

Update on the position of the Mineralogy and Museums Conference 2016 (M&M8)

Following the joint meeting of the IMA-CM and SMMP held on 30th October 2015 at the Munich Mineral Show, it was decided that in order to try and resolve serious problems that would affect the organisation of the conference, the following letter was written to the conference organisers:

“After the many problems which were discussed during the Joint Meeting of the SMMP/ IMA-CM on Friday 30th October at the Munich Mineral Show which you attended, the officials of the Commission on Museums (IMA-CM), following our own private discussions after the meeting, now feel that we need to take strong action to bring the uncertainty surrounding M&M8 to an end.

We were all deeply shocked by the information that there is still no 100% guarantee that the show, and the conference, will take place at the time and place described by you and your team in the bid documents we received last year. I am sure I don't need to remind you that it is only six months until the start of the conference. We are all agreed in the IMA-CM, and Federico and I said this at the meeting, that this situation is now totally unacceptable.

For delegates travelling from Europe, North and South America, Australia and Africa, long term planning is required so that flights and hotels can be booked but also, more importantly, finances can be organised. In many cases six months, or less, is not long enough for museums and universities to commit such large amounts of money from already stretched budgets for something that has so much uncertainty attached to it. I can already reveal that many potential delegates will not be going to the conference because of this.

It is therefore with a very heavy heart that the IMA-CM has reached the following decision. We urgently ask you to supply us by no later than Friday 21st November 2015, a guarantee, supported by an official document or documents from the Chinese Government, that the conference has full, unqualified permission to go ahead as planned. If we do not receive this guarantee, then we have no choice but to cancel the conference. If that is the case, then the IMA-CM will begin urgent discussions to find a possible alternative venue.

I am sorry it has come to this but I am afraid that after the meeting in Munich, we feel we have no choice. We have taken this decision with some sadness, but we need to be able to tell our colleagues that everything has been organised and set-up to the highest international standards and at the moment we cannot say this.”