

INTERPRETASIA

NUMBER 1 • AUGUST 1993

EDITORIAL

Dear Reader,

It is a pleasure to bring to you this first issue of **INTERPRETASIA** – *The CIAP Bulletin*

which has been written and produced by members of the CIAP network.

Conference interpretation is becoming increasingly important in Asia-Pacific, the fastest-growing region of the world, as it attracts more multilingual international conferences. We hope our publication will fill a gap in the conference industry literature in this part of the world and will increase knowledge of conference interpretation and its great usefulness.

Your comments and suggestions are welcome.

The Editor

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WORLD LEADERS SPEAK IN TONGUES

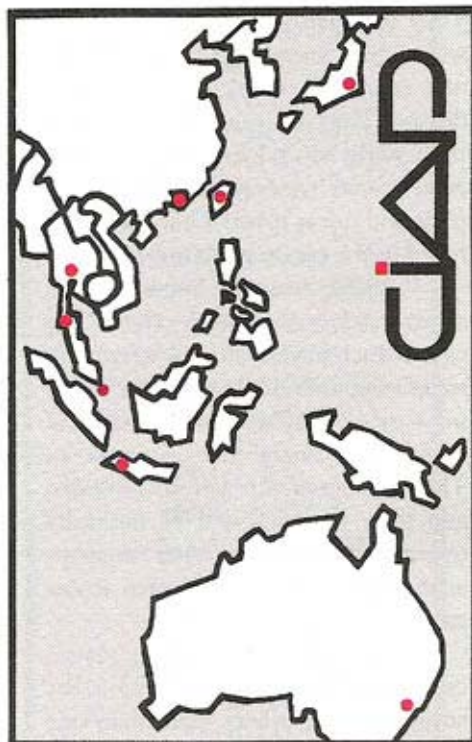
In early July Asia, more specifically Tokyo, was the venue for what has now become the traditional Annual Summit of the leaders of the world's seven most powerful industrial nations.

The Heads of Government of the United States of America, Great Britain, France, Germany, Japan, Canada and Italy meet regularly to discuss the world economic and political situation and to attempt to harmonize their economic policies.

Boris Yeltsin, the Russian leader, was also present.

The Japanese government was busy for months preparing this momentous event which always attracts thousands of media people, as well as a retinue of ministers and advisers. All of them need to be housed, transported and protected from potential acts of terrorism. It is a gigantic task.

But how do the leaders communicate with each other? The topics they discuss



are of global significance and it is of utmost importance that their ideas are communicated accurately to the other members of the group and the world at large. This is why they choose to speak in



The Tokyo Summit, 1993

cont... from page 1

their own language and leave the task of conveying their message to the professionals – qualified conference interpreters.

If you have seen some of the leaders on TV meeting each other, you will have noticed that there are usually one or two unidentified figures just behind them, whispering into their ears throughout the meeting. These are the personal interpreters of each leader. They are highly skilled professionals with a deep knowledge of the political and economic matters their leaders discuss. They are carefully chosen for their abilities and for their absolute professional secrecy. They shun the press and never reveal what they have heard in the course of their duty.

But what about the Summits when several leaders talk to each other? They cannot each have their own interpreter translating from many languages at the same time. They work with a team of professional conference interpreters. They will speak through microphones and their thoughts will be faithfully interpreted into all the other languages at the same time, so that each leader can listen to his own language.

Professional interpreters play a crucial role not only at the Summit, but at any meeting where more than one language is spoken. They ensure a smooth exchange of views between people with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

To organize such a team of professional conference interpreters is a delicate task. The languages required for the Tokyo Summit were Japanese, English, French, German and Italian. This means finding English interpreters with the required skill and experience in French, German, Italian and Japanese; French interpreters with English, German, Italian and Japanese; and so forth. The kind of people who fit the bill are exceptional. Not only that, each one of them has to be screened by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the host country, so as to ensure absolute security, professionalism and language abilities.

For this purpose, the host government works with an experienced interpreter who knows the abilities,

their particular strengths and fields of interest of many other professional interpreters and can judge their suitability for such a demanding assignment.

Most conference interpreters are free-lance professionals who work at meetings all over the world. They have undergone rigorous training, and have qualified in consecutive and simultaneous interpretation. Professional interpreters have extensive general knowledge which is essential to work at conferences on many different subjects. They typically have one or two university degrees before becoming interpreters. Their language knowledge has to be perfect before they can train to become interpreters.



A CIAP interpreter at work

The interpreters hired for the Summit are members of the International Association of Conference Interpreters (AIIC), the only worldwide professional body that guarantees the quality and professionalism of its members by a strict membership selection procedure.

Professional conference interpreters in the Asia-Pacific Region are members of AIIC. A number of them have formed a network of consultant interpreters called Conference Interpreters Asia Pacific (CIAP).

CIAP interpreters worked at the Tokyo Summit together with their colleagues from Europe and North America. They were there to ensure that what each leader said in his own tongue was understood by all the others. The interpreters were not seen, tucked away in their booths behind glass windows overlooking the meeting room. But without them there could have been no Summit. □

HELPFUL HINTS

This regular feature provides helpful suggestions about how to recruit interpreters, what speakers and organisers can do to make the best use of interpretation at a conference, how to arrange a conference room with simultaneous interpretation, on SI equipment and so forth.

Hints for speakers

1 If you are speaking from the rostrum or a lectern and want to understand questions from the floor, PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU HAVE A RECEIVER WITH YOU so that you can listen to the questions as they are interpreted.

2 If you move away from your seat, for instance to point at a slide projection, PLEASE USE A NECK OR LAPEL MICROPHONE; otherwise the interpreters cannot hear you.

3 Interpreters love to interpret speakers who speak off the cuff rather than read their speech. They do not read your speech, they interpret its meaning. Nonetheless, if you have a written text or notes of your speech, GIVE A COPY TO THE SECRETARIAT FOR THE INTERPRETERS, so that they can read it beforehand and understand your message better. They will interpret what you actually say, not what your text says.

Early Recruitment

4 Interpreters are busy people and frequently have engagements months in advance. In order to get the best interpreters closest to your conference venue, contact a consultant interpreter as early as possible so that your interpreters are booked while they are still available. The formal contracts can be signed later. □



Two professional interpreters in their booth at an international conference in Kuala Lumpur, May 1993

HISTORY OF INTERPRETATION

This regular feature of the CIAP Bulletin will cover different aspects of the history of conference interpretation. It will attempt to summarize the views of a different author in each issue

Although the birth of conference interpreting cannot be dated to any specific moment, it has been regularly practiced since World War I. Various inter-Allied meetings, the Paris peace talks and the League of Nations were the inter-governmental settings of conference interpretation as it is known today.

The Peace Conference of 1919 was

London and later became co-director of the University Institute for International Studies in Geneva. Other pioneers of the profession were Antoine Velleman, Robert Cofino, Andre Kaminker and George Kaminker, George Mathieu, and J.F. Rozan.

This group did not specifically train to become interpreters. Recruitment and working methods were on a trial and error basis. Jean Herbert was sent on his mission to London while on leave from the front, because Mantoux was not available. But he, like others, decided to make interpreting his career, instead of looking at it as a stepping stone to other positions. □

Taken from "Origins of Conference Interpreting", by David Bowen, in The Jerome Quarterly, vol. 2, issue 1, Nov-Dec 1986, Georgetown University, Washington DC.



Participants at a seminar on the new Cambodian Constitution, in Phnom Penh, March 1993, the first time simultaneous interpretation from and into Khmer was used

the first major diplomatic gathering at which both French and English were officially used and the conference machinery of the League of Nations followed this precedent. When Germany became a member of the League, interpretation from German was also provided. Individuals or a special team used what was called 'consecutive' interpretation, since the version in the target language followed when the speaker had finished.

At first, the consecutive interpreter was seen as a cross between an almost-diplomat and a very good secretary. Jean Herbert, accompanying the French Finance Minister to London in 1917, was described as the Minister's Private Secretary. At meetings in those days, a speaker would act as if the debate were taking place in his language only. The interpreter had to wait to the end of the speech, which could last up to an hour, and then reproduce it in the first person singular, as if the delegate were repeating his speech in another language.

One of the first conference interpreters was Paul Mantoux, who had taught history at the University of

INTERPRETATION JARGON

This regular column provides definitions of terms used when dealing with conference interpretation

Language combination is the set of languages that a conference interpreter uses professionally. Most interpreters have a professional command of at least three languages and some even more.

Language classification defines the different language skills of an interpreter. The language classification of an interpreter is sanctioned by AII's Committee on Admissions and Language Classification (CACL). An 'A' language is the mother tongue or a language of equal proficiency. Interpreters usually work into their 'A' language from their other languages.

'B' languages are those in which an interpreter is absolutely fluent and can also work into.

'C' languages are passive languages of which interpreters have a thorough knowledge and can work out of into their 'A' and 'B' languages.

When a consultant interpreter is asked to put together a team for a conference, he/she must find interpreters with the right language combination for the conference and with the appropriate language classification to serve the needs of the conference. □

HOW TO RECRUIT CONFERENCE INTERPRETERS

When is simultaneous interpretation necessary?

Mankind has always depended on interpreters to bridge language and cultural gaps. One of the interpreter's most important roles is to facilitate intercultural understanding and harmony. Professional interpreters understand the nuances of different languages and help to bridge the gap between cultures. They listen to a speaker and recompose and deliver the message in another language and cultural context as accurately and sensitively as possible.

Nowadays many conferences are held in a single language, often English, which has become a sort of international lingua franca. Many people can read and sustain a simple conversation in English, but would hesitate to make a speech in a

language they are not really comfortable in. Unfortunately, at many conferences, speakers are told they must deliver their papers or speeches in English. This discourages many experts from participating and makes it harder for the audience to fully appreciate the speakers or even, occasionally, understand them.

At a truly international conference simultaneous interpretation is critical for communication between participants of different languages. It is a matter of courtesy for the host organisation or country to make foreign delegates feel at ease and show them that their ideas and contributions are valued as much as those from English speakers.

How to go about it

TO GET THE TEAM of interpreters best suited to your needs, contact the

continued from page 3

nearest consultant interpreter (see attached list of CIAP members). Consultant interpreters know other interpreters, their expertise and when they are available. The consultant interpreter will contact interpreters prepare contracts and offer a complete service to the conference organiser who will only have to deal with one person.

In Asia-Pacific many are also CIAP consultant interpreters who know working conditions in the region.

Is it affordable?

CONFERENCE INTERPRETING is a highly exacting job that requires exceptional language skills, extensive



Three interpreters chatting with the Director of the Bank of Thailand Training Centre, at a reception during a conference in Bangkok, March 1993

university education, professional training and experience. As with other professions, such as doctors and lawyers, professional work commands professional fees.

The cost of a team of interpreters will depend on several factors: the number of languages used at the

conference; the length of the conference; the number of concurrent meetings requiring interpretation and the availability of interpreters close to the conference venue. The earlier they are booked for a conference the more likely they can be found close to the venue.

The total cost of simultaneous interpretation is only a small part of the overall conference costs. It is usually less than the cost of a banquet, or even of the coffee breaks. If it is planned from the outset and announced in the conference materials, this cost can easily be recovered with increased registration.

continued on page 5

CONFERENCE VENUES

As professional conference interpreters working frequently in convention centres, CIAP associates are keenly interested in the quality of facilities provided in such centres. Conference Venues is a regular feature of the CIAP Bulletin and we start here a series of reports on the major convention centres in the Asia-Pacific Region and their countries. In this issue we list the major convention centres, the maximum capacity of their largest hall and whether or not they have fixed simultaneous interpretation facilities.

MAJOR CONVENTION CENTRES IN ASIA-PACIFIC

CITY	NAME OF CENTRE	MAX. CAPACITY OF MAIN HALL	FIXED S.I. FACILITIES
Adelaide	Adelaide Convention Centre	3500	yes
Canberra	National Convention Centre	1700	yes
Melbourne	World Congress Centre	1500	yes
Sydney	Darling Harbour Convention Centre	3500	yes
Beijing	International Convention Centre	2800	yes
Beijing	China World Trade Centre	1800	yes
Delhi	Ashok International Conference Centre	2000	yes
Hong Kong	Convention & Exhibition Centre	1800	yes
Hong Kong	Pacific Place Conference Centre	250	no
Bali	Nusa Indah Convention Centre	2700	yes
Jakarta	Jakarta Convention Hall	300	yes
Jakarta	Sahid Jaya Convention Hall	2500	no
Medan	Tiara Convention Centre	600	no
Chiba	Nippon Convention Centre	1600	yes
Kobe	International Conference Centre Kobe	4000	yes
Nagoya	Nagoya Congress Centre	3000	yes
Okinawa	Okinawa Convention Centre	1700	?
Tokyo	Tokyo Metropolitan Govt. Conference Centre	800	yes
Tokyo	Intl. Convention Centre Pamiir (Takanawa)	3250	no
Yokohama	Pacifico Yokohama Convention Centre	1500	yes
Seoul	KOEX Conference Centre	500	yes
Seoul	KLI 63 Convention Centre	800	yes
K. Lumpur	Putra World Trade Centre	4000	yes
Auckland	Auckland Convention Centre	1800	?
Manila	Philippine International Convention Centre	400	yes
Singapore	Raffles City Convention Centre	3500	yes
Singapore	International Convention & Exhibition Centre	12000	yes
Colombo	Bandaranaike Memorial Intl. Conference Hall	1500	yes
Taipei	Taiwan International Convention Centre	3300	yes
Bangkok	Queen Sirikit National Convention Centre	5200	yes
Bangkok	Central Plaza Convention Centre	3800	yes
Bangkok	United Nations Conference Centre	1000	yes

INTERPRETER PROFILES

This column will present the profiles of professional interpreters. For this first issue of its Bulletin, CIAP has chosen to present a brief curriculum vitae of each of its consultant interpreters

• **Jean-Pierre ALLAIN**, graduated in conference interpretation and economics University of Geneva. Interpreting since 1971. Lived in Latin America, Europe, Africa and, for the past ten years, in Asia. Member of AIIC since 1972. Languages: English, Spanish, French, German, Portuguese, Dutch.

• **Christine BAYLE-VAN DER MEULEN**, graduated in conference interpretation from ISIT, Catholic University of Paris. BA in English, Sorbonne University. MA in Law from Sorbonne University. Interpreting since 1979. Staff interpreter at the EC for 14 years. Lived in Europe, North America and Asia. Member of AIIC since 1974. Languages: French, English, Italian, Spanish.

• **Socorro BOTERO-BROWNING**, graduated in conference interpretation from Holborn College of Law, Languages and Commerce, London. Interpreting since 1968. Former staff interpreter at United Nations in New York. Lived in Latin America, Europe, North America and, for the past 19 years, in Asia-Pacific. Member of AIIC since 1970. Languages: Spanish, English, French.

• **Ana CASADES-MORGAN**, graduated in conference interpretation from the University of Geneva. Interpreting since 1990. Lived in Europe and Asia. Member of AIIC since 1993. Languages: Spanish, English, French.

• **Yuko MATSUOKA**, graduated from the International Christian University in Tokyo. Interpreting since 1977. Lecturer at Sophia University, Tokyo and at Monterey Institute of International Studies, USA. Member of AIIC since 1981. Languages: Japanese, English.

• **Manuel PASTOR**, graduated in conference interpretation from Georgetown University, Washington D.C., USA. Interpreting since 1980. B.A. Dip. Ed. in English studies from the University of Deusto, Spain. Lecturer in Interpretation studies at Macquarie University, Sydney. Lived in Australia, Europe and USA. Member of AIIC since 1987. Languages: Spanish, English, French.

• **Catherine POUGET-ALDERTON**, MA in languages from the University of Limoges, France; graduated in conference interpretation from PCL School of Languages, University of Westminster, London. Interpreting since 1983. Lived in Europe and Asia. Member of AIIC since 1986. Languages: French, English, Spanish, Portuguese.

• **Robin SETTON**, graduated in conference interpretation from ESIT, Sorbonne University, Paris. BA in Applied Linguistics, MA in Chinese Studies, Sorbonne University, Paris. PhD cand. in Linguistics, CUHK. Currently Director of GITIS, Taipei. Interpreting since 1968. Lived in Europe and Asia. Member of AIIC since 1982. Languages: English, French, German, Chinese.

• **Marie-Christine STREULI**, graduated in conference interpretation from the University of Geneva; Law studies at University of Nancy (France). Interpreting since 1975. Lived in Europe, Latin America, Africa and Asia. Member of AIIC since 1978. Languages: French, English, German, Spanish.

• **Salma TEJPARG-DANG**, graduated in conference interpretation from the University of Geneva. Interpreting since 1975. Lived in Africa, Europe and, for the past 11 years, in Asia. Member of AIIC since 1980. Languages: English, French, German. □

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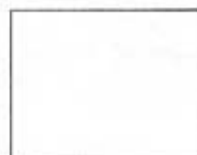
continued from page 4

How To Recruit Conference Interpreters

It is helpful for the cost-conscious organiser to discuss interpretation requirements with a consultant interpreter who can advise on the most suitable way of organising meetings to make the best use of the team of interpreters. The consultant interpreter can also assist with equipment selection, room layout, etc.

Finally, when recruiting interpreters, do not be tempted to skimp. Take only the best professionals, just as you would choose your doctor, your lawyer or your accountant. Otherwise, you might end up paying for interpretation at your conference and not getting your money's worth. □

AIR MAIL ✈
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WHAT IS AIIC?

Founded in 1953, **AIIC (Association Internationale des Interprètes de Conférence - International Association of Conference Interpreters)** is the only world-wide association of professional conference interpreters. AIIC has over 2,500 members in 65 countries and is recognised by the United Nations, the World Bank, NATO, the European Community and many business organisations as the only representative of professional interpreters and the authoritative voice on matters of conference interpreting.

AIIC sets professional standards and working conditions accepted worldwide. Together with the International Organization for Standardisation, AIIC's Technical Committee has drawn up standards ISO 2603-1983 for built-in booths and equipment for simultaneous interpreting and ISO 4043-1981 for mobile booths for use in conference rooms without built-in facilities.

ASSOCIATION
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WHAT IS CIAP?

Conference Interpreters Asia Pacific (CIAP) is a network of consultant interpreters, all members of AIIC, who live and work in the Asia-Pacific region. CIAP was established in 1990 to provide conference interpretation services to the growing conference industry in the region.

Its members advise conference organisers on language requirements, choice of conference venues, technical equipment, seating arrangements and so on, and recruit teams of interpreters suited to the needs of a conference.

CIAP associates can provide simultaneous interpretation teams for English, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, French, Spanish, German, Italian, Portuguese, Russian and other languages.



CONFERENCE INTERPRETERS ASIA PACIFIC

BANGKOK • HONG KONG • JAKARTA • PENANG • SINGAPORE • SYDNEY • TAIPEI • TOKYO

There are CIAP Associates in eight cities in Asia-Pacific. For the consultant interpreter nearest to you, please consult the list of names and contact numbers provided in this issue.