

# **Seventeenth Douzelage Conference**

**KÖTZTING**

**16th-19th September 1999**

## **PRESENT**

### **ALTEA**

Mr. Javier Saenz  
Mrs. Feli Navarro  
Mrs. M-Angeles Berenguer  
Mr. Tomas Gonzalez

### **BELLAGIO**

Mr. Alessandro Nettuno  
Mrs. Angela Gilardoni  
Mrs. Anna Fiume  
Mr. Lorenzo Gandola  
Mr. Simone Cataneo  
Ms. Valeria Vaccani

### **BUNDORAN**

Mr. Joe McNulty  
Mr. Michael McMahon  
Mr. Tiernan Brady

### **GRANVILLE**

Mr. Bernard Husson  
Mrs. Mathilde Prost  
Mr. Marcel Michel  
Mr. Hermann Montreuil  
Mrs. Annette Michel  
Mr. Pierre Audrain

### **HOLSTEBRO**

Mr. Olaf Sielemann  
Mrs. Mette Sørensen  
Mrs. Ulla Hammelev  
Mr. Ole Hammelev  
Mr. Claus Bredehöft  
Mr. Karsten Kristensen  
Mrs. Annemarie Skovmose

### **HOUFFALIZE**

Mr. Alphonse Henrard  
Mrs. Malou Henrard  
Mr. Gislain Kech  
Mr. Francis Collin  
Mr. Daniel Rob

### **JUDENBURG**

Mr. Gerald Dobnigg  
Mrs. Sandra Fogarascher  
Mr. Erich Heitzer  
Mr. Hans Ströbel  
Mrs. Margit Ergert  
Mr. Peter Zobernik

<b>KARKKILA</b>	Mrs. Riitta Houvinen Mr. Kari Korkiakoski Mrs. Irja Bergman Mrs. Seija Laine Mrs. Helena Palm
<b>KÖTZTING</b>	Mr. Günther Pecher Mr. Hermann Kumpfmüller Mrs. Evi Maurer Mr. Wolfgang Kerscher
<b>MEERSSSEN</b>	Mr. Karel Majoor Mr.& Mrs. Nico van de Vliet Mr. Wim Raedts Mr. & Mrs. Robert Waltmans Mr. & Mrs. Paul Claessens Mr. Joop Hosman Mr. & Mrs. Johan Breukelaer Mr. & Mrs. Peter Gillessen Mr. & Mrs. Hans Ruysink Karin & Reijnders Stahl
<b>NIEDERANVEN</b>	Mr. Jeannot Poiré Mr. Jos Mouton
<b>OXELÖSUND</b>	Mrs. Benita Vikström Mr. Göte Eriksson
<b>PREVEZA</b>	Mrs. Athanasia Tsoutsani Mrs. Vaya Pani Mrs. Alexandrou Pavlos Mr. Kypriotelis Stratis
<b>SESIMBRA</b>	Mr. Alberto Gameiro Miss Maria Manuel Gomes Miss Cristina Conceicao Mrs. Anabela Santos
<b>SHERBORNE</b>	Mr. Jeremy Barker Mr. Chris MacAdie Mrs. Sarah Whittick Mrs. Karin Robson Mr. Luke Mendham

The President made a speech of welcome to all the Delegates, and in particular to the representatives from the Austrian town of Judenburg, attending as observers, and also to the representatives from Susice in the Czech Republic, the twin town of Kötzing.

Wolfgang Ludwig, Kötzing Bürgermeister, congratulated the Douzelage on its many successful achievements whilst his predecessor, Landrat Theo Zellner further noted the links between the region and the neighbouring Czech Republic under the umbrella of EUREGIO.

Dr. Gerhard Schmid, Vice-President of the European Parliament, conveyed a greeting from Mme. Nicole Fontaine, President of the European Parliament, and expressed his admiration and support for the work of The Douzelage which he considered to be a courageous, fascinating and unique symbol of European co-operation. Having noted that the twelve stars of Europe represent balance and harmony, and his hope that The Douzelage would not change its name, he stressed the necessity for Europe to be built up from the grass root level.

The President, in thanking Dr. Schmid, was pleased that the European Parliament recognised the achievements of The Douzelage. Mme. Fontaine had pledged to assist with the request for funding for travel and he hoped that Dr. Schmid would be able to continue with the undertaking. (In subsequent conversation he undertook to champion our requests and the necessary information has been duly sent.)

Mr. Bohumil Knotek of the Czech Republic outlined the work of EUREGIO whose aim was to influence the social, environmental and economic development of the region, starting from the grass root level and ignoring artificial boundaries and frontiers.

#### **A. Business Matters**

1. **The Minutes** of the meeting held in Sherborne, 22nd - 25th April 1999, were approved.
2. **Interim Statement of Accounts** for the period 1st April - 6th September 1999 were received. The President noted that expenses remained well within the budget and said that the Honorary Treasurer had expressed the opinion that it would not be necessary to increase the annual levy, unless additional burdens were laid upon the Presidential Fund.
3. **Accounts** for the purchasing of Simultaneous Translation equipment were circulated by Nico van de Vliet.

There were four points arising :-

1. Not all towns had yet paid which meant that interest was now being incurred. These towns were urged to pay now as a matter of urgency.

2. Insurance: the equipment is safe and secure while in Meerssen and the matter of insurance only arises for the two weeks in the year when it is in use at Conferences. It was agreed that :-

- **insurance for these periods was necessary**
- **a formula needed to be found as to how this expense should be met**

**Action: Nico van de Vliet  
Jeannot Poiré  
The President  
Vice-Presidents**

3. Transport: the cost is nil when the Delegates from Meerssen are travelling by car, but very considerable when the cases have to be taken by aeroplane.

- **this expense also should be met by The Douzelage**
- **a formula should be found to meet this expense**

**Action: Nico van de Vliet  
Jeannot Poiré  
The President  
Vice-Presidents**

4. Surplus money: since all towns had now agreed to contribute, a surplus had been achieved. Assuming that it had not been absorbed by interest payments, it was agreed that :-

- **since returning the money to each town would involve a substantial loss through exchange commissions, the money should be retained by Meerssen in a special fund to meet repairs and maintenance, as they may arise, or for the purchase of additional units.**

#### **4. EU Funding**

Although little recent progress has as yet been achieved, the President undertook to send a Dossier on the request for funding for travel to Dr. Gerhard Schmid MEP, Frau Emilia Müller MEP and all other interested parties. FIDDEM would also be lobbied and it was hoped that they would be represented at the forthcoming conference in Altea.

**Action: ALL TOWNS to  
continue lobbying their respective MEPs.**

The suggestion by Bellagio that the Douzelage should have representation at Brussels was well received.

**Action: The President agreed to  
approach the Dorset/La Manche Office**

**5. Extension of The Douzelage**

Delegates attending the conference from the town of Susice in the Czech Republic, twin town of Kötzing, conveyed their greetings.

The President spoke of his recent visit to the Austrian town of Judenburg and concluded that Judenburg would make a very suitable partner.

Having introduced the members of their delegation, Judenburg gave a video presentation on their town and confirmed their confidence that they would shortly be joining The Douzelage. The decision will be made at a meeting of the Town Council on the 28th October. The President noted that this would then be an appropriate time to renew the Charter.

**6. Karkkila**

Kari Korkiakoski presented a brief description of his town, host to the Douzelage Community Play in the Summer of 2000.

**7. Election of President**

Aware of the honour and responsibility, Jeremy Barker thanked the delegates following his re-election as President by 28 votes to nil: he stated, however, that he would not stand again after the three year term.

Bernard Husson (Granville) and Riitta Huovinen (Karkkila) were elected as Vice-Presidents.

Thanks are due to Günther Pecher for the manner in which the elections were conducted.

**B. Survey of recent events**

Details were circulated by the towns together with information listing contact names, telephone/ fax and e-mail addresses.

Frau Emilia Müller MEP welcomed the achievements of The Douzelage and reminded the delegates the principle of the EU in the words of Jean Monet "We do not unite states and nations, we unite people"; the unification of East and West Europe being the most successful peace policy of the century. The Douzelage has recognised that the driving force of European unification and co-operation starts at the grass roots level.

Herr Georg Steiner, Tourismusverband Manager in East Bavaria, spoke of the effects of growing tourism in the region with the paramount need to protect the environment. Although public transport was not generally popular its use had to be encouraged. The region was rich in local culture and has many natural facilities to offer and it was important to encourage the integration of local residents and the tourists with the enterprise being continued across into the neighbouring Czech Republic.

## **C. Projects not yet finished or in preparation**

### **1. San Felipé**

With the deadline now reached and €2,275,000 raised, Sesimbra thanked the delegates and, in particular, Meerssen, Kötzing and Bundoran who had contributed. (Sherborne has subsequently sent a contribution.) A final report would be circulated at the next conference.

**Action: Sesimbra**

### **2. Holstebro Music Festival**

With only two towns indicating intention to participate, further application forms would be sent out to be followed by a fax which would confirm whether or not the event would take place.

**Action: Holstebro**

**ALL TOWNS  
even if negative**

### **3. Holstebro Art Exchanges**

Information on the two exhibitions - one being for miniature works - has been circulated by fax and most towns confirmed participation in the project

**Action: All Towns**

### **4. Youth exchanges**

- Houffalize 'Stay in the Belgian Ardennes': Karkkila, Granville, Preveza and Bellagio have answered positively whilst others were still hopeful. Houffalize would arrange details with the participating towns.

**Action: Houffalize**

- Kötzing 'European Youth Week': Sonja Schwarz stressed the invaluable experience to the participants and hoped that more people from the Douzelage towns would come, whilst the President confirmed the excellence of the project and that it definitely merited support by all the towns. As finance and travel were always at issue it was suggested that the Benelux countries could form a combined group: the cheapness of weekend rail journeys in Germany was underlined. Kötzing particularly requested that all towns should ensure that the information was being forwarded to the right people and that a response of some kind would be given.

**Action: All Towns**

- Bellagio 'Mini Parliament': with details circulated Bellagio emphasised the success of the project. It was confirmed that the stay in the town was completely free and that the only expense involved was travel. The date for 2000 would be 7th - 10th May but it was also noted that this was very near the dates of the meeting in Altea.

- Niederaanven 'Millennium Scout Camp': with information circulated the deadline for replies would be the end of November in order to request funding from Brussels.

**Action: All Towns**

**BY 30/11/99**

- Sherborne/Preveza exchanges: these have now taken place for three years and continue to grow in popularity.

- Karkkila/Sherborne student exchange: these are proposed for October 1999 and March 2000.

**5. Altea Symposium 4th - 7th May 2000**

The dates were confirmed and that there would be a parallel Education Meeting. The Douzelage Community Play committee hoped to meet and the Altea tennis tournament would take place during the same time.

**6. Programme of future meetings**

14th-17th September 2000	Preveza
Spring 2001	Niederanven
September 2001	Karkkila
Spring 2002	Oxelösund
Autumn 2002	Houffalize
Spring 2003	Sesimbra
Autumn 2003	Holstebro

The dates for the meeting in Preveza were confirmed, although it was noted that this would be difficult for Altea. **(Subsequent negotiation has led to the Preveza meeting being brought forward to an earlier date - 17th September. We all owe Preveza thanks for the promptness and flexibility they have shown in altering their date.)**

**7. Firaltea**

With a temporary change of location there would be limited space and it was therefore impossible for Douzelage towns to be invited this year. Invitations would be sent out for 2000.

**8. Altea tennis**

The tournament was confirmed as taking place during the Altea meeting: details were circulated by the towns of their sporting organisations

**Action: All Towns**

**9. WORKSHOPS**

**Economic & Tourist Development**

It was agreed that special package tours to Douzelage towns would be too expensive but that each town could tailor a programme for their visitors. Preveza were requested to prepare arrangements for visitors to their meeting in September 2000.

**Action: Preveza**

A report on the tourist situation in Preveza was read out by the Mayor and circulated.



Street Fairs were thought to be too large an undertaking for The Douzelage but Gourmet Markets were of on a more manageable scale. Bellagio reported on their successful 1992 Fair when items had been sent from other towns to be sold on their behalf. Jeremy Barker reminded the delegates of the advice given by Tony Watts of the Dorset/La Manche Office.

### **Community Liaison**

With the President stressing the vital need for Douzelage awareness the towns reported as follows :-

**Sherborne:** a Community Liaison Officer has been specifically appointed to increase local awareness of The Douzelage. The proposed town and Douzelage websites will further help.

**Kötzting:** The Douzelage meetings and European Youth Week always obtain good publicity. Local businesses show little interest.

**Preveza:** local awareness still needs to be encouraged.

**Altea:** excellent coverage in the local media.

**Bellagio:** Mini-Parliament is a good publicity vehicle and further material and information is put into schools, shops and the local press.

**Granville:** Douzelage activities are reported in the local press. It was considered that the best way forward is through activities for the young such as the Mini-Parliament, school exchanges and the Youth Week as the parents would then also get involved. The Passport scheme has not proved successful.

**Meerssen:** one person has been specifically appointed to cover Douzelage publicity.

**Holstebro:** success stories such as the student exchanges and art projects raise publicity.

**Karkkila:** very good coverage with keen local Press and people from The Douzelage towns would be welcomed to stay with families. The successful exchanges and the Community Play raise excellent publicity.

**Oxelösund:** so far a low profile but now hope to improve.

As The Douzelage website was already set up by Sherborne they would liaise with Oxelösund on further developments.

**Action: Sherborne  
Oxelösund**

### **Sporting Links**

It had been decided at the Sherborne meeting to concentrate on establishing sporting links with the 14 to 16 year age group. Altea would be circulating immediately information on their international football competition to be held in July 2000.

**Action: Altea**

## **10. Troisième Age exchanges**

Successful contacts have already been made with considerable potential for different types of exchanges both at group and on smaller personal levels. Those

towns with appropriate organisations or individual groups were Houffalize, Meerssen, Niederaanven, Sherborne, Holstebro, Karkkila, Bellagio and Granville.

**Action: those towns with  
Troisième Age organisations to inform their groups which  
other towns are similarly organised, giving a contact name,  
number and address for each**

**11. Exchange of Town Councillors**

The purpose of these exchanges is to promote mutual awareness of the way in which each Council functions, so that each may learn from the methods of the others. With the exception of Houffalize, all towns expressed some interest in this scheme: Delegates were requested to circulate the relevant contact names.

**Action: All Towns that  
expressed interest to inform their councillors which other  
towns are interested**

**12. Exchange of Town Librarians**

Sherborne and Karkkila have an exchange: Holstebro also expressed interest.

**D. Douzelage Play**

It was confirmed that it was not yet possible to apply for funding from the EU but that it would probably be given. Karkkila informed the delegates that there were no hotels in Karkkila but that local families were all very eager to host visitors. Towns will be kept fully informed as matters progress.

**Action: Karkkila  
Sherborne**

Following a report by Sesimbra on the situation in East Timor, sympathy and support was expressed by the towns. It was agreed that the situation was being given world-wide media coverage and that most governments were pledging their assistance.

**E. New Projects**

**1. Douzelage Constitution**

A Draft was discussed and which would be circulated to the partner towns for further consideration at the Altea meeting.

**2. Exchange of Primary Health and Social Health Care Personnel**

Details of the project were circulated by Karkkila with all towns, other than Bellagio, expressing interest and their intention to pass on the information to the relevant parties. Please note that this concerns all levels of the medical profession and the social services.

**Action: all interested  
towns to contact their medical and social services, and to  
inform them which other towns are interested.**