

REPORT

Third **ILAC** General Assembly Rio de Janeiro (19–20 October 1999)

<http://www.ilac.org>

ILAC, the international cooperation between various laboratory accreditation schemes operated throughout the world, was founded over twenty years ago and formalized as a cooperation when 44 national bodies signed the MoU in 1996 in Amsterdam.

In her report to the General Assembly, Mrs. Collins (Chair) gave a summary of activities since the previous GA and focused on key issues such as the permanent secretariat, closer liaison with IAF, facilitation of a global MRA of accreditation body competence and the admission of new Members.

An important item on the agenda was the ILAC Multilateral Recognition Arrangement. Four supporting documents had been developed and it was decided that following the positive postal ballot on the documents, applications for membership of the ILAC Arrangement could be accepted immediately. The GA encouraged EA and APLAC to apply to be signatories to the Arrangement since the mutual evaluation conducted by them had been accepted by the GA.

Reports from ILAC Committees

- *Accreditation Policy Committee* (which deals with the approach of accreditation bodies to the assessment and accreditation of laboratories, the establishment of agreements between accreditation bodies and related policy areas) has developed the above-mentioned documents for the MRA and prepared a work program including continuation of the liaison with IAF, consideration of the legal aspects of ILAC work and development of further documents and guides.
- *Technical Accreditation Issues Committee* (which is involved in the investigation of technical issues related to accreditation, and the development of technical documentation related to ILAC activities) has finalized three documents and advanced with the draft application guidance for the ISO/IEC 17025 Standard. The GA has adopted these documents and accepted the recommendation of the Committee to use the EAL R2 *Expression of the Uncertainty of Measurements in Calibration* for a maximum of two years as a requirements document for the Arrangement signatories. This Committee has undertaken the

revision of OIML D 10 and a draft will be circulated soon.

- *Laboratory Liaison Committee* (which provides a means of interaction and exchange of ideas between ILAC and the laboratory community) reported advances in most items of the 1998–2000 Work Program.
- *Public Affairs Committee* (which is involved in the publication of ILAC documents, newsletters and other information) reported on significant developments of the ILAC web site, wide-ranging distribution of information on ILAC and plans for development of an inter-linked series of databases on accredited facilities and accreditation bodies.

Reports from other international organizations in liaison with ILAC

- The IAF representative gave an outline of recent activities, including intensification of cooperation with ILAC. It was stressed that both bodies are interested in harmonized and globally consistent conformity assessment and that will be the first area of cooperation.
- The OIML representative gave information on OIML activities that can be of interest to ILAC and on the recent establishment of an SC on *Conformity Assessment*. The OIML is interested in closer cooperation with ILAC on conformity assessment and accreditation issues and in a trilateral BIPM/ILAC/OIML cooperation on issues such as terminology and uncertainty.
- On behalf of the BIPM Mr. Kaarls gave a report on the recent CGPM session and the signing of the agreement on *Mutual recognition of national measurement standards and calibration certificates issued by national metrology institutes*. Representatives of the *Convention du Mètre*, ILAC and the OIML will meet at the BIPM in February 2000 to discuss matters of common interest and to identify possible joint actions.

The next ILAC General Assembly together with a 3-day Technical Conference will be held in Washington, DC from 29 October to 3 November 2000. ■