



**24<sup>th</sup> CONFERENCE AND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF  
VICTIM SUPPORT EUROPE  
BERLIN, 26-29 MAY 2010**

**MINUTES OF VICTIM SUPPORT EUROPE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
SATURDAY MAY 29 2010 AT 10.00 AM  
Hotel Berlin, Berlin**

**1. OPENING AND WELCOME**

The president, Jaap Smit, welcomes everyone to the 2010 Annual General Meeting.

**2. Apologies and Presence**

**Present**

Jaap Smit, president	Netherlands	Slachtofferhulp Nederland
David McKenna, secretary	Scotland	Victim Support Scotland
Helgard van Hüllen, treasurer	Germany	Weisser Ring Germany
Vesna Nikolic-Ristanovic	Serbia	Victimology Society of Serbia
Joao Lazaro	Portugal	APAV
Marianne Gammer	Austria	Weisser Ring Austria
Lyane Sautner	Austria	Weisser Ring Austria
Ilse Vande Walle	Belgium	Steunpunt Algemeen Welzijnswerk
Ludmilla Cirtkova	Czech Republic	Bily Kruh Bezpeci
Marketa Vitousova	Czech Republic	Bily Kruh Bezpeci
Petra Vitousova	Czech Republic	Bily Kruh Bezpeci
Lone Nielsen	Denmark	Victim Support Denmark
Ove Bendtsen	Denmark	Victim Support Denmark
Chris Wade	England & Wales	Victim Support England & Wales
Petra Kjällman	Finland	Victim Support Finland
Gabrielle Holthaus	Germany	Weisser Ring Germany
Bastian Finke	Germany	Arbeitskreis der Opferhilfen (ado)
Laszlo Fugedi	Hungary	Feher Gyuru
Peter Liszka	Hungary	Feher Gyuru
Greg Heylin	Ireland	Commission for the Support of Victims of Crime
Maeve Ryan	Ireland	Crime Victims Helpline (IRL)
Mario Borg	Malta	Victim Support Malta
Victor Jammers	Netherlands	Slachtofferhulp Nederland
Dineke Peterse	Netherlands	Slachtofferhulp Nederland
Sonja Leferink	Netherlands	Slachtofferhulp Nederland
Carmen Rasquete	Portugal	APAV

Olga Kostina	Russia	Soprotivlenie (Victim Support Russia)
Marina Schepp	Russia	Victim Support Russia
Tamara Kalantaryan	Russia	Victim Support Russia
Frida Petersson	Scotland	Victim Support Scotland/ Victim Support Europe
Susan Mallinder	Scotland	Victim Support Scotland
Bob Leitch	Scotland	Victim Support Scotland
Jana Siposova	Slovakia	Pomoc Obtiam nasilia (Victim Support Slovakia)
Sven-Erik Alhem	Sweden	Brottsofferjouren (Victim Support Sweden)
Eva Larsson	Sweden	Brottsofferjouren (Victim Support Sweden)

### **Apologies**

Frank Hengeveld	Netherlands	Victim Support Europe
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### **3. Minutes of AGM 2009**

On page 3, under the Secretary's report, change the second new associate member from the Republic of Ireland to "Commission for the Support of Victims of Crime".

On page 5, under Membership Fees, change the fee for Germany to Euro, 1.250 (total).

With these amendments, the minutes from the last AGM, held in Lisbon, Portugal on June 27 2009 were approved.

### **4. Report of the President – Jaap Smit**

Jaap informs the meeting that Victim Support Europe's new constitution has been signed and approved. Victim Support Europe is now officially based in Brussels and will be sharing office with the European Network of Councils for the Judiciary (ENCJ). Jaap thanks the ENCJ for their hospitality and assistance in this move, it is greatly appreciated.

Jaap has during the year attended the meetings of the Justice Forum. Victim Support Europe has developed a firm position on this Forum and it will be exciting to see how the Forum will develop in the future.

Jaap has had a meeting with Lotte Knudsen at the European Commission who is very interested in the work of Victim Support Europe. She offered to send VSE support from their financial department to assist us with managing our grants and future funding applications.

### **5. Report of the Secretary – David McKenna**

David begins by explaining why there is no Annual Report produced this year. Normally, the Annual Report would be produced to cover the 12 months period 1 January – 31 December. To fit the timeframe of the European Union, VSE now aims to publish the Annual Report in November. The report will form part of our marketing strategy for VSE.

During the year, there have been many key advancements made in victim issues throughout Europe, for instance the adoption of the Stockholm Programme. As we have all heard during this conference, the European Commission is undertaking an impact assessment on ways of improving the situation for victims in Europe. We look

forward to being part of this work and we encourage you all to engage with the Commission as well as your own Governments to share your knowledge in this area.

## **6. Report of the Treasurer – Helgard van Hüllen**

Before Helgard gives the treasurer's report for the year of 2009, she explains that until June 2009, Marianne Gammer was the elected treasurer. The AGM 2009 ended without having found a new treasurer. The Executive Board tried to find a replacement for the post, but was not successful so Marianne kindly offered to continue the work as treasurer. The Board came to a conclusion in November that one of its members must take over the role as interim-treasurer and Helgard was given the task. She took over from Marianne in December 2009, which means that Marianne has done the vast majority of the work during 2009 along with Frank Hengeveld. Helgard thanks Frank and Marianne for all their hard work and assistance, and regrets that Marianne will no longer act as the treasurer.

As David explained earlier, the members did not receive an Annual Report yet for this year. In the new operating grant, VSE has included an Annual Report that will cover the whole year of 2010. Therefore, the publication of the Annual Report has been delayed until later this year.

### **VSE – Income and Expenditure 2009**

The total income for 2009 has been €65.020,00 (membership fees €13.925, EU grants 2008 €51.095) and the expenditure has amounted to €49.018 (reimbursement of part of the 2007 grant, travel and hotel costs, external speakers at the annual conference 2009 as well as €2.372 for audit costs and bank charges). In the accounts for 2009, donations in kind contributed by member organisations are not considered. Total funds as per 31 December 2009 were €168.208, cash in the bank were €165.263. It is stressed that funds have increased in 2009 due to the final payments by the European Commission for two operating grants under JLS/2007/JPEN/005/OP for the period of 1 April 2007 – 31 March 2009 (€10.146,14) and under JLS/2008/JPN/001/OP for the period 1 April 2008 – 31 March 2009 (€40.949,18). These funds will be reimbursed soon to the member organisations that pre-financed the activities of Victim Support Europe.

With more than two years experience of European Commission operating grants, VSE has learnt that applying for, and receiving, grants is related to considerable costs in terms of manpower and in the capacity of pre-financing all activities for a rather long period. Another important aspect is that 30% of the total grant budget has to be contributed by the applicant. This is increasingly becoming a problem when VSE or member organisations are involved in several grants simultaneously.

The reimbursement of expenses of member organisations for participating in the VSE conference in Brussels in May 2008 and other expenses made will be effected with the upcoming weeks for the members who sent in the required documents.

Due to the fact that from the 1<sup>st</sup> of April 2009, no funding was provided by the European Commission, VS Netherlands had to pre-finance much of the incurred costs. This mainly refers to secretariat costs, updating the website, travel and accommodation costs. VS Netherlands has offered to discuss a solution to this matter with VSE in the near future, which VSE is very grateful for.

### **Budget 2010**

The budget for 2010 was distributed to all members along with the agenda for today. It is a provisional budget, showing restricted income of €239.855,04 related to the

operating grant under JLS/2009/JPEN to be awarded for 2010 and €13.675 for membership fees. The operating grant has not been officially confirmed yet. The new president and the new Executive Board will have to make the final decisions about the budget for 2010 once we receive final confirmation from the European Commission.

### **Membership fees 2010 and 2011**

The membership fees for 2009 and 2010 were set for each member organisations according to the structure accepted by resolution at the AGM in May 2005. A new resolution to be proposed at this AGM later on will suggests fees are set at the same level as in 2009:

Bulgaria, Estonia, Malta and Serbia	€250
Slovakia	€375
Czech Republic, Finland, Hungary and Portugal	€500
Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Sweden and Switzerland	€750
France, Netherlands, Russian Federation	€1.000
Germany (ADO and Weisser Ring)	€1.250 (total)
UK (England & Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland)	€1.500 (total)
Associate members Spain (1) and Ireland (3)	€200

Helgard stresses that membership fees 2010 are due within the year of 2010 and all those who have not yet paid the fees for former years should do so as soon as possible. **Total membership fees expected for 2010 are €13.675.**

To summarize: The funds as per 31 December look good, but are not. There are three main reasons for this;

- 1) reimbursement to member organisations has not yet take place because the exact numbers have not yet been given by the EC
- 2) VS Netherlands has pre-financed a lot of costs. This has been most helpful to maintain the finances in 2009. It is at this moment not clarified exactly how much VSE owes VS Netherlands and what these costs cover. In this context it should be stated that the pre-financed costs should have been integrated in the balance sheet 2009 under "debts". Since the 2009 balance sheet has already been forwarded to the auditors and VSE are in discussions with VS Netherlands regarding the reimbursement of these costs, it was decided to keep the submitted 2009 balance sheet and to integrate the solution between VSE and VS Netherlands in the balance sheet 2010.
- 3) EU did not award any operating grants 1 April – 31 December 2009, which resulted in financial challenges for VSE. Some members have helped out by refraining from claiming their expenses, but there are still challenges to be solved by the newly elected board and by us all as members of VSE to ensure that VSE is an ongoing successful organisation and victim issues remain a high priority within the EU.

Helgard once again thanks Frank and Marianne for all their work during the last year.

Jaap explained that due to a technical failure of the European Commission, they withdrew the operating grants for 2009 and VSE were therefore unable to apply for funding. VSE was previously informed that there would be operating funding available and acted based on that information. The withdrawal of operating funding has been very challenging for VSE and Jaap has expressed to the EU that it is very difficult for an organisation such as VSE to function in these circumstances. VS Netherlands has this year had to step in to cover around €90.000 of VSE's costs and the other members of the Executive Board have also abstained from receiving money

back to try to cover the costs arisen due to the failure of the EU. This is a one-off solution and could not be used again to cover VSE costs.

Mario Borg asks if it would be possible to set up an emergency fund in case similar situations happen in the future. David explains that VSE does currently not have any money to put into such a fund. The only unrestricted income given to VSE is membership fees, which during last year amounted to around €13.000. The money currently in VSE's account is to be reimbursed to the member organisations who have pre-financed VSE's activities. David agrees that VSE needs to look at a system to fund for the future.

The Treasurer's report is suggested by Sonja Leferink and seconded by Marianne Gammer. The report is approved.

#### **7. Report of the Executive Officer – Frank Hengeveld**

Victor Jammers of VS Netherlands is Frank's formal employer. He explains that Frank is very ambitious and has been working very hard for Victim Support Europe during the last year which has been a difficult period with insecurities regarding the grants etc. The hard work is taking its toll so Frank is taking a few days off to rest before continuing his work for VSE.

#### **11. Resolution 3 – Executive Board Membership**

David explains that given the workload of the Executive Board, it would be helpful if more members could join which would enable more work to be done. The resolution therefore suggests extending the membership of the Executive Board to 8.

"This AGM approves within terms of the constitution an increase in the number of Executive Board members from the present 7 to 8 members effective from this AGM"

The resolution is adopted unanimously.

#### **8. Appointment of Office Bearers**

Jaap is happy with the interest shown in becoming a member of the Executive Board.

##### **a. President**

David McKenna, nominated by Victim Support Scotland, is elected unanimously.

##### **b. Vice-president**

Joao Lazaro, nominated by APAV Portugal, is elected unanimously.

##### **c. Treasurer**

Helgard van Hüllen, nominated by Weisser Ring Germany, is elected unanimously

##### **d. Appointment of Executive Board Members**

- i. Lyane Sautner, nominated by Weisser Ring Austria, is elected unanimously
- ii. Marketa Vitousova, nominated by Bily kruh bezpeci o.s. is elected unanimously
- iii. Owen Sharp, nominated by VS England & Wales, is elected unanimously

- iv. Victor Jammers, nominated by Victim Support Netherlands, is elected unanimously.

Jaap thanks the AGM and all the members for his time in VSE. He has enjoyed it and has also received many good results; he wishes VSE success for the future and hopes we will be able to move the organisation forward.

Jaap hands over the meeting to the new president, David McKenna, who thanks Jaap and congratulates all the newly elected members on the Executive Board.

#### **9. Resolution 1 – Membership fees**

“This AGM agrees that the full and associate membership fees should remain at the current level for 2011. Further the AGM instructs the Executive Board to undertake a review of the basis of membership fees and to report with recommendations to the AGM 2011”.

Resolution is approved unanimously.

#### **10. Resolution 2 – Business Plan Victim Support Europe**

The VSE business plan was discussed at a workshop on Friday and many good ideas were given. The Executive Board will use this comments to feed into the planning process before the Business Plan is finalised.

Petra Kjällman stresses that it's important to extend the business plan to include all people in Europe affected by crime, not just citizens. David agrees, this was raised at the workshop and the Business Plan will be amended accordingly.

Mario Borg asks if a revised Business Plan will be sent out to all member organisations before it is approved. David confirms that the development of a Business Plan is part of our grant application, so some actions are more fixed than others and must therefore be included. In addition to developing the current Business Plan of 24 months, VSE is looking at developing long term 4-5 year strategies. At the CEO meeting in November, a revised Business Plan will be presented for the member organisations for comments.

Ilse Vande Walle stresses the importance of victim support organisations contacting their national Ministries of Justice to keep victim issues high on all countries' agendas. David agrees and suggests that the Executive Board should develop guidance how national organisations can lobby their own Governments.

The resolution “This AGM supports and adopts in principle the two year business plan presented by the Executive Board” is approved unanimously.

#### **12. Resolution 4 – Appointment of Auditors**

Helgard thanks VS England & Wales for helping VSE with the bookkeeping during the time the accounts were held in London. In due course, as the management of VSE is transferred to Brussels, we may need to locate Belgian auditors, but in the meantime this resolution suggests:

“This AGM agrees to continue for a further year (2010) the appointment of Newnham & Company of 27 Morden Hill, London SE13 7NP at a fee yet to be determined as the auditors of VSE”.

Resolution is approved unanimously.

**13. Resolution 5 – European Protection Order**

Frida Petersson explains that victim issues have moved forward and improvements have been made in the area of protection and promotion of victim's rights since the last AGM. The Lisbon treaty, the Stockholm Programme and the Council conclusions on a strategy for better support to victims of crime in the European Union have all helped to move victim issues forward. During the development of the Stockholm Programme, Victim Support Europe lobbied extensively for specific attention to be given to victims of crime. We are therefore delighted to see victims being expressly highlighted.

VSE is pleased that victim issues are being promoted and legislative proposals are being developed to provide additional protection measures for victims. As such, VSE supports the introduction of European Protection Orders. We would however like to stress that though we agree that these groups of victims are entitled to support and protection, so are people who fall victims to other crime categories. We are today beginning to see a trend whereby particular groups of victims are receiving a higher level of attention. The Stockholm programme for instance mainly focuses on explicitly "vulnerable victims". VSE would like to refrain from developing a hierarchy of victims or a hierarchy of grief, which is why we suggest this resolution.

"This AGM supports the introduction of European Protection Orders, as part of the wider improvements needed for all victims of crime".

Resolution is adopted unanimously.

**14. Resolution 6 – Specialist Victim Organisations**

"This AGM supports and commends the work of specialist victim organisations and encourages the establishment of generic services to all victims"

Resolution is adopted unanimously.

**15. Future Annual Conferences**

Joao declares that FAVIDE, a foundation of the regional Government of Valencia, has shown an interest in hosting the VSE conference 2011. They would however like to receive more information regarding costs, arrangements etc. Joao will continue to work closely with FAVIDE to provide the needed information.

David invites the AGM to give other suggestions on who would like to host the AGM 2011.

Russia states that they would be happy to host the VSE conference in either 2011 or 2012.

David thanks both countries for their kind offers. The AGM agrees that VSE should get more information from both Spain and Russia before making the decision on the location for the AGM 2011.

Ilse Vande Walle asks if future conferences can have a separate day for VSE members. People/organisations who are not members of VSE may not be interested in attending workshops regarding VSE and VSE members themselves may feel forced to attend workshops specifically targeted at VSE. To create a stronger "VSE family", it

would therefore be helpful to hold mutual workshops, meetings etc. The AGM agreed that the Executive Board should take this suggestion away with them to consider its practicalities for future conferences.

**16. Other resolutions**

No other resolutions were submitted.

**17. Any other competent business**

Bob Leitch, the chair of Victim Support Scotland, expresses his pleasure and honour that the presidency of VSE has been given to Scotland. David has worked with victim issues since 1986 and is one of the victim experts in Europe. Bob is proud to have him as the CEO of Scotland and now the president of VSE, and the Executive Board of Victim Support Scotland looks forward to supporting David and all other member organisations in Victim Support Europe in the years to come.

**18. Closing**

David thanks Jaap for all his achievements and all his hard work for Victim Support Europe. He says that Jaap's presidency has been the most successful presidency in the history of Victim Support Europe. During the last five years, VSE has moved forward and the position for victims have improved dramatically. He thanks Jaap on behalf of all victim support organisations and more importantly, on behalf of all victims of crime who will benefit from Jaap's work. Jaap has many friends within VSE and we all wish you the best of luck.

David McKenna, president





With financial support from the European Commission  
Directorate-General Justice, Freedom And Security