and beyond that of the MIAC's by a lack of interest of the support structures and the little attention that is shown towards Catholic Action in general. In the search for solutions, it was recalled that today people do not differentiate between the strategy of "doing" and that of "being". Indeed, the role of MIAMSI is different from that of "Caritas Internationalis", for example, that is, it is not involved in humanitarian projects or in charitable support, etc., or, again, it is not the place where we will talk about prayers to be recited, Marian apparitions, or the enthusiasm of the Pope's travels, etc., but it must be the place where we can talk about our experience of faith lived in our environment with a commitment to the transformation of this living environment, which does not exclude specific interventions in terms of human dignity and human rights.

Then, the participants set about preparing, in broad outline, the visits to be carried out, in particular on Tuesday, June 20 as planned in the agenda. The President recalled the importance of these visits, which are in accordance with our texts, and members discussed any concerns that may be raised.

The celebration of the 60th anniversary of MIAMSI (to be organized jointly by MIAMSI and ACI France) is scheduled in Marseille on September 16 during the re-entry seminar of the coordinators of territories of the ACI France (September 16-17) ahead of the Euro-Mediterranean days (September 17-24) which will be closed by the Pope (September 23). A book is being published in relation to the event and will be opportunely launched during the celebration.

Then, he reviewed what could constitute the content of the book that MIAMSI will publish on the occasion of its 60th anniversary.

Furthermore, the Bureau decided that a meeting – even in virtual mode – bringing together all the members of the Bureau and these representatives of MIAMSI will be organized on a regular basis in order to strengthen the presence and action of MIAMSI in these spaces at the international level.

At the end of the presentation of the situation in Latin America, the members were challenged, in particular by the decrease in members for each country now constituting

the Relay of South America. Faced with this decrease, which entails very small teams, a theology starting from the Acts of the Apostles, with the first Christian communities, could inspire and stimulate the mission anew. This does not absolve members of the need to note that this reduction nevertheless poses a problem and is a challenge.

With regard to cash, the treasurer mentioned the difficulties encountered for almost a year to settle the terms with the French bank, Crédit Lyonnais (LCL), so that it could have access to the account and have the powers conferred on it by its position as Treasurer.

With regard to MIAMSI's representations in international institutions. These representations are provided by convinced and available members who have been in place for several years and we should question the succession, a relevant question, especially since there is often little goodwill for its prosecution. The movement has undergone considerable changes, with the end of the "membership" of several countries within MIAMSI, for lack of succession.

Departure for San Calisto MIAMSI Office: Storage and arrangements for the transfer of archives

The temporary closure of the secretariat in San Calisto is a pre-requisite.

The rent is one of the operating expenses that absolutely had to be reduced in view of the drastic reduction in successive budgets.

First, Secretary Ella was asked to reduce her working hours from 5 working days to 2 half-working days per week. This has been done and yet the problem persisted.

She reached her retirement in 2020. Despite the abolition of the wage burden, the problem persisted. For nearly 3 years the office was unoccupied and yet we paid the rent about 400 euros per month along also the other things (telephone, maintenance etc). There were two or three times when the rent was paid with penalties (according to the contract) because the money could not be mobilized quickly. The former B.I. had considered leaving San Calisto and eventually joining Rinascita (with a view to a shared office) or others, but there were some small problems because Rinascita was also looking to leave a rent too expensive for something more modest (financial situation required it). What is done now, and that is why they took some of our boxes of archives. If the former Bureau had succeeded in its approach (the boxes were already made since 2020) and had moved, we would not be talking about it now.

How to continue to pay rent without occupation for more than three (3) years subject to hazards ? Where to find the money to pay and who will pay is the only question to ask at the moment as our main contributor (ACI-France) has problems also and has not yet paid its contribution for the current year

The problem was posed and the debate was made during an online meeting in December 2022.

Then, it was redone and concluded at the zoom meeting of the full members of February 18, 2023 (see my email of February 11 and the agenda which includes in its item 3 "Release for the Bureau of the « MIAMSI of Rome and arrangements to be made »).

The problem was posed to the Administration of the Heritage of the Apostolic See (APSA), the solution was to vacate the premises pending a definitive solution for us and other associations that are in the same situation. The main problem is the fate of our archives, which continues to be discussed.

The Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life, our interlocutor, who does not manage the buildings at most, suggested to us during the meeting on Tuesday, June 20, to maintain a minimum presence by relying on Rinascita Cristiana (our movement in Italy) as UMEC does to receive our letters.

Visit to the Secretariat of State

After the presentation of the Movement by the President, each member of the Bureau introduces himself before the President and he stated the importance of the MIAMSI – and in particular the evangelization of the laity by the respective circles. Archbishop Daniel Pacho then shared the fact that, in his opinion, the human being is transformed through, on the one hand, an external motivation (fear, the law, etc.), and, on the other hand, an inner motivation (the experience of faith, morality, etc.). This leads us to understand the relevance of conversion, because every conversion – conversion of hearts, looks, attitudes – is intimate and personal, appealing to the inner dimension.

Each member took turns by sharing their concerns and insights: the impact of technology on the lives of humans today; advocacy in European and international bodies; witness of the laity by their life in the world; audacity to dare to innovate with creative Hope; etc.

Archbishop Daniel Pacho took up the main lines raised by the members, encouraging them in their mission and reminding them of the eschatological dimension of the Christian's life: at the end of our lives, at the end of time, we will find ourselves in the joy of the Father. It is this conviction that founds the hope that must characterize the life and apostolate of Christians.

With the continuation of exchanges with Dr. Fermina Alvares Alonso, the latter recalled that the Secretariat of State carries the political dimension of the Church, while the Dicastery, the pastoral dimension. She strongly encouraged members to occupy political spaces, including inside the UN, the bodies of the UN system, the Council of Europe, etc., because Christians must be there. These places are opportunities to advance and make human rights happen. Moreover, even if Christians cannot speak explicitly of God, they have, according to her, a powerful means of witnessing to Him implicitly: it is the Social Doctrine of the Church (DSE) and the Catholic anthropology that flows from it. This is a powerful and relevant weapon to help Christians in their political struggle. In addition, she encouraged our members to form a Forum, like the Forum of NGOs of Catholic inspiration, because in the eyes of international institutions, MIAMSI is small but if

inserted in a Forum with several international Catholic organizations, its voice would be stronger.

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Meeting with the Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life

Members meet Dr. Gleison de Paula Souza, Secretary of the Dicastery, Dr. Linda Ghisoni, Undersecretary, and Dr. Philippe Milligan, Jurist at the Dicastery.

As during the first visit this morning, after the usual formalities, including the presentation of the Movement by the President, each member of the Bureau had introduced himself ,the President has stated the importance of MIAMSI. It also addressed some practical questions requiring the help of the Dicastery (preface for the publication for the 60th anniversary of MIAMSI; change of seat of the MIAMSI secretariat; etc.). Then, the members continued sharing, as on the first visit, some of their concerns.

The Dicastery invited MIAMSI to approach its local Italian movement Rinascita to represent it in case of need, which then continues the exchange with the members of the Bureau by emphasizing in particular the following points: relevance of the evangelization of the laity, and the role of the MIAMSI in this sense; pursue Pope Francis' intuition around synodality; to rely on, and deepen, the two master documents, within the anthology of the universal Church that are "Laudato Si" and "Fratelli Tutti" because they propose a whole program, and a whole path of apostolate.

The rest of the exchanges evolved around the following points:

- Echoes of the Representatives in the various bodies
- Flyer and writing of the next LAM and Newsletter
- Update on dues and call for contributions from members of movements/countries
- MIAMSI website: status and improvement
- Directives of the Dicastery + Statutes and RI
- Future General Assembly: What proposal regarding the theme of the next assembly, place (country) and dates?
- 2022-2025 Challenge

Members also addressed the issue of flyers but after discussion, no decision has yet been made on how to update it. They will wait, given the reality of the resources available to date. On the other hand, the Bureau notes that since last year's General Assembly, three LAMs have been published; under the responsibility of the President and the V-P AML and a fourth LAM will be in preparation soon.

Finally, members talked lengthly about our dues, based on data shared by the Treasurer. They are the primary source of income for MIAMSI, so contributions are crucial to the budget; It is therefore crucial that all members double down on their strategy so that all members and country movements can be up-to-date on this issue.

After all these exchanges, the meeting was adjourned for that day.

Under the direction of the President, the members of the Bureau were working to organize the boxes to be sent to the headquarters of MIAMSI and ACI France (3bis rue François Ponsard) and that of ACI Italy. This includes terms and conditions with the Italian Post Office.

After these logistical steps, the session resumed at 10:45 a.m. and started with the prayer of our Secretary.

Members talked about the MIAMSI website. From the outset, confusion is due to the existence of two sites – the old and the new, this one prepared by the Delegate of South America. It is important to address this issue, while asking who will continue to manage the new site – and the resources it requires. In addition, it is important not to lose any data that appears in the old site. The Delegate of South America then indicated that she had done her best to extract from the old site everything she considered important and relevant to publish it on the new site. Still, the old site will not be destroyed or erased, but silenced and made "invisible" so as not to fuel confusion between the two sites. But access, if necessary, to the old site can be granted to any member of the Bureau and any member of MIAMSI.

Furthermore, if the Vice-President of South America is willing to continue to manage the site – which is welcomed by the Bureau, as is her "performance" in the architecture of the new site – the Bureau should consider that this management will be carried out in the future by another external person and expert on the subject. Finally, the same Delegate will redirect all access to the old site to the new site in case of any "click" of a user on the old site.

Then, the Bureau looks at the Dicastery Directives and the new Statutes of MIAMSI, approved by the Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life in July 2022. After discussion, the Bureau decided that an official letter would be sent to all Relays inviting them to rework or amend their Statutes or Regional Regulations, and/or write new ones, in order to ensure that they comply with the new MIAMSI Statutes dated July 2022.

In another item of the agenda, the Bureau addressed the XVIth General Assembly.

As for the XVI General Assembly, one possibility would be Portugal, but the members agreed to continue to discern on the spot while considering the subsequent modalities as well as a possible Plan B.

Whatever happens, the XVI General Assembly cannot be held beyond December 31, 2025, that is, it cannot take place in 2026, even if the previous one took place in March 2022 and this, by decision of the Dicastery.

Finally, it is important for the Office to consider the 2022-2025 Challenge. The President acknowledges that there was some kind of failure in this regard, as it should have been proposed immediately with the Final Message at the end of the XV General Assembly of Rome 2022, but for one reason or another, this could not be done. Since then, no Challenge has been formally identified and some country movements are requesting it. Therefore, members will reflect on this question on the basis of the proposal made by the Inter-Islands.

In total the meeting ended with the feeling of the work accomplished and most of the planned topics were discussed.

III – Echoes of the MIAMSI consultation with Pax Romana on Wednesday, June 21, 2023 by Father Richard Arce, Ecclesiastical Assistant

Dear friends:

I want to share with you that the meeting with Pax Romana was very good. I feel that we can join forces, as the report we received, says relatively easily. In Latin America, for example, relations are almost natural because we coincide in some countries and we see each other quite often in the ecclesial organizations of each country.

I don't know how this is where you live, but I think if we don't know where to find the people of Pax Romana, maybe we can ask them themselves and they will suggest where to look.

The challenge of common formation can be a way to mobilize also the interests of our dear movement and, perhaps, to energize it a little more. It may even be an opportunity to access countries where the presence of the movement was not so strong before and now it is weakened, or perhaps no longer exists. In Latin America, for example, we no longer have people, neither in Chile, nor in Mexico, nor in Argentina (these were places where the movement was present and very active). Perhaps we can, through some contacts they may have, revive the movement there.

In addition, they told us about a course on "Life Review" (or something like that) that they did recently via Zoom, in coordination with CELAM (Latin American Episcopal Council), and that they think they can repeat and if possible replicate on other continents. Maybe we can join and contribute... and perhaps we can thus think of ways to revive some of the more declining parts of our movement and to contribute to the universal Church our charism and spirituality that we consider so precious.

IV – Celebration of the 60th anniversary of MIAMSI

We will soon celebrate the 60th anniversary of MIAMSI (1963-2023). It will be on September 16, 2023 at Marseille, France (Centre le Mistral, 11impasse Flammariion 13001 Marseille) where you are all cordially invited to take part physically or by videoconference or to join in the event. The link for the zoom will be communicated later.

On this occasion, it is planned to launch a book entitled "The apostolate in independent circles throughout the world". It is an important collection of testimonies and reflections on the history, experience and challenges of our movement that we are invited to obtain.

Indeed, alongside the ACI-France, which organizes in this place its traditional back-to-school seminar for the coordinators of territories, and our guests, the International Bureau will be present and will attend the various highlights of this meeting which will include two round tables, a Eucharistic celebration and the launch of the aforementioned book.

Knowing that for many of you you will not have the opportunity to share these moments, we invite you to commune and celebrate with the members of your respective movements this event that will galvanize us and encourage us to continue our efforts in the evangelization of our living environments.

May Faith, Hope and Charity dwell in our lives and responsibilities.

V-1: Reminder of contributions

We thank all movements that are up to date with their membership fees or that have paid partially with the commitment to pay and we ask those who have not yet been able to do so to pay them as soon as possible. For many we are waiting for the 2020-2021, 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 dues. The Bureau recalls that the official year of MIAMSI runs from 1 October to 30 September of the following year. Each country, which has its own year of operation, communicates at the beginning of the year the renewal of contributions,

By taking into account the actual number of members and inviting everyone to face this statutory obligation. From these data, the treasurer makes her provisional plan for the entry of contributions. Out

From this LAM, the treasurer will write to each relay leader and each movement manager.

At the national level to invite them to fulfil this obligation on time. Contribution arrears are also expected.

We remind you that the membership fee is requested at the beginning of each year and at the latest in the first half of the year and that your financial participation is vital for our movement and allows us to meet our commitments and operating obligations.

As a reminder, MIAMSI asks for a share of US\$ 5 (or € 5) per member per year.

Payment can be made by bank transfer to Crédit Lyonnais Paris:

Holder: MIAMSI –

Bank: Crédit Lyonnais: 30002 - Agency: Paris Passy: 00428

Account: 0000006784B Key: 97 - IBAN: FR29 3000 2004 2800 0000 6784 B97ou at the

Banque du Vatican – IOR (Institute for Vatican Works)

US\$ account

MIAMSI

Account No. 21401001

IBAN: VA62001000000021401001

CODICE BIC: IOPRVAVX or IOPRVAVXXX

Euro account

MIAMSI

Account No. 21401003

IBAN: VA08001000000021401003

CODICE BIC: IOPRVAVX or IOPRVAVXXX

V-2: WORD FROM THE TRESORIERE

I come to make an appeal for the collection of MIAMSI dues because otherwise the International Bureau will have serious difficulties in managing to pay all its expenses and monetary obligations of operation. Thus, all movements are invited to pay their contributions and also their arrears that have not been made so far.

We are waiting for the contributions of 2021, 2022 and 2023. The office reminds you that the official budget year of MIAMSI runs from 1 to October to 30 September of the following year.

We also encourage anyone who can really make an effort beyond the statutory \$5 a year to do so, as it would be vital to our movement.

Goodwill or possible generous souls can support us with their donations at the address at the bottom and we are all invited to approach us.

As a reminder, MIAMSI asks for a share of US\$ 5 (or € 5) per member per year.

Details of our bank accounts are given in the paragraph above.

On behalf of the International Bureau, I send you a big THANK YOU here!

Asunción MEXIA - Trésorière du MIAMSI

VI – MIAMSI database

In order to update our Database and the MIAMSI website, please send us updated information on your movements and send them by email to the secretariat. Do not forget to also send us your projects, photos, reports, etc., and especially allow us to consider avenues of reflection for all countries.

In addition to updating our database, sharing your realities, your experiences through our site allows a mutual enrichment of the different movements / countries of MIAMSI.

VII – Miscellaneous information

- Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life: Annual Meeting of Moderators

Dates to remember:

- ACI-France: University of Strasbourg Holidays from Thursday 13 July to Sunday 16 July 2023

- European relay:

- World Assembly of Catholic-inspired INGOs in Rome:

Good reading and good work to all.

The International Bureau