

Message of Francesco D'Aprile  
Chair of ICMCI  
Johannesburg, Sept 25, 2013



Dear Colleagues, Chairs of IMCs and Trustees of ICMCI,

When I was thinking about this moment - to share with you my view and perspective on ICMCI after my two years experience as Chair of this organisation - I asked myself how, today, can I **add value** to the discussion that is needed in order for the most appropriate decisions to be taken to stimulate the growth of ICMCI?

My first task today is to report to you on what we have done during the past two years.

Secondly, I would like to share with you what I have learnt, as I think this can be useful to help you address and manage what are the next important steps in our future development.

What we have done?

Two years ago, when we started out in Taipei, we were asked by all Trustees to invest our time and financial resources, as well as our professional energy and effort, in order to make ICMCI a more professional organization – one that would provide valuable services to its members; and then to design a new and self sustainable future financial model for our association.

The essence of the Breakthrough Strategy projects was focused on achieving these critical goals.

Today, thanks to the professional work programme developed by the members of the ExCom and other volunteers, supported by Alinda van Bruggen as Programme Manager and now by Reema Nasser as Executive Director, we have

- created new products/services to sell and thereby generate new revenue
- designed and implemented a new operational model for ICMCI, moving from an organization based on the work of volunteers to a more professional organization in terms of executive support

I have asked a number of our project leaders to create short and informal videos, outlining the key areas of content within each project, so that you are fully aware about what is happening and is going to happen and **the ways in which this will affect the style and content of our cooperation over the short term.**

Talking about content and what I simply call “products and services”:

- now our **framework for the CMC standard and accreditation processes** are designed in a more professional way and these documents and processes can be easily communicated to, and understood by, our stakeholders and academies, thereby forming the basis for professional relationships with these key partners, as well as forming a

basis for our professional publications. When I think about this project, I always refer to the approach taken by other global, well known professional associations that have successfully designed and implemented at global level " a means of selling on a professional and commercial basis" the intellectual capital they have accumulated in terms of knowledge and professional certification. Now ICMCI is in the position of being able to design a series of professional publications that can effectively promote the framework of the CMC standards and the accreditation process. These packages can be sold as part of a professional development program to business schools, academia, IMCs, MC courses managed by business banks.- and so on. This is a great result, achieved thanks to the professional involvement of Caroline Lumb, formerly Head of IC UK.

- we are now in the third year of the **Constantinus International Award**. This is important, as only when we are publicly proud of and celebrate our own professional successes can we invite others to pay attention to the value that we add.

During the course of our 2 years ExCom mandate, we have tested the Constantinus model and applied it in Taipei, Orlando and now, this year, in Johannesburg.

-In the past week I have had a really fruitful exchange of ideas with Viktoria Olskaia, President of the Gabriel Al Salem Foundation that is managing the Gabriel Al Salem Award for Management Consultants. This link was facilitated by Elena Yuzkova who is leading the organisation of this Award that is planned next year in Kiev.

- in June I was invited to attend to the Constantinus Europe Award ceremony organised by FEACO in Rome. I must thank Alfred HARL for the warm and "strong" invitation extended to me.

This shows that the concept of the award adds significantly to our overall promotion of the value provided by the management consulting industry! So we were right in setting up this project, thanks to the input of Ilse Ennsfellner and to our colleagues within the Austrian Association of Management consultants, UBIT.

Both events, managed by our stakeholders, have similar purposes with different perspectives (ie territorial perspectives). I think that now is the right time to design a more clear value proposition for each Award, to achieve a win win outcome in terms of future co-ordination and cooperation. We are at the stage that, without something different and new, there is a risk of creating confusion in the market place, and which will hamper us in achieving our agreed goals. I strongly believe that ICMCI, as sole worldwide organisation in the management consulting industry, should lead this process. We should seriously consider this in our discussions during this Congress.

- ICMCI is now ready to play an active role within an environment where professionals develop their Management Consulting skills. First of all, I am thinking of our relationships with the **Academy**.
  - o we are proud to have the first directory of **Academic Fellows**, thanks to the powerful support of Calvert Markham and Mike Thompson
  - o we have designed the framework for **Accredited Management Consulting Courses**, a new service that ICMCI will manage together with the IMCs, in

order to create a global directory of Management Consulting Courses recognized by ICMCI. Here in Johannesburg we will talk about the related business and operational model and Calvert Markham, who has successfully designed and coordinated this project, will facilitate it.

- o we have activated a strong link with the **Academy of Management (AOM)**. I delivered a speech to its conference in Boston in August 2012, introducing ICMCI; we have published an article in their magazine; we have included an article written by them in one recent issue of Meridian. Those two environments, the Academic environment and the Professional environment, are now talking to and with each other, and we are both growing through these regular and mutually beneficial connections and communications.

This is a pure institutional activity useful to promote the value of the ICMCI and CMC brands, developing, in a concrete way, what I call the "co-brand strategy". I will come back to the value of our brands when I will talk about sponsorships. I also really need to thank Ilse Ennsfellner for her vision in forging these connections that have led to fruitful discussions.

- We have created a new accreditation model for the Consulting Firms, the **CMC Firm**, with the first accredited CMC firm (a big Chinese Consulting Firm); and we have firm ideas about a new business and operational model we can discuss here in Johannesburg. The CMC firm is a new project where we will create a global list of Consulting Firms accredited by ICMCI, alongside our National IMCs. This represents a new and powerful tool that will support our global and national organizations in promoting CMC accreditation, together with the growth of the Management Consulting industry as a whole. With the CMC firm we are starting to approach the consulting firms, focusing on those firms that are not in the top and largest bracket, but consulting firms that play a key role at national level and that are perhaps missing out on potential for successful international visibility and connections. I was directly involved in this project and I have to say that, without the vision and determination of Genevieve Bonin, supported by the trust of the MCC China, this result would not have been achieved.
- Finally we have successfully launched the first **Global Management Consulting Conference**. We had an incredible success with the event in Vilnius in July 2013, with more than 250 attendees representing 40 nations. We will have a further conference next year in Seoul - South Korea.

There are several ways to view the value of such conferences:

- a) focusing on the money. No profit = No conference
- b) of course managing risks and not losing money are important – but so is the perspective of these conferences as a means of promoting our profession, to take inspiration in designing something new, to develop networks and talk with our stakeholders, again... to support our ICMCI and CMC brands. Inviting key speakers representing our key stakeholders... The message is that ICMCI is "in" the market; ICMCI "is" a key player in the market. After Vilnius, we can truly say that!

Rob Wagenaar , thank you for your vision and determination in leading this project and achieving this result, involving our Lithuanian friends coordinated by Aleksandras Abisala

and his staff.

Talking about a new operational model for ICMCI, we have today two legs that will make ICMCI able to walk in the next future

- The first leg is the Executive director. We have now an **Executive Director**, Ms Reema Nasser. This is a clear sign that ICMCI is becoming a stronger organization. One of the main purposes within the job description of the Executive Director is to increase partnerships and forge communications with our members, as well as to promote and manage the new operational models required to take forward the new products and services that are now designed and ready to use.

It was not so easy to achieve this result and manage the related recruitment process. There was the imperative to design a job description. There was an open call for candidates, giving rise to a powerful shortlist; then the final choice. Here the role of Tim Miller was a key success factor in the achievement of this concrete and tangible result within the Breakthrough Strategy projects. Today Reema Nasser, Executive director of ICMCI is, together with us, ready to professionally support each of you during this Congress.

- The second leg is **The Greenhouse IMC**. This is a virtual IMC, managed by ICMCI, with the purpose of supporting Management Consultants in countries where we do not have members – helping them, for example, to achieve CMC certification and to set up, if needed, a local IMC able to manage the CMC certification process in that country. We have designed the concept and we have chosen CMC Canada as our partner in managing the secretariat activity for Greenhouse IMC.

Tim Miller, together with Dwight Mihalicz and others, worked extremely hard on this project. Now we are at the final stage of signing the formal agreement with CMC Canada and to start up our activities.

In actual fact therefore, we have new products and services ready to be promoted and sold, and a new organization structure well fitted to handle this. I think this is something really new and distinctive, providing alignment with the stated needs of our members and with the mission of the ICMCI.

But I want to add something more, to help our mutual discussion in assessing and reflecting on these many concrete results:

I think that it is time for ICMCI today to approach a key and strategic issue related to its value proposition and associated business and operation model.

Firstly

- in Taipei we were asked by our IMCs to design for ICMCI a new and self sustainable financial model;
- in Orlando last year we had to guarantee that all our activities and services would be managed within the existing membership fee structure, ie without increasing the current level of

membership fees.

- some IMCs are suffering national problems related with a decrease in the numbers of their members and associated financial implications
- after playing a leadership role for decades, today a number of key IMCs are suffering in term of value proposition and they have to focus on new initiative and new strategies in their own countries; thereby affecting their approach to and with ICMCI. They are endeavouring to re-design the nature of the "contract" between ICMCI and the national IMCs. Please also consider an old and well known structural issue which affects the depth of the relationship between each IMC and the ICMCI. I am thinking here of the periodic turnover of members on national boards, leading to the involvement of new members who are not familiar with ICMCI. It means that every time Trustees and those who are linking the national IMC with ICMCI have almost to start from scratch – to refer, explain and ask for trust in developing the cooperation between all of the players. They are always successful, but this takes energy and time.

On the other hand, up until now, the value produced by ICMCI has been based on an operational model where - from one side - ICMCI has produced value (CMC certification, ACP, ATP, now the Accredited management Consulting courses, CMC firm, ...) and on the other side our IMCs are charged to promote and 'sell' this value at national level.

If we exclude the CMC certification process, which works very well, up to this present moment, all other projects have not been successful for the simple reason that, with the exception of between 3 and 4 IMCs, all others IMCs have decided not improve such services at national level. The reasons given are: an organisation that is not strong enough; lack of available skills and competences; divergent national priorities; variable levels of connections at national level with their own stakeholders, ..... On these issues, ICMCI does not have the power or ability to influence the set of priorities and activities agreed at national level.

The result is that, after investing a lot of time, professional energy and money in designing such professional tools, the large majority of our members have not been keen to sell on these tools, and thereby forgoing opportunities to generate financial resources for themselves as well as for ICMCI.

Today I am asking myself: how can ICMCI design a self sustainable financial model, and how can we generate new incremental revenues if the operational model in selling the value produced is reliant solely on the role of the IMC. IMCs set their list of priorities based principally on national issues and assets, which can be vastly different from the set of priorities agreed within ICMCI.

I need to mention here the great role that our Treasurer, Sorin Caian, has played in managing the financials of ICMCI, managing the existing model in this time of crisis, managing relationships with our members that were going through tough financial situations, and providing information requested by members of ExCom, I would say, on daily basis (the budget of ICMCI is based on income of around 70k per year and the BS budget is 100k), and also appreciating third party difficulties in providing and collecting data. In addition to the risk within ICMCI of losing revenue and members, we must consider the situation of our members who are experiencing tough financial circumstances. These are not viewed as "criminal members" - thanks to the approach, style and professionalism of a great gentlemen that I am been proud to work with. Thanks Sorin.

Now, finally, ICMCI has an Executive Director; the Greenhouse IMC is ready to start and has the

opportunity – and this is my view – to transform the scope of its activity by playing a direct role in the global market without competing with the local IMCs; designing local and customised agreements with each IMCs. We have products ready to be sold, the local IMCs could reap the benefits of this in terms of image, influence and revenue, by promoting such products at national level, adding professional resources, but leaving to ICMCI the role of managing this tools directly, especially in countries where the local IMCs are not keen to manage this directly. The international group of volunteers that has worked on this for years within the various working groups have proved an incredible asset in terms of professional resources ready to be used, together with other professionals, in managing these projects.

Playing a direct role in the international market is also a tangible way to evidence the value emanating from the ICMCI and CMC brands. If we look for sponsorship at international level (and we should certainly be doing this professionally and effectively), those potential international sponsors are looking to get something back. In my experience, till now, when we have tried to move in this direction and sought sponsorship, there has not been enough interest to support us. It means that, up to now, the value behind the ICMCI and CMC brand , for such kind of projects, has not been strong enough.

Another way to increase the awareness of the ICMCI and CMC brands is related with our connections with the main international stakeholders and the reputation of ICMCI in this environment. I have dedicated a lot of time and professional effort in consolidating our links with the **EBRD**. A milestone that I would like to share with you, as a tangible result achieved in these two years, is a move to a higher plan in terms of our relationship. Now ICMCI is a real partner of EBRD, supporting the design of new perspectives in business development in those regions where EBRD focuses its activity, thanks to the role of the Management Consultants. This is impacting on and leading to the launch of projects that involve national and international Management Consultants, as well as ensuring the training of local management consultants in order to increase their skills and level of professional qualification. We have welcomed and hosted key EBRD representatives at all of our events and congresses, opened our doors, and promoted cooperation between our IMCs with the Bank at regional level. Now our cooperation can grow at senior and strategic levels; for the first time EBRD has formally and directly asked ICMCI for support in finalising the design of training programmes for Management Consultants, that will be implemented in some of those regions where they focus their activity. In my view this is something new that moves the level of our cooperation from an institutional basis to concrete, project-led basis.

I need to thank Dilek Macit and all EBRD officials who have followed and worked with us as we have set out along this path.

But something more needs to be developed.

We are behind in our targets:

- in developing our new web site that should include the international CMC directory and related services for our CMCs;
- in designing a concrete and effective new governance model for our organization able to consider the new role and requirements that ICMCI should be playing at global level
- in increasing the number of our members
- in being more effective in managing our processes, starting from the accreditation and

- re-accreditation of our IMCs, to providing services to reflect their increasing needs and new requirements
- in launching the operative phase for the design of the ISO standard in Management Consulting, following on from the success achieved with the EN16114 Standard. We have already started this process, signing a contract with the UNI - Italian Standardization Board in assisting us as Secretariat in this process, there was an open call within the ISO and results were positive, and we are ready to move to the point of setting up a working group for designing the standard. This working group should be led by ICMCI and now we need to identify people who are keen to professionally lead and manage this project.

We are aware of these shortfalls and I am also sorry for these. The absence of concrete results does not mean that no work has been undertaken. There are ideas on the table, working papers already available for all Trustees and these will be considered during our sessions as part of this Congress.

Just to complete this information exercise, our contract with CMI for the Secretariat service is to finish at the end of the year; we are managing the process to select a new service provider through an open call. We have received applications and we are managing the selection process.

Whilst the activities that I have talked about so far today highlight all the new activities and projects that are ready to be implemented, it is also amazing to consider that, thanks to the work of volunteers and Chairs of the Institutional Committees of the ICMCI, the core underpinning activities of our association have been sustained and well managed, to provide the institutional and support services to our IMCs. I am referring to the Professional Standards Committee (PSC led by Calvert Markham), the Membership Committee (MC led by Mark Nesbitt), the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC led by Brian Ing) and the Nomination and Succession Planning Committee (NSPC led by Aneeta Madhok). All of them have worked effectively in two core ways: managing existing obligations and also supporting the related BS committees in designing all of the new initiatives. Thanks to their views and inputs, we were able to keep on a dual track of securing continuity, whilst focusing on innovation in the design and implementation of much needed change. There are proposals for resolutions coming from a number of these Committees that will be discussed during the Congress and voted on during the business meeting.

As you have listened now to this presentation, ICMCI's last two years are not linked with the skills and the leadership of its Chair. ICMCI is much more; ICMCI is an organisation that can attract so much talent from all over the world and benefit from their voluntary and extremely professional work. I am proud to say that, if there are indeed such positive results on the table, these are absolutely thanks to these many individuals, supported by our program manager, executive director and also by Valerie Hamill, our professional secretariat in CMI. I should now like to give these key individuals the floor, because they have been the real driving force behind our results.

But, at the end of this 2 year mandate, after building on the solid foundation that was handed to us, and thanks to this professional support and to the financial resources provided by our members, ICMCI is now ready to play a new and more effective role in the global scenario.

Today ICMCI is not only linked with CMC professional certification; ICMCI is THE global player representing the Management Consulting industry, with a strong knowledge base and

frameworks, with a multiplicity of products and services, with a managerial organization and strong recognition from the academic, economic and institutional environments.

Last year we explored our roots in celebrating our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary and publishing the book of our history; thanks Angelo Kehayas for your professional and key support in this. Now ICMCI is ready to embark upon a new journey, ready to take on its further challenges, with renewed energies and refocused awareness.

This is our scenario today in Johannesburg, we are at this stage!

I have learnt a lot in these two years, thanks to all of you and to all colleagues who have lived together with me through this challenge. I have often asked our colleagues in the ExCom, sitting there, to undress the suit of consultants (who are always keen to advise) and dress the suits of the entrepreneurs, taking decisions, improving things and taking risks. Only in this way today, in this challenging world, can our profession change and improve, and can we change and improve.

We have tried to adopt this approach during these last two years, setting up also pilot projects. It was not such an easy choice for all of us. But it really was a breakthrough, and the best reason to live together through all these common challenges.

I wish ICMCI to continue to live through these challenges; I urge all of you today and tomorrow to live these challenges because we have a lot of professional energy available to expend; the new ExCom is an II team led by Tim Miller, full of this professional energies.

I really believe we are in good hands.

Thanks

Francesco D'Aprile  
Chair of ICMCI 2011- 2013