

International Mineralogical Association

Activities' Report - Year 2019

Roberta Oberti (CNR-IGG)

1. Introduction

Founded in 1958, the IMA is the world most important organization aimed at coordinating and promoting mineral sciences, in particular modern studies of the chemical-physical properties of minerals and their synthetic analogues, their use to develop industrial production and technological applications, to preserve cultural heritage, to improve human health and make it safer, to make mineral classification and conservation in the museums more rational and effective. Making the public aware of these scientific results and of their impact on human health and wellness as well as on the preservation of the environment is a major issue for the IMA. IMA organizes scientific and managing meetings, promotes international cooperation among the present 39 member societies and represents them in the International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS).

2. Main activities carried on by the IMA during 2019 relevant for Italy and for CNR

2019 was a sort of transition year between the four-year meeting held in Melbourne in 2018 and the General Assembly to be held in 2020 in Krakow during the European Mineralogical Conference, when IMA officers and commission members should have been renewed. The President in charge for the 2018-2020 term, Patrick Cordier (UniLille) has been working hard to improve involvement and role of the European mineralogical community in the IMA. Cordier also spent many efforts to promote an International Year of Mineralogy to be held in coincidence with the 2022 IMA Meeting in Lyon and the bi-centennial of the death of René Just Haüy, one of the fathers of modern mineralogy and crystallography. This project was carried on together with Michele Zema (UniPv and IUCr, as well as CNR-IGG associate scientist); at the end of a series of meetings, the UNESCO has decided to dedicate 2022 to the International Year of Basic Science for Sustainable Development (YBSSD), in the frame of which the Year of Mineralogy will be organised by IMA. In this context, a number of events will be organised also in Italy aimed at increase society's perception of the relevance and impact of modern mineralogy. YBSSD and the Year of Mineralogy will be supported also by the International Union of Crystallography (IUCr), where CNR acts as the Italian representative and where the Italian community as well as some CNR Institutes are very active. YBSSD should definitely be approved by UN in December 2020.

IMA awarded the 2019 Medal of Excellence in Mineralogical Sciences to Eiji Ohtani (Tohoku University, Japan), a pioneer in the study of HP and ultra HP behaviour of minerals, which has provided exciting insights for our understanding of the evolution of the inner Earth. This subject is of great interest for the Italian mineralogical community, who is very active in this field. The medal lecture should have been delivered during EMC2020 and followed by a number of related sessions. At the moment, EMC2020 is postponed to August 2021.

The 9th International Conference Mineralogy and Museums (MM9), another meeting of major interest for the Italian mineralogical community, had been organised by the IMA Commission on Museum in Sofia in July 2020. It was also postponed to 2021.

3. Activities carried on by Roberta Oberti within the Union during 2019 and impact on the Italian scientific community

The Italian representative had several collaborative exchanges with the IMA president, the IMA secretary Hans-Peter Schertl (Bochum Univ.) and the IMA councillor Marco Pasero (UniPi), and has promptly informed the Italian mineralogical community using the mailing list of the Società Italiana di Mineralogia e Petrologia.

4. Evaluation of the participation in terms of benefits and membership cost

The IMA is the most important international organization for mineral sciences. It is crucial that the Italian community (there represented by the CNR) plays a proper role at the international level, and is proactive to solicit IMA decisions. Moreover, the annual fees for IMA membership (360 \$) are really low if compared to the benefits that can be obtained.

5. Evaluation of Italians' attendance and how to improve interest and involvement

The Italian contribution to scientific initiatives of IMA in 2019 (as in the previous years) was important and appreciated.

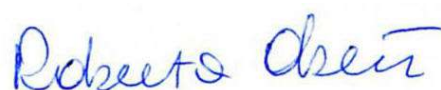
6. Italian experts with important roles within the Union or within related Commissions and Programs

IMA officers do not represent their countries but their expertise and roles. Italian participation to IMA activities has always been characterized by a strong involvement and a high profile, even in the presidential role (Stefano Merlino (UniPi) 1994-1998). At present, Marco Pasero (UniPi) is serving both as Councillor and as vice-chair of the IMA Commission on new minerals, nomenclature and classification, the most active in the IMA. A number of further Italian researchers is serving in the IMA Commissions: Alessandro Gualtieri (UniMoRe) is vice-chair of the newly approved working group on "Asbestos, asbestiform minerals, and other respirable minerals that pose potential negative health risks", in which Giovanni Andreozzi (UniSapienza and CNR-IGAG associate) and Giancarlo Della Ventura (UniRomaTre) are serving as members. Cristian Biagioni (UniPi) is the Italian member of the Commission on new minerals, nomenclature and classification, Paola Comodi (UniPg) is serving as secretary of the Commission on physics of minerals, in which Francesco Di Benedetto (UniFi) and Mauro Prencipe (UniTo) are serving as members.

7. Conclusions

In 2019, the involvement of Italian researchers in IMA activities has been important and proactive, and was greatly appreciated. The Italian mineralogical community has been timely informed on each activity, and its efforts have been properly highlighted on the IMA stage.

Signature

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Roberto Ober".

June 17, 2020