



SENIOR INTERNATIONAL

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An end to megalomania and sabre-rattling! This was the call from ESCU President, Dr. Worms, in a press release addressing Russia's violation of Georgian sovereignty. On World Peace Day (1st September), which commemorates Nazi Germany's invasion of Poland in 1939, he expressed the ESCU's solidarity to all victims of the war in Georgia. From the EU Emergency Summit which started on the same day he anticipated "constructive decisions, which look to the future" and heal the wounds. Expressing his faith in the diplomatic skills of the French EU Presidency and other politicians, he called for "the discussions with both sides to articulate in clear ... words the need to maintain peace and stability in Europe". With the situation prior to 7th August restored, there was a need to address the concerns of the Baltic States and Ukraine as well, as "fear of the Russian bear" was still a reality in the region.

The lesson from the experience of the Second World War, Worms believes, is that any attempt at unilateral decisions as has now happened has to be confronted right from the start. The generation of over-60s to over 90-year-old Europeans represented by the ESCU has vivid memories of the years between 1939 and 1945 and their consequences with the division of Europe and the Cold War, and it is this experience which guides their political action today. The statement closes with an exhortation to: "Let us have an end to megalomania! An end to sabre-rattling! All people have the right to live in honour and dignity and without discrimination." (See: www.eu-seniorunion.info/en/press/pressreleases.htm).

Electoral congress in Belarus. Senior citizens' organisation "Nashe Pokolenie" (Our Generation) which was established in Belarus in July 2007 held its electoral congress on 17th August in the Minsk area, which involved a measure of improvisation after they were declined a meeting place. 75 delegates from all regions – with the exception of Grodno – elected Tatyana Zelko as their President, although she had carried out the duties of the office from the start. Her deputies are Igor Orlov and Vladimir Yanowsky. An application will now be made to register with the state.

Their programme of work is geared towards improving the social situation. Greetings were received at the congress from the ESCU President, the "East" Regional Coordinator and from ESCU member associations in Poland, Lithuania and Germany. The association has ESCU observer status.

Regional conference in Saarbrücken. The first "Central" Regional Conference on 21-22 October in Saarbrücken (D) is set to welcome senior citizens from the Saarland and Rhineland-Palatinate (both D), Benelux States, French region of Alsace Lorraine, UK and Italy. Speaking on the theme of "The Social Market Economy in the Globalised World Economy" are Saarland's Minister President Müller, as well as MEPs Doris Pack, Ria Oomen-Ruijten and Lucien Thiel, and participants will be welcomed by Vice President, Prof. N. Estgen (L).

Board and Executive Committee. Both governing bodies will be meeting on 6th November at Konrad Adenauer House in Berlin. In the afternoon, there will be a meeting with the German Chancellor and Chair of the CDU, Dr. Angela Merkel. Each ESCU member organisation delegates two people to the Executive Committee, and you are asked to confirm your current details (i.e. names and addresses) with the General Secretariat (esu@cdu.de).

Senior citizens on the hustings. Senior citizens in a number of countries are out canvassing for votes: currently in Slovenia, where parliamentary elections are being held on 21st September, and in the German Federal State of Bavaria, where there are forthcoming elections to the State Parliament on 28th September. CSU Chair Huber has recently spent two hours with 400 senior citizens aboard a pleasure steamer plying Lake Starnberg to discuss his election manifesto, while Minister President Beckstein received senior citizens on board a Lake Ammer cruise boat. At the event, Dr. Weckerle, Chairman of the CSU Seniors' Union, introduced position papers on pensions and health policy co-drafted with the Young Christian Democrats.