

## **Minutes of ECSA Meeting in Budapest (6 October 2000)**

It is my pleasure to present the minutes of our Annual General Meeting.

The AGM was held in Budapest in the Hungarian Finance Guard Training Centre and where our kind hosts ensured that we had a very pleasant visit to their beautiful city. Our thanks to everyone involved especially laszlo Kopf, Georgy Juhasz, Eموke Ratki, the colleagues from the Museum, the staff at Penzugyor and the drivers who brought us everywhere.

### **The Meeting**

#### ***1. Welcomes & Apologies from Absentees***

- a) Colonel Georgy Juhasz (President Sports Club) welcomed the delegates to Budapest and wished us a successful conference. Laszlo Kopf explained the schedule of the conference, the agenda and the order of the speakers as well as the excellent programme of events organised by the Hungarian Finance Guard.
- b) Apologies were received from Oleg Markov (Russian Customs, St. Petersburg). Oleg said the Russian Customs Sports Club could not send attend for financial reasons but he hoped to regularise relations with ECSA soon. Apologies were also received from Nicky Greig (Gibraltar) and Bas Van Broek (Netherlands & Honorary Life Member) who could not attend but they wished the conference well.
- c) Theo De Goeijen (Netherlands & ECSA Treasurer) said he had spoken with Emile Nothum (Luxembourg) who could not attend but Luxembourg will keep paying membership fees.
- d) Delegates to the AGM represented Hungary, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Belgium, France, the Czech Republic, Finland, Italy, Sweden, Poland and the Slovak Republic.

#### ***Chairman's Remarks***

Billy Robb (UK & outgoing chairman) said that ECSA is growing in strength. In the last year, Gibraltar, the Czech Republic and Slovakia had joined. He welcomed Poland as our latest new member.

Billy (who retired from the UK Customs service after a very successful career) said that he was very proud that the profile of ECSA had been raised during his time as chairman. He remembered warmly the many fine colleagues he met at ECSA meetings he had attended in wonderful places and he thanked delegates for their kindness over the years.

He mentioned the ECSA colours award innovation which gave sporting colleagues in the different European administrations a sense of pride in representing their countries and their jobs.

He also thanked Theo for the beautiful Netherlands gift of an ECSA flag for each member. We can display these at national sporting events in each of our own countries.

### ***Business***

Laszlo gave a report on the ECSA Marathon which was held in Budapest one week before the AGM. It was won by Ireland's Gerry Mullane. Laszlo invited delegates to consider sending marathon runners to the CEFTA (Central European Free Trade Association) Supermarathon which was due to be held on 18 October.

The minutes of the 1999 AGM were agreed.

Laszlo said that Slovenia would apply to join ECSA soon.

Mick O'Hanlon (Ireland & Incoming chairman) and Pietro Ariodante (Italy) outlined developments on the ECSA website. Several members have not yet sent their text to Giampiero Piacentini (Italy) for inclusion on the website. Discussion continued about the best practise for the website which is currently undergoing technical work in Italy. The conference expressed our thanks to Signor Di Lorenzo, the Italian colleague whose technical expertise has produced the ECSA site. Delegates were reminded to send up-to-date e-mail addresses to Mick and Giampiero.

### **ECSA 6-a-side Football**

Tommi Kivilaakso & Klaus Geiger (Finland) praised the organisation of the wonderful tournament in France, (Reims, May 2000). Finland proposed that a roster of countries who were willing to host the event be drawn up. However, before this proposal was considered, Billy Robb asked the delegates to listen to a report and proposal from Lieven Muylaert.

### **Support from DG XXI for ECSA event**

Lieven Muylaert (Belgium) told the meeting about contact with DG XXI of the European Union. (ECSA has been trying to increase contact and communication with this Unit. The EU is supposed to be a member of ECSA but they do not send delegates to our meetings nor do they pay subscriptions).

Lieven had written to TACSUD and he met Mr. John Poulford to discuss our ECSA letter to DGXXI. Mr. Poulford said that there was no enthusiasm in the EU to come to our meetings. It is not their policy to give sponsorship to associations like ECSA. However, Mr. Poulford recommended that ECSA

should make a business case proposal for help with a high-profile event, outlining figures, costs etc.

Mick O'Hanlon proposed making a business case for EU help with a cup or trophy. After discussion among delegates, this was dropped. Billy Robb proposed Gibraltar\* 2001 (six - a -side football) as the event for proposed business case to EU for support. Mick widened the proposal to include women's teams as well as Tax Office sports associations in the high-profile event. This was carried. Each delegate was asked to prepare a business case based on sending a men's and women's six-a-side team to Gibraltar in 2001.

*\* (NOTE: A few weeks after the AGM, ECSA received a letter from Gibraltar which regrettably said they would not be in a position to arrange any international event. The business case for this is now cancelled.)*

### **Other Sponsorship**

Discussion followed about sponsorship from business sources. The general feeling of the delegates was that it would be unethical to follow this course. Tommi Kivilaakso asked ECSA not to be closed to the idea of this source of funding as something suitable may present itself as an opportunity in the future. The delegates agreed to keep the option of accepting sponsorship from trade associations and businesses open.

### **Subscriptions**

Subscription rates were kept at £40 Sterling for new members and £20 Sterling for existing members. ECSA Treasurer Theo de Goiejen (The Netherlands) collected the 2000 subscriptions and he gave his annual Treasurer's report. Theo said that he would soon have some good news from the International Customs Association (ICA). The ICA organisation was winding down and was thinking about giving its funds to ECSA. Theo will keep the committee advised on this matter.

### **Other Matters**

Delegates decided to circularise the World Customs Council with a list of ECSA events for 2001. Lieven and Theo agreed to provide the committee with a list of all the DG's so that they might be invited to each ECSA event by the organisers.

Belgium will host a 20k race (probably on the last Sunday in May 2001). Accommodation will be provided in Brussels for two participants and one leader from each country.

The Czech Republic will organise a cross country race in Bohemia (distances to be decided) in April or May. They are also organising a table tennis tournament in conjunction with the race. Accommodation will be provided free for CEFTA (Central European Free Trade Association) members and a

charge will apply for other countries. Katy Stifterova (Czech Republic) hoped that this would become an ECSA-wide event maybe in 2002.

Finland will hold cross country skiing event and invite other countries in January.

Italy will also hold the Settima Bianca (White Week) international skiing event 10-17 February. Costs c.340 euro per person (full board)

The UK will hold its 100th anniversary of the C&E sports club. Billy Robb hopes that something special will be organised.

Hungary will host the ECSA Marathon and the Vienna to Budapest road race. Laszlo Kopf gave an outline of other CEFTA events.

Ireland promised to host the six-a-side football at some future date. Gibraltar and Hungary had indicated that they might host this event in 2001 and 2003. Ireland will await developments of the UK 100th anniversary in 2003.

Sweden will host several events and wants to hear from interested ECSA members on bilateral exchanges.

The Netherlands will organise Nijmegen Walk in July (on the third Tuesday in July). The Dutch will also host a pistol shooting competition (for experienced pistol shooters only!) in May 2001.

The Slovak Republic is involved in CEFTA games and discussions are being held to encourage greater involvement in ECSA events. Similarly in Poland.

The ECSA matrix of events country-by-country was checked as well as the publicity leaflet details. An electronic newsletter will issue periodically from Dublin in English and French text to inform members about ECSA news etc. Lieven said that the Belgian administration could help with printing some information leaflets.

Mick O'Hanlon was elected chairman and the Officers and committee members are:

Treasurer	Theo De Goiejen	(The Netherlands)
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Committee Member	Laszlo Kopf	(Hungary)
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Committee Member	Jean-Pierre Brust	(France)
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Committee Member	Svend Mandel Hansen	(Denmark)
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#### **Other Officers**

Brussels Liaison	Lieven Muylaert	(Belgium)
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ECSA Website Managers	Giampiero Piacentini	(Italy)
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& Pietro Ariodante

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Billy Robb and Pietro Ariodante were made Honorary Life Members in recognition of the work they have done to promote the ECSA spirit.

**2001**

The first committee meeting will take place in Holland on 23 March 2001. The AGM will be held in Dublin on 5 October 2001 and new member Poland has kindly agreed to investigate the possibility of holding a committee meeting in Warsaw in June 2001.