Board Member Report of Nuno Cardoso

Preface:

I wasn't planning to be a board member, but I couldn't also ignore a request[1] from the previous board, due to a lack of candidates, so I offered myself to the cause and to the opportunity of knowing both sides of a divide that I saw brewing due to the choices that the PPI (as a whole) was making.

I addressed[2] the GA saying that I didn't like what I saw, that we were looking like old fashioned politicians instead of political innovators and that I prefered to see the amendment about e-democracy within PPI passed than to be elected at all because I was not important, the idea was. (I said "liquid" repeatedly instead of "e-" due to nervousness and the example of LQFB in my head)

I was glad when I came last in the first vote[3], hoping to avoid the problems I was predicting, but couldn't say no to responsibility when suddenly I was asked to accept it (how the heck did that happen?!?)

So I was set on the goal to promote e-democracy and it's tools thinking that, like in a Field of Dreams[4], if I built them it would come, after all, as I said in my candidature[5], the "PPI should be using them also, to set the example and show the advantages of such systems to all its current and future members, instead of adopting the rigid models of plain old parties that bind democracy to specific election/voting dates separated by long periods of detachment where few decide for all.
Real democracy means constant democracy, not cyclic democracy, and if we are to change the world we should start by setting the example ourselves."

Term in office:

A quick review of minutes shows that I attended 22 meetings and missed 5, the first one due to an medical emergency, a pink eye that almost made me wear a pirate eye patch (oh the irony), 3 stuck working at my day job and the last one because I was so burned out and stressed with work I just forgot all about it.

I tried to fulfill my main promise as soon as possible and 3 weeks after being elected I already had the system up and started sending out the invitations to the members from which I had contacts and announced[6] it on the PP Leaders list for any that I couldn't reach. I even added all the statutes amendment proposals that weren't voted in Prague, so they could be discussed using the Feedback system.

Getting people on board the project was a struggle, and an inglorious[7] one for that matter, only 18 ordinary members out of 28 ever replied to the challenge before I had to shanghai the other 10 onto the boat for correct quorum calculations, and even so, only a handful of members actually showed support for any initiative (thumbs up to PP-LU, PP-NZ, PP-CAT, and PP-PT), so no surprise came to me many months later when all initiatives failed a quorum and got canceled by the system without a single suggestion from anyone (if time starts slipping in Kazan due to the discussion of these, please remember all the months you had to do so before pointing fingers).
I also invited many other PP's, because the whole pirate movement must be taken into consideration by statutory enforcement, and a big percentage of those joined the project, but using it was also an entirely different matter unfortunately.
I maintained the project updated nonetheless because I still believe it is necessary, but I also studied other alternatives/complements to LQFB, from Liquidizer to Loomio more recently. They all have their place in an e-Democracy ecosystem, something I plan to have a report on as well as soon as I get some more time to finish some more tests.

[1] http://lists.pirateweb.net/pipermail/pp.international.general/2012-April/011347.html
[2] http://youtu.be/z1k8fMoyXAM?t=4h52m2s
[3] http://archive.is/0rVK (line 221 and 266)
[4] http://youtu.be/5Ay5GqJwHF8
[5] http://int.piratenpartei.de/PPI_Conference_2012/Board_candidatures#further_board_members
[6] http://lists.pp-international.net/private/pp-leaders/2012-May/000208.html
[7] http://lists.pp-international.net/private/pp-leaders/2012-June/000232.html

I also promised that any issues raised and voted on LQFB would be taken by me to the board so that it could pass a decision on them, sadly no member ever used that possibility, as no issues were ever raised besides the statute amendment proposals I put there. Since the problem could be the fact that loud voices kept specifically attacking LQFB on the mailing lists and to show that there are more ways we can have votes without excuses of not having the software[8] (really?), I used an alternate system (OpaVote.org), to poll the members on the important board decision about where the GA should be held. Although I voted according to the wishes of the majority in that poll, the final decision reflected one of the problems I see in PPI, the pressure of loud voices of a few and the attempt to appease them even if that doesn't reflect the official opinions of the majority.

Fulfilling my last promise, I tried to help out wherever I could, giving assistance to PP's in their attempts at setting up LQFB instances (the latest was PP-RU), investigating software to aid in setting up transparent accounting (OpenERP seemed a good bet) so that we wouldn't depend on banks to do it (argh!!!), trying to spread the pirate movement as a whole by acting locally as a PPI representative, among many other small things.

I only wish I had achieved more results from all my fulfilled promises, but then again the main idea needed the cooperation of all, and that was my flaw, I should have promised to nag you all until you used the darn thing ;-)

For reference, here are my short reports from all meetings ("pirated" from the minutes pads):

2012-04-24	Trying to get liquid feedback in place, for topic discussion, had technical problems, fixed problems.
2012-05-01	Almost finished a LiquidFeedback site for PPI members (should take only 1 day more due to problems with C update program, shifted to my own implementation in C#). Discussed with Pirate Party of Portugal tech team to see their willingness to participate in Travis initiative, they are interested and will contact soon.
2012-05-08	Finishing up international lqfb - started sending out invites, more later in TOP5 ==5 - PPI Liquid Feedback== Proposed by Nuno: Fulfilling promise - made an installation, wrote an email to the pp-leaders to get the right contacts to invite them to lqfb. The purpose of LQFB in the PPI is to try to streamline the GA procedure and to decentralize disscussion on statutes and proposals. Could not find the official contacts of PP-IT (Lola provided them)
2012-05-15	I have been trying to get everyone on board the Liquid Feedback boat, 17 already in and everyone else contacted through proper means. Also been analysing other liquid democracy software I didn't knew about (Liquidizer, ideatorrent and Adhocracy) and preparing a comparative document of strengths and weaknesses of all. Also found another free secret voting helper like http://www.opavote.org at https://modernballots.com this one implementing Schulze STV (more resistant than traditional STV to vote manipulation in small elections).
2012-05-29	Excused - Medical emergency.
2012-06-05	Nothing to report for this week because of illness but last week: Counter-pointing lies in a video of the Portuguese software association (Assoft) through doing some research and creating an article. Organizing preparations for ACTA demo in Portugal on June 9th. Asked Pirate Parties to join Liquid Feedback.
2012-06-19	I've been trying to get all ordinary members on board the LF ship, but since after multiple contacts during a month and a few days only 18 joined I made an administrative registration of the other 10 and sent them login details (Ireland is no longer an ordinary member thus only 28 now). I also launched a first issue/initiative to really start things. I've also been looking at OpenERP for use in PP-PT after seeing a comment in ppi.techteam, and think we should also look into it possibly for PPI.
2012-07-03	Checked security of Liquid Feedback, updated to the final 2.0 version that was released last week

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[8] http://youtu.be/z1k8fMoyXAM?t=2h57m37s

	and opened new issues. Investigated a lot of OpenERP for our future accounting needs, it's very good.
2012-07-17	Integrated pad support in LQFB instance and finished adding the rest of the proposals that didn't get voted in Prague. Didn't have much time for more due to some late job projects and a minor vacation.
2012-07-31	I was interviewed by the computer edition of an important magazine for their next month issue on the subject of Piracy, had to prepare carefully to dodge trick questions because they are a bit biased. Been working on PP-PT for evolving from the current movement into a formal association with legal status in the next month or two.
2012-08-14	I've been contacted by the Pirate Party of Mexico for help on setting up a LQFB for them, I also started contacting other Parties that are not members or applicants in order to have them interested on the LQFB issue. Updated the system to the lastest frontend release. Created a poll of sorts on LQFB policies for several issues (https://docs.google.com/a/pp-international.net/spreadsheet/ccc?key=0Ai9AFwhEPqTedGFXQkRYVVdYeGJuRWdvNXdNUi1GZnc#gid=13) since the subject caused long heated debates on the international mailing lists, and of course participated in the heated debates trying to bring some logic and peace to them, seems to have worked a bit.
2012-08-28	Excused - Stuck at my day job
2012-09-11	I had some hectic work weeks on my job so the only thing I could do with my scarce spare time was legal work on PP-PT in order for it to become a formal association.
2012-09-25	Invited more than a dozen other PP's for the LQFB of PPI under the non-member area, continued progress in PP-PT towards formal association.
2012-10-09	Invited more than a dozen other PP's for the LQFB of PPI under the non-member area, seven already joined in. Continued progress in PP-PT towards formal association.
2012-10-23	I've been preparing for the "2nd International Conference about the Pirate Culture in the Information Society" where I'll be on a panel with a fellow PP-PT member on Thursday (https://culturapirata2012.wordpress.com/english). I've upgraded the LQFB instance to the new version which introduces new important features and bug fixes.
2012-11-06	Participated on a round table in the "2nd International Conference about the Pirate Culture in the Information Society" with a fellow pirate from PP-PT and members of the video and book industry. It was fruitful and we made connections with several other pirate friendly associations and people.
2012-11-20	Excused - Stuck at my day job
2012-12-04	Last week I participated in the first Transparency Hackday in Lisbon, organised by www.transparenciahackday.org , which already sprouted very interesting projects in the past about open data and transparency in politics such as parliament transcriptions, public contracts, government budgets, etc. Met a lot of interesting people with very interesting and "piraty" ideas. I was also invited to participate in a discussion panel happening here in a Lisbon university on the next 26th of February along with Peter Sunde (Pirate Bay) and other local representatives of associations dealing both with free software (ANSOL) and non-free software (ASSOFT). I didn't have much time before this week because of my personal Job which also made me miss the last meeting.
2012-12-18	I've been upgrading the LQFB instance to the most recent version and making sure everything is working since it will be important for polling our members on an important decision that is looming and my vote will reflect their decision.
2013-01-08	I was on vacation for Christmas and New Year, and since then I tried to choose the best way with which to poll the PPI members for my vote today. I ended up choosing OpaVote.org for the task and used the contacts registered at the LQFB instance.
2013-01-22	Tracked a couple of updated PP representatives for the LQFB instance, since I noticed that PP's don't usually update us when they change. Couldn't do much more than that since I'm swamped

	with work at my Job.
2013-02-05	Excused - Stuck at my day job
2013-02-19	I was in the PP EU conference in Paris representing PP Portugal. I'm organizing a local event on next Saturday for the International Open Data Hackathon (http://opendataday.org) and the International Day for Privacy (http://protestwiki.de/wiki/EN:Main). I'm also preparing for a discussion panel on "Content sharing and piracy" with Rick Falkvinge, among others, next week on Tuesday (http://xx.sinfo.org/pt/painel-partilha-de-conteudos-e-pirataria), so I've been busy with all these things.
2013-03-05	Unexcused - burned out and stressed with work I just forgot all about it
2013-04-02	I was busy finishing up the PP-PT amendment proposals for this year's GA and also finishing up the initial procedures for the registration of PP-PT as a formal association. We had the election for our internal organs this last week. Been reading all the proposed amendments submitted to PPI.
2013-04-16	I had a lot of work in my job, but was still able to attend the statutes meeting and beginning of RoP for the Kazan GA (couldn't attend on the following day).

Final thoughts:

PPI's boat is headed towards an Iceberg and has a strong possibility of sinking if it's direction doesn't change.

We are advocates of new political models, and yet we managed to put up a statutory model no different than that of old political parties. In doing so we created the same divide that exists in old politics, the "us" vs "them" rift.

In this last year we have seen the PPI organs yet again under all sort of attacks by PPI members and members of PPI members. The board was attacked, the CoA was even forced to resign under personal legal threat and the GA, the supreme body composed of the PPI members themselves, was also targeted, like a scorpion committing suicide when faced with a ring of fire, or in this case a dysfunctional old style political meeting.

Either we fix this by removing the rift, by making the PPI members, and not some elected scapegoats, responsible for PPI or we will only succeed in the demise of a formal cooperation between international PP's, and if PP's can't fix the mistakes of this one, then any formal alternatives will end up making the same mistakes over and over again.

My humble contribution, adding to the proposals I presented last year, comes in the form of two new proposals trying to bring more responsibility to the actual members, both through a jury of members within the CoA (SAP-26) and direct representatives in the board (SAP-27). This last one (SAP-27), while at a first glance it could look like we would end up with a board too big to actually do anything, does exactly the opposite, it provides a workforce that can fill in for the eventual and inevitable lack of time or interest at one moment or another of those responsible for this or that task within the board.

If the board model changes I will happily be a representative, if not I won't run for scapegoat again but will still cooperate gladly with the new board and offer my first pieces of sincere advice: fulfill your promises; be diligent; be patient; ignore the trolls or "tie" them with logic and their own words; be patient; ignore personal attacks, they reveal more about the attackers than about yourself; be patient; be kind when dealing with others; try to change the world; don't despair if you can't; did I say be patient already?; and last but not least, in the words of a wise man, have fun while trying to change the world!

Finally I want to thank all those that give up their personal time in a constructive way to further the pirate movement and ideals, officially or not, despite all adversities. You rock!!!

Pirate regards,
Nuno Cardoso