

## **Responsibility for Europe demands a proactive response**

**Dr. Worms: Promote democracy and reconciliation! / ESCU projects for 2008**

**The Board of the ESCU has stressed the responsibility it shares in enabling our continent to thrive. As Dr. Bernhard Worms explained to the press, “When life experience, historical insight and political will come together, then the way will be cleared for an ongoing peaceful development of Europe.” The task, which therefore falls to all ESCU member organisations is “to actively support activities aimed at democracy and reconciliation”. It’s here that Worms believes that the intergenerational cooperation avowed and agreed at the 2007 ESCU Congress will need to prove its worth.**

The conference topic to be debated at the first Regional Conference of the Mediterranean Region scheduled to take place on 23-26<sup>th</sup> May in **Cyprus** will be “The Struggle for Intergenerational Justice”. As well as other issues, the topic will pick up on sharpening the awareness that one day the youth of today will be old as well. The local partner is the Organisation of the Senior Citizens of Cyprus (OSCC), chaired by Phoebus V. Zachariades.

Young people will also attend the Fifth German/Polish Seminar to be held by the Brandenburg (D) CDU Seniors’ Union in **Poznan (PL)**, when the topic for discussion in early April will be “Germany and Poland – stage of shared history and current cooperation in the European Union”. Presentations and discussions will alternate with excursions to historic sites. The local partner is the “People’s Movement Parliamentary Association”, the senior citizens’ section of the PSL (Polish Peasants’ Party) which has been part of the coalition government for the past four months. President of the PSL’s senior citizens is university professor, Dr. Jan Czaja. Dr. Bernhard Worms has confirmed his readiness to cooperate.

Already anticipating events next year is the “ESCU East Regional Conference” to be held in **Vilnius (LT)** from 15<sup>th</sup> June which will be devoted to the European Parliamentary elections and the impending 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the peaceful revolutions in Eastern Europe and will be hosted by the two Lithuanian ESCU member organisations, the Senior Citizens of the Christian Democrats and Conservatives under the chairmanship of Jonas Volungevicius and Romualda Hofertiene. The opening speech will therefore address “The Experience of Eastern European Senior Citizens in Gaining Freedom and Political Responsibility” and will be given by Prof. Vytautas Landsbergis MEP, who in 1990/91 spearheaded political change in his country. Planning for the meeting will be undertaken jointly with the ESCU’s “East Working Group”.

Other ESCU conferences planned in 2008 are for the **South-East** (Vienna, 29-30/5/2008) **and for West Europe** (in November in **Saarbrücken**).

The ESCU’s partner organisation in the Czech Republic is planning to commemorate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1968 “Prague Spring” and is inviting a number of guests from other countries, who can report on the dramatic events in **Prague** from their own point of view. ESCU President, Dr. Worms, will be one of the participants.

In the first week of March, ESCU President, Dr. Worms, is travelling to **Oswiecim/Auschwitz** accompanied by Austrian Vice President, Dr. Flemming, as well as other figures, in response to an invitation by the Lord Mayor of the city. Worms explained to his colleagues that he felt it was particularly important for him to undertake this visit.

**Ulrich Winz**