

The English-Speaking Union International Council Meeting 2009

Minutes of the meeting held at 10:00am on 12 October 2009, in Dartmouth House, London

Present:

The Rt Hon The Lord Hunt of Wirral MBE PC	Chairman, ESU International Council
Mr William Miller OBE	Deputy-Chairman, ESU International Council
The Lord Watson of Richmond CBE	Chairman Emeritus, ESU International Council
Mr Michael Lake CBE	Secretary-General, ESU International Council
Ms Alice Boyne	President & Executive Director, ESU USA
The Hon Christopher McLaren	Honorary Treasurer, ESU International Council
Miss Annette JE Fisher	Executive Secretary, ESU International Council

Representatives from:

Mr Zenel Hoxha	Chairman	ESU Albania
Mr Michael Rattagan	Deputy-Chairman	ESU Argentina
Mr Geoffrey Skipper	Chairman	ESU Austria
Mrs Anna Skipper	Treasurer	ESU Austria
Mr Asif Chowdhury	Chairman, Steering Committee	ESU Bangladesh
Mr Jiban Kanai Das	Secretary-General, Steering Committee	ESU Bangladesh
Mrs Natalia Dzemchanka	Member, Steering Committee	ESU Belarus
Mrs Christina Thornton	Chairman	ESU Brazil
Mr John Wright	President	ESU Canada
Mrs Joyce Wright	Director	ESU Canada
Mr Garo Keheyian	Chairman	ESU Cyprus
Prof Arne Zettersten	Chairman Emeritus	ESU Denmark
Mr Richard Oldham	Chairman	NC England & Wales
Mrs Holly Shakespeare	Vice-Chairman	NC England & Wales
Ms Riina Altpere	Member, Committee	ESU Estonia
Mr Richard Lewis	Co-Chairman	ESU Finland
Ms Ulla Ladau-Harjulin	Co-Chairman	ESU Finland
Mme Beatrix de Montgermont Keil	National President	ESU France
Mrs Marina Tsitsishvili	Chairman	ESU Georgia
Mr Hartmut Bahr	Member	ESU Germany
Miss Alyson JK Bailes	Member, Steering Committee	ESU Iceland
Mr Dilip Borawake	President	ESU India
Mrs Nancy Schnore	Vice-President	ESU Latvia
Miss Iris Tan	Member, Committee	ESU Malaysia
Mr Martin Scicluna	Chairman, Steering Committee	ESU Malta
Mr Michael Refalo	Member, Steering Committee	ESU Malta
Mrs Joyce Troughton	President Emeritus	ESU New Zealand
Mrs Mercedes Motek	Member, Committee	ESU Portugal
Dr Alexandru Budişteanu	Chairman Emeritus	ESU Romania
Mrs Florina-Jasmine Niculescu	Chairman	ESU Romania
Mrs Margarita Mudrak	Chairman	ESU Russia
Ms Tatyana Emelyanova	International Programmes Director	ESU Russia
Mr Jon Dye	Chairman	ESU Scotland
Mr Brian Monteith	Deputy-Chairman	ESU Scotland
Ms Zorica Becanovic Nikolic	Member	ESU Serbia
Mr Parvonakhon Jamshedov	Chairman, Steering Committee	ESU Tajikistan
Dr Riza Kadilar	Chairman, Steering Committee	ESU Turkey
Mr Jean-Paul Elard	Member, Finance Committee	ESU USA
Ms Patricia Scott Schroeder JD	Chairman	ESU USA

1) Chairman's Welcome

Lord Hunt began by welcoming all delegates (46 delegates from 29 International ESUs). Lord Hunt also specially welcomed Patricia Schroeder, the new Chairman of ESU USA and the new Director-General of the ESU of the Commonwealth and Secretary-General of the International Council, Mike Lake.

2) Apologies for Absence

Annette Fisher informed the Council that 26 apologies for absence were received.

3) Minutes of the last meeting

The Minutes of the International Council Meeting held on 15 September 2008 in Edinburgh, Scotland were approved.

4) Matters Arising

Lord Hunt informed the Council that Patricia Schroeder would be taking over from William Miller at the end of the 2009 Meeting as Deputy-Chairman of the International Council. Lord Hunt and the Council thanked William Miller for his service as both Chairman and Deputy-Chairman of the Council and welcomed Patricia Schroeder to the post.

Lord Hunt asked for the Council's approval that William Miller take up the position of Chairman Emeritus of the International Council along with Lord Watson. The Council approved.

5) Ratification

Lord Hunt read out an extract from the International Council St Petersburg Constitution 2003 (article 3b):

“English-Speaking Union's in the future are to apply to the International Council for ratification before they are launched – ratification to be agreed on the basis of their presentation to the International Council, the Secretary-General's assessment, and their agreement to:

- Uphold the good name and reputation of the English-Speaking Union
- Participate actively in the international programmes of the English-Speaking Union
- Act responsibly for the resolution of internal disputes and divisions”

Lord Hunt then invited Asif Chowdhury to give a presentation for the proposed launch of ESU Bangladesh in 2010.

Please see attached for the ratification papers of ESU Bangladesh.

ESU Bangladesh was ratified for official launch 24-25 January 2010.

Lord Hunt then invited Martin Scicluna to give a presentation for the proposed launch of ESU Malta in 2010.

Please see attached for the ratification papers of ESU Malta

ESU Malta was ratified for official launch 27-31 May 2010.

Lord Hunt then invited Riza Kadilar to give a presentation for the proposed launch of ESU Turkey in 2010.

Please see attached for the ratification papers of ESU Turkey

ESU Turkey was ratified for official launch on 4 June 2010.

6) Election of President of the International Council 2009-2010

Ambassador Masamichi Hanabusa, President of the ESU International 2008 – 2009 was unable to attend and sent his apologies. His report was tabled, please find attached.

a) Voting for President of the International Council 2009-10

Lord Hunt outlined the voting procedure by reading out the formal minute for the 2003 International Council Meeting and Article 7 from the St Petersburg Constitution:

i) Formal minute: Election of the President

“The International Council decided that in 2004, invitations would be issued for nominations which must be received three months before the International Council Meeting. Nominations would be reviewed by a review committee of the International Council consisting of the Chairman, Deputy Chairman and Secretary-General. The committee would ascertain the willingness and ability of candidates to serve as President. Nominations would then be taken to the International Council for the vote.”

ii) Article 7 - The President

“A President of the International Council shall be elected for a term of one year only by the International Council from member countries other than the UK and USA to demonstrate and symbolise the international expansion and diversity of the English-Speaking Union today. The President is authorized by the Council to speak for the English-Speaking Union internationally on appropriate occasions.”

b) The Chairman went on to say that there was one candidate nominated for election: Arne Zettersten, Chairman Emeritus, ESU Denmark.

c) Following a show of hands by those present, Arne Zettersten was approved as President of the International Council 2009-10.

d) Lord Hunt presented the new president with the International Council medal. Ambassador Hanabusa will have an inscribed replica medal to mark his term as President delivered to him in Japan.

7) Report of the Chairman Emeritus of the ESU International Council

Lord Hunt called upon Lord Watson to give his report on his fourth year as Chairman Emeritus of the ESU International Council.

a) Lord Watson (LW) emphasised the continuing momentum of the ESU and explored the reasons behind it. In addition LW asked the Council to consider the need not just to address the contemporary desire for English which is market driven but also the meaning of English for the global economy and for political development.

b) LW presented to the Council, ideas for establishing a Centre for Dialogue and Exchange in Cyprus by the Pharos Foundation (led by Garo Keheyan) in partnership with ESU Cyprus.

c) LW highlighted and drew the Council’s attention to the launches in Cyprus and Albania and the ESU Conference held in Paris.

d) LW called upon the Council to examine the prioritisation of future expansion and to look at where the ESU is not currently present and consider where our priorities should lie. LW gave the examples of South Africa and the Middle East.

- e) LW suggested to the Council that it ought to consider new criteria in deciding where the ESUs international expansion focus ought to lie. LW also suggested that those criteria might be based on where the ESU is most needed.
- f) LW emphasised the need for the Council's greater involvement and assistance with disputes or issues involving International ESUs in order to avoid or to prevent incidences similar to that of ESU Australia.
- g) LW stressed the importance that ESU USA should play an influential role in the ESU's international programmes.

8) Secretary-General's Report

Lord Hunt called upon Mike Lake to give his Secretary-General's Report for 2008-09.

ML informed the Council that his immediate priorities have been to build a new management team at Dartmouth House and to ensure that no momentum is lost through the busy summer period. ML then stated that he anticipates that he will then be in a position to review the international work and to recommend a development plan to the International Council in the early part of next year.

ML emphasised two particular priorities:

- A clear and compounding strategy for the international work and the union of global partners
- Enhanced profile and influence for the ESU internationally

ML presented the draft terms of reference for a review of international development to the Council for comment and approval:

Draft Terms of Reference: Review of International Objectives

Background

1. The international breadth of the English-Speaking Union (ESU) has spread beyond the original conception of a special relationship between the UK (and the Commonwealth) and the US. Meanwhile, the nature of the international community, together with the perceived objectives of the ESU as a movement have, similarly, evolved with circumstances.
2. This development has given rise to the need for some process and organisational rigours to be applied, since the growth has not been set within the terms of a fully articulated plan nor has it been accompanied by a legal framework (other than that conceived at St Petersburg to address particular issues).
3. The global organisation is significantly dependent on the leadership and management offered by Dartmouth House, but there is no specific resource established for the purpose (less the role of Secretary-General) and this situation is increasingly anomalous as the membership grows beyond fifty.
4. Meanwhile, the ESU UK has its own international agenda stemming from established charitable objectives originally conceived on a bilateral basis with the US, but now becoming more globally diverse. The distinctiveness of this agenda, as opposed to an agenda set by the community of organisations, needs some definition to avoid future confusion over responsibility.

5. Set against this background and within the framework of a comprehensive review of the ESU UK that is currently under way, it is proposed that a Review of International Objectives and processes is undertaken by the Secretary-General to report initially to the executive and then to the International Council.

Aim

6. The Aim of the Review is to identify the international objectives of the ESU movement, together with the supporting organisation and process, to form the basis of a strategic plan for consideration by the International Council.

Scope

7. The Review will cover:

- The charitable and other objectives of the ESU movement.
- Consideration and development of strategy in terms of relationship with international partners, eg. British Council and Foreign & Commonwealth Office.
- The method for identifying a pattern of growth of new organisations.
- The inter relationship between national bodies and the International Council.

Concurrent Reviews

8. It is intended that this review would be concurrent and linked to a review of the international work of ESU UK.

Timing

9. The Review will be completed by February 2010 for consideration out of committee by the membership of the ESU across its breadth, and after refinement, for endorsement by the International Council at its meeting in 2010.

ML proposed the establishment of a working group formed of Council members and invited applications and invitations from delegates.

This was approved and confirmed by the Council.

9) **ESU Australia**

The Chairman announced that Alec Waugh was not present – report was tabled and Lord Hunt read the following:

As of today's date, all the ESU branches Australia have indicated agreement to the Draft 6 version which establishes

'The consultative council for the English-Speaking Union of the Commonwealth of Australia (AESU)'

A meeting chaired by myself to formally adopt the above, elect the chairman and establish essential duties of the chairman, is being sought, we are having difficulty in getting a date when all the Presidents can attend. The search is on for a date between October and December.

Alec Waugh, National President, ESU New Zealand

Joyce Troughton informed the Council that 7 November in Canberra had been agreed upon as the date and location for the aforementioned meeting.

The Chairman and the Council noted the progress made on this issue and thanked Alec Waugh for all the work and efforts regarding this issue. The Chairman asked Mike Lake to clarify with Alec Waugh whether 'Draft 6' is the same document circulated to the Council in 2008.

10) Honorary Treasurer's Report

- a) The Honorary Treasurer Christopher McLaren (CM) stated that the Auditors had confirmed that the accounts tabled had been properly prepared and showed that the fund balance carried forward for the year ended 30 April 2009 was £7,473.
- b) CM reported that the income of £2,063 was the contribution of subscriptions during the year, and costs of the Council amounted to £423. This resulted in a surplus for the year of £1,790
- c) CM reported that though this compared with a deficit for 2007/8 of £6,109, the balance of £7,473 carried forward had declined by £4,319 (36%) from the opening balance for 2007/8. The better result for 2008/9 was due to the International Council being held in Edinburgh rather than in Tokyo;
- d) This deterioration was largely due to ESUs who had failed to pay their subscriptions in the recent and in past years, resulting in a write off of subscriptions as bad debts of £2,910 in the 2008/9 accounts.
- e) The Honorary Treasurer thanked those ESUs who had paid their subscription fees promptly and reported that he would continue to encourage the accounts department to send out invoices early in the year and to send them out electronically. CM also made a serious plea to all International ESUs to pay their subscriptions and to pay them promptly. In addition CM stressed the need for those International ESUs which have issues with paying to approach the Honorary Treasurer and the Executive of the International Council in good time to discuss options.
- f) The accounts were approved and signed.

11) Looking to the Future

Lord Hunt called upon Zenel Hoxha to submit his bid to host the 2010 International Council Meeting in Tirana, Albania.

Following the presentation, a number of Council delegates raised issues regarding travel and visas to Albania, resources and infrastructure for the Meeting itself and the capacity of the tourist industry for the cultural programme. In line with these concerns, the Council delegated the decision on the location for next year's meeting to the International Council Executive.

During the Country Report section of the Council Meeting programme, Garo Keheyan (GK) expressed his intention to bid to host the 2010 Meeting in Nicosia, Cyprus. William Miller asked GK to deliver a written bid to the Executive of the International Council to be considered alongside the former bid by ESU Albania. A written bid has now been received.

Regarding dates for the 2010 Meeting: The Council agreed that the Meeting should not occur before 9 September (due to Ramadan) and not during 21-24 September (due to a clash with planned ESU USA events). Date to be agreed with International Council Executive in reference to decision on location.

Lord Hunt asked the Council if there were any suggestions or bids for locations for the 2012 World Members Conference.

Bids were received by ESU Portugal and ESU Russia-St Petersburg. The Council delegated discussion of these bids to the International Council Executive.

The Council asked if the guidelines for International Council Meetings and World Members Conferences could be circulated to members. Annette Fisher agreed to send out the documents after their review by the Strategic Review Team.

12) AOB

No other business and consequently Lord Hunt called the meeting to a close at 12:15pm