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2021 CIBJO Congress closes out with hybrid event, as General Assembly gathers in person in Vicenza



The CIBJO General Assembly in session in Vicenza, Italy, on March 17, 2022. On the podium (from left) are Gaetano Cavalieri, CIBJO President; Roland Naftule, CIBJO Vice President; and Pramod Agrawal, CIBJO Vice President. Joining virtually is Philip Olden, out President of CIBJO's Responsible Sourcing Commission

MILAN, ITALY: MARCH 17, 2022 — The World Jewellery Confederation (CIBJO) wrapped up its 2021 congress in person, with a meeting of the General Assembly in Vicenza, Italy, on March 17, 2022, which also was broadcast live via the Internet to members not able to attend the event physically. It was the final session of the congress that had begun virtually, with online sessions taking place between November 1 and 4, and then again from November 15 through 18,

The event was hosted by the Italian Exhibition Group.

The General Assembly Meeting was ground-breaking, because it was the first CIBJO Congress event that was designed specifically as a hybrid event. By its start, some 126 individuals had registered, with about 62 indicating that they would attend in person. Actual attendance was higher, since the event was conducted during the VicenzaOro trade show and additional guests attended.

In total, close to 150 people participated during the course of the event, both in-person and virtually.

“Unlike the civil conflicts in Western, Central and Southern Africa 20 years ago, gemstone and precious metal deposits are not primary factors in this current conflict. But that does not mean that we are disconnected to the tragedy – not as human beings, nor as business enterprises. We have customers who are dismayed by what they are seeing play out before them day by day, and we have members, colleagues and friends who have been impacted personally, both directly and indirectly,” he continued.

The CIBJO President suggested how the industry should respond to the new events. “First and foremost, we are always obliged to act according to the letter of the law in the legal jurisdictions where we operate,” he stated. “Because, the sanctions regimes differ from country to country, CIBJO urges all members of the industry to consult with their national associations, so as to ascertain what can be done and what cannot be done in the country in which they reside.”

“If there was ever any doubt about the relevance and importance of trade associations in our industry, and belonging to trade associations, no questions should be asked any longer. Of course, it is up to each and every trade association to make certain that it has the up-to-date information and tools to serve its members. As always, CIBJO will do all that it can to aid and assist,” Dr. Cavalieri said.

In his opening address to the gathering, CIBJO President Gaetano Cavalieri remarked how the COVID crisis, which had forced the cancelation of the congress in 2020 and the decision to conduct the of the 2021 congress as mainly a virtual event, had been eclipsed by the new conflict in the Ukraine.

“We talk a lot about the new normal, and it would seem today that part of that ‘normality’ is learning to live in a constant state of crisis,” he said. “Just one month ago, COVID-19 was right at the top of our agenda. Today it seems to have been replaced by the conflict in Eastern Europe, and the scenes of the type that that, previously, the majority of us had only heard about from our parents and grandparents.”



Attendees of the in-person General Assembly in Vicenza. Close to 80 people attended the physical event, while a further 70 joined online.



In addition to the regular business of the General Assembly, the meeting on March 17 featured three panel discussions. The first looked at CIBJO’s involvement in the development of a grass roots jewellery industry in Africa, with the involvement of the newly formed African Jewellery Industry Committee.

The second panel focused in the inclusion of the watch federations into CIBJO and discussion about the role of watches in the World Jewellery Confederation.

Longo Mulaisho-Zisner presenting the newly formed Jewellery & Gemstone Association of Africa to the CIBJO General Assembly on March 17, 2022.

The third panel looked at the impact of COVID-19 on way that CIBJO and the industry will operate in the future. It included an in-depth look at the future role of the metaverse in the jewellery industry.

CIBJO is the international jewellery confederation of national trade organisations. CIBJO's purpose is to encourage harmonisation, promote international cooperation in the jewellery industry and to consider issues which concern the trade worldwide. CIBJO's chief mission is to protect consumer confidence in the industry. CIBJO is the sole jewellery industry organisation to have Special Consultative Status with the United Nation's Economic & Social Council (ECOSOC) and is a member of the UN Global Compact.