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## International Mineralogical Association



### FROM THE PRESIDENT

#### NEXT STOP KOBE

This issue of *Elements* will be the last before our 19<sup>th</sup> General Meeting in Kobe. It is a matter of great sadness that one of our longest-serving and most distinguished Councillors, Werner Schreyer, has recently died. A fitting tribute to Werner by Walter Maresch is published on this page.

The Kobe programme will, as usual, include two meetings of the council and two business meetings at which national representatives will be able to make their views known on the performance and future of IMA. Even in the four years since the last general meeting in Edinburgh, enormous changes have occurred in the way communication occurs between the members of scientific organizations. Scientific publishing is in a state of considerable turmoil. For IMA, *Elements* presents an unprecedented opportunity. Council has had preliminary discussions, by e-mail, on a number of initiatives to strengthen IMA in this fast-changing world. Some of these ideas are listed below, and we would welcome the input of IMA members in general.

A new position of Communications Officer should be created in Council, responsible for providing copy to *Elements* and for obtaining news material from member societies, commissions and working groups.

An IMA medal recognizing distinction in mineralogy should be instituted, with the aim of becoming the most prestigious international mineralogical award.

Commissions and working groups have contributed to the mineralogical community mainly by sponsoring sessions at meetings. Currently they are composed solely of individuals nominated by the national societies. We should consider opening membership to all members of IMA and making them in part international, electronically active newsgroups.

We need to consider co-organization of meetings with other mineralogical and geochemical organizations and to have a long-range meetings plan.

We must solve our problems with sending and collecting membership dues, a topic I discussed at length in *Elements* in February 2006.

In the long term, after our 2010 meeting in Budapest, we need to break the tradition that the chairman of the organizing committee of the general meeting automatically becomes president. The four-year period of presidency is too long. Before the meeting the president-elect is very busy and has little time to learn the ways of IMA. Afterwards, the new president relaxes, exhausted. I speak with personal experience here. The president of IMA should be a distinguished mineralogist, elected by the international community, and the position should not simply be an outcome of the success of a national bid to run a general meeting.

Please let me have your views on any of these topics. If IMA is supported by your national mineralogical organization, IMA is your society. I look forward to meeting some familiar faces in Kobe, and I wish the organizers the best of success in what promises to be an outstanding meeting.

Ian Parsons  
President