

**International Commission for the History and Theory of Historiography**  
**Nomination of the new President**

*ICHTH Bureau Meeting, Poznań, Friday 26 August 2022*

The present Nomination Committee of the Bureau of the International Commission for the History and Theory of Historiography (ICHTH) – established pursuant to Article 9.3 of the ICHTH Constitution by outgoing President Ewa Domańska and consisting of Secretary-General Edoardo Tortarolo, Treasurer Marek Tamm, and Bureau member Verónica Tozzi – was invested with a mandate to nominate the next ICHTH President. The Committee is pleased to nominate Bureau member Antoon De Baets for this position.<sup>1</sup>

Antoon De Baets recently retired as professor emeritus after a career spanning four decades and spent partly at the department of Third World Studies of the University of Ghent, Belgium, and partly at the history department of the University of Groningen, the Netherlands. Over the years, he specialized in the problems of historiography at the crossroads of history, ethics, and human rights. He is a prolific author in this interdisciplinary area, which we will illustrate with three recent examples.

In 2019, he published [Crimes against History](#), a book about the worst forms of censorship of history around the globe. A much needed work in its own right, it also served as a model for the International Federation of Human Rights in Paris – the oldest human rights organization in the world – which, together with the Russian NGO Memorial, published a report, [Russia: Crimes against History](#), in 2021 – only months before the invasion of Ukraine which itself was accompanied by a massive abuse of history.

Last year, Toon edited a Special Issue for the journal of our Commission, [Storia della Storiografia](#), about the freedoms of opinion and expression about history and about the problem when these freedoms are legitimately restricted. This is, of course, a problem for all historians interested in the survival of their profession and it was also the subject of a panel he has organized at the current International Congress of Historical Sciences in Poznań.

And just last month, a major study of his was published in the *International Review of the Red Cross* – the journal of the International Committee of the Red Cross, which is the official guardian of the laws of war. This study is entitled “[The View of the Past in International Humanitarian Law \(1860–2020\)](#).”

In addition to his scholarly work, Toon has founded the [Network of Concerned Historians](#) in 1995 and he coordinates it to this day. The Network campaigns on behalf of persecuted and censored historians, including those in our field, and produces [Annual Reports](#) about the attacks on historical research and teaching around the globe. Two weeks ago, the [28th edition](#) was published. In 165 pages, this latest *Annual Report* documents incidents in 100 countries.

As an ICHTH member from 1995 and an ICHTH Bureau member from 2021, Toon knows well how our Commission operates. In addition, he has worked for decades with many scholars in our field. These long years of performance demonstrate his perseverance.

We are confident that he will dedicate his energy and skills to the benefit of our Commission, our mission, our field of activities, and our profession. For these reasons, this Nomination Committee strongly recommends to the Bureau to elect Antoon De Baets as the next ICHTH President.

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<sup>1</sup> Note: For a complete cv of Antoon De Baets (31 pp.), see <http://www.concernedhistorians.org/va/cv.pdf>. His ORCID is 0000-0002-5734-8193.