



EUROPÄISCHE SENIOREN UNION EUROPEAN SENIOR CITIZENS' UNION L'UNION EUROPEENNE DES SENIORS



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Two decades of work. The Seniors' Union of the CDU Germany recently observed their 20th anniversary in Berlin, with Dr. Heiner Geisler giving the ceremonial address. The Chairman, Dr. Otto Wulff, greeted a large number of honorary guests, including the first Chairman, Gerhard Braun, who addressed the gathering, and the Honorary Chairman and ESCU President, Dr. Worms, who led the SU from 1990 to 2002. The state associations of eastern Germany have also been part of the national German Seniors' Union since December 1990. The SU currently has a membership of some 56,000.

Closer cooperation. The CDU Seniors' Union (SU) and the Austrian Senior Citizens' Union (ÖSB) have agreed to extend their cooperation. Chairmen Wulff and Khol would like to appoint more candidates "with experience of life and leadership" to their parties; take action against age discrimination of any kind, and warn the younger generation about the dangers of totalitarian regimes. Both ESCU member associations believe that a united Europe has a key role to play in achieving and safeguarding welfare and security.

Amalgamation imminent. In the wake of the amalgamation of the two Estonian senior citizens' associations, both ESCU member associations in Lithuania are now set to join forces. Respective Presidents Romualda Hofertiene and Jonas Volungevicius have advised us that the Senior Club of the Fatherland Union/Lithuanian Conservatives and the Senior Section of the Lithuanian Christian Democrats are to amalgamate. The charter is expected to be signed on 17th June at the "East" Regional Conference in Vilnius. The unification of their parties is to take place in early May.

Meetings in Poland. The ESCU President met up with politicians, diplomats and academics in Poznan at the V German/Polish Seminar of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAS) in Potsdam, chaired by the Deputy President of the Seniors' Union of Brandenburg (D), Dr. Horst Röpke. Also taking part were Dr. Czaja, President of the PSL-aligned "People's Movement Parliamentary Association" (Stowarzyszenie Parlamentarzystow Ruchu Ludowego); the Chairman of the Europe Committee in the Sejm, Andrzej Grzyb (PSL); the Director of the Western Institute in Poznan, Prof. Andrzej Sakson, and the Vice-Marshal of Wielkopolska, Antoniusz Blochowiak (PSL). The principle topics of discussion were the role of Poland in European integration and the situation of Polish pensioners.

Open for business. In Poznan, Dr. Czaja and Andrej Grzyb announced that the PSL-aligned Parliamentary Association is now open to all senior citizens interested in politics. Regional associations are to be established, the first of which are expected to be in the Voivodships of Wielkopolska (Great Poland) and Zachodniopomorskie (Western Pomerania) including the city of Szczecin. The association is the only one in Poland to be affiliated to the ESCU and is joint organiser of the German/Polish Seminar mentioned above.

Resolution on Tibet. A great number of citizens – not just in the UK – have signed a petition organised by Grahame Leon-Smith (Senior Citizens' Party in the UK) to be handed in to the Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, urging support for the restoration of human rights in Tibet.

Decision pending. On a visit to the university city of Porto at the end of March/beginning of April, Dr. Worms held discussions with the International Secretary of Portugal's PSD, Antonio Martins da Cruz, in which Mr. da Cruz put forward a request to join the ESCU. The President and Dr. Lehr (D) gave presentations on socio-political topics at the invitation of the Portuguese office of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation.

Dr. Jozef Miklosko is the new President of the "Association of Christian Senior Citizens in Slovakia". He recently welcomed ESCU Honorary President, Walter Mohaupt, and Vice President, Dr. Marilies Flemming, (both from Austria) at a joint commemoration for the victims of the "Bratislava Candle Demonstration" on 25th March 1988, a precursor to Czechoslovakia's "Velvet Revolution". A great many of the current members of the senior citizens' association had been actively involved in events at the time.

Jan GUREGA

Discussions from a Christian perspective on the significance of historical events in the 20th century are due to take place on 16th May in Prague. ESCU Vice President and leader of the "Association of Christian Senior Citizens" (SKS), Dr. Vaclav Roubal, has invited members of the association as well as politicians and academics to the event which is to be held at the Representation of the European Commission.

Commitment and encouragement. In an interview with Prof. Stratenschulte at European House, Berlin, Dr. Otto von Habsburg (95) put on record his passionate commitment to democracy and a united Europe. His statement that "if you are not optimistic about European affairs, you will always be on the wrong side" enthused the audience, which included a large number of diplomats. The long-serving MEP and Honorary President of the Pan European Union expressed his respect for his comrade-in-arms and Austro-Hungarian visionary, Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi, whose key writings have recently been republished.

Please note. A report on the President's visit to Oswiecim (previously Auschwitz) is available at www.eu-seniorunion.info – Since being taken up by the "SIS Info Service" of the ÖSB, "Senior International" now reaches some 1,000 senior citizens and politicians in Austria. – Let us know if you translate "SI" into your local language!

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