

**MINUTES**  
**12TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF DELEGATES**  
**EUROPEAN UNION OF THE DEAF**  
**12-13 OCTOBER 1996, BRUSSELS**

**1. OPENING, WELCOMING ADDRESS AND APOLOGIES**

The President of the European Union of the Deaf (EUD), Mr. Knud Søndergaard opened the 12th Annual Conference of Delegates of the EUD and extended a warm welcome to all persons present.

Knud Søndergaard dedicated a special welcome to Ms. Liisa Kauppinen, president of the World Federation of the Deaf (WFD) representing Finland, Mr. Jeff McWhinney, executive director of the British Deaf Association (BDA) and Ms. Carol-lee Aquiline, General Secretary of the WFD.

He also explained that the Dutch Deaf Association (NEDO) would make a video during the Annual Conference and a journalist was present of the Dutch Deaf Magazine Woord & Gebaar.

Apologies had been received from Asger Bergmann (DK) replaced by Lene Ravn and from Terry Riley, vice President of the EUD.

**2. ROLE CALL**

See attached list of participants (Annex I).

**3. MINUTES OF THE 11th AC HELD ON 13-14/10/95**

Andre Lathouwers (B) remarked that on page 10 Belgium Flemish part; not 16 but 27 programmes were planned.

Helly Christopoulou (Gr) remarked that on page 12 Elections not Salvatore Triolo but Salvatore Falata was meant.

Lars Åke Wikström (S) asked if the minutes could be distributed within three months after the Annual Conference.

Knud Søndergaard answered that the EUD Staff would try to mail out the minutes earlier but encouraged the delegates to send in their written comments as well as this was never happened in the past.

The minutes were accepted by the delegates.

Knud Søndergaard explained that the points on the Agenda would be changed, due to the departure of Helga Stevens after the lunch break. The Council had proposed in a motion that EUD should become a non-profit organisation with legal status under Belgian law. As this would be a very important decision decided was that this should be discussed right now.

#### **4. EUD BECOMING AN INDEPENDENT LEGAL ORGANISATION**

Helga Stevens explained that in principle four options were open to EUD to establish an independent organisation in Belgium (*see also explanatory memorandum*).

##### **1. Non Profit organisation**

Helga Stevens explained that EUD could set up a non-profit organisation under Belgian law but that EUD could never meet the requirement of 3/5 of the member of this organisation being Belgians and therefore this option would be impossible for EUD.

##### **2. Foundation**

Helga Stevens explained that this form was mostly used for museums, big theatres etc. A capital of 25.000 Ecu needed to be set aside at a bank. EUD could never meet the strict requirements to be come a foundation and therefore this option would be impossible for EUD as well.

##### **3. International Non Profit Association**

Helga Stevens explained that this form was often used for associations with many international members like EUD. No capital was required, except for membership fees and in case the International Association would go bankrupt there would be limited liability for the members. The Association would enjoy a preferable and low tax rate and statutes could be changed and later adapted to new situations. The Belgian government needed to give permission for establishment of the International Association but rules were liberal. The procedure would take 6 months. The Council of the International Association needed to have at least one Belgian member.

Helga Stevens concluded that this form would suit the EUD being an international; European organisation the most.

##### **4. European Economic Interest Grouping (EEIG)**

This was a European form for which the framework was set by the European Community Council of Ministers in 1985 to facilitate the set up of European organisations in the EU.

An big disadvantage of the EEIG was that the EEIG could not work independently for itself, its activities would be subject to the activities of its members. Furthermore each member could be held fully and jointly liable for all the debts and obligations of EUD, which could be a dangerous situation for richer Members of EUD.

Liisa Kauppinen (SF) thanked Helga Stevens for this information and asked if an international association (option 3) would still be able to get funding through European Programmes. Furthermore she said that the Conference needed to discuss the purpose of EUD. If the purpose of EUD would be a forum for cooperation, there would be no big financial responsibilities for the members and Liisa Kauppinen suggested therefore to choose option 4.

Helga Stevens responded that the third option would be a much stronger form for EUD.

Johan Wesemann added that the NADs needed to take more responsibility in the future for EUD.

Knud Søndergaard added that DDL had announced to withdraw next year from its current responsibilities and therefore EUD needed a legal base.

Liisa Kauppinen (SF) repeated her question why EUD would not opt for option 4, the European Economic Interest Grouping.

Helga Stevens responded that the EEIG was based on a European directive and national legislations. Furthermore she explained that if EUD would choose the International non-profit organisation it would be made clear in the statutes that EUD would be a European organisation only with European objectives. By making this clear in the statutes, it would still be possible to receive funding through programmes of the European Union.

Luis Cañón (E) asked which legal status the new independent European Disability Forum had chosen.

Johan Wesemann responded that the Forum had chosen option 3, the International non-profit Association under Belgian law. He added that it would be a good idea if EUD would follow the framework of the Forum.

Lars Åke Wikström (S) asked who had decided that option 1, 2 and 4 were not suitable for EUD and that option 3 would be the best.

Helga Stevens responded that she had made these decisions together with the Council, from her legal point of view.

Lars Åke Wikström (S) remarked that such a fundamental decision could not be made immediately. The NADs needed time to study the papers available and how the statutes needed to be adapt.

Knud Søndergaard replied that the Annual Conference needed to make this principle decision. The Council and Staff members of EUD would than continue

the work following the chosen option and with the help of a legal expert and with a special working working group to revise the Statutes.

Helder Duarte (P) said that it would not be easy for the NADs now to make this decision. There was no information available on how to adapt the statutes and the NADs needed more time to study the different options.

Christopher Jones (EIRE) agreed with Helder Duarte.

Knud Søndergaard reminded the delegates of the fact that EUD currently had no legal position which meant a very weak position.

Liisa Kauppinen (SF) repeated her question why EUD did not choose the European Economic Interest Grouping and said that if EUD would be a forum of cooperation this option would be possible. She said that EUD had a very weak position at the moment and that the NADs had the least responsibilities of all members of European disability NGO's. The NADs needed to be liable for EUD which would mean more independence for EUD and which would be more appreciated by the European institutions. She explained about the European Blind Union (EBU), a very strong and independent European NGO with its members being liable for the EBU.

Furthermore Liisa Kauppinen asked the Council why EUD should have to chose a legal status under Belgian law and she advised to examine all other possibilities before making a decision.

Helga Stevens promised to ask information on the legal status of EBU and to investigate the different possibilities further.

Luis Cañón (E) said that it would be impossible to make a decision during this Conference as all delegates had too many questions and were too afraid. It would be unwise to take such a principle decision right now. He suggested to make a decision during next Annual Conference.

David Bullock (UK) suggested that EUD should follow the legal status of the Forum and asked information about the objectives of the Forum and if they were very different of those of EUD.

Johan Wesemann responded that the Forum was an International Non-Profit Association and that EUD should follow the Forums' framework.

Markku Jokinen (member of Council) said he was happy with the discussions going on, but he reminded the NADs to think about their future role and what



they wanted from EUD. Did they want a forum of cooperation or a strong umbrella organisation?

Knud Søndergaard added that EUD was set up with the aim to make the European Union institutions aware of Deaf people and their needs. EUD needed to follow political questions, Parliament and Commission proposals and directives to protect the interests of Deaf people. He suggested that the aim could be changed and that the paper of Helga Stevens could be a starting point to work further upon.

## **5. THE SIGN LANGUAGES PROJECT**

Helga Stevens explained that following the Portugal Conference "The Way Forward" a long letter had been sent out to the NADs explaining the set up of National Committees in the framework of the Sign Languages Project. She said she was happy with this opportunity to explain now more about the project to the delegates.

Fact sheets had been sent out in the 11 EU languages explaining the project. An optimal translation had been tried but the used translation office in Brussels did not have knowledge about Deafness and so translation problems had occurred. The assistance of the NADs was needed. Also the NADs needed to send their mailing list and costs of distributing the fact sheets to EUD in order to get reimbursed for these costs.

Next to the fact sheets two videos would be produced in international signs. Unfortunately the EUD had not yet received the contract of the European Commission. Commitments between EUD and Bristol had already been made and a contract between EUD and Bristol had been drafted. Bristol would start the work on 1 November 1996.

The aim of the National Committees (NCs) would be to create a political impact on the work of the NADs. EUD would support the NCs on a European level only. Continuity of the NCs needed to be ensured, the NCs should not "die" after one year but work needed to be continued. Broad support needed to be created for the recognition of Sign Language. Helga Stevens stressed the importance of government representatives participating in the NCs to exchange political views and establish useful contacts within the governments.

Helga Stevens also stressed the importance of EFSLI being included in the NCs. EUD had received a request from EFSLI to be part of the NCs and EUD supported this request.

Furthermore the NCs could choose their own national priorities to work upon.

Bristol prepared a questionnaire to make a comparing survey on the different situations of Sign Languages in the EU. The results would be presented to the

European Parliament.

A Final Conference would be organised on 2 and 3 October 1997 in Brussels.

Helga Stevens explained that on 11 October a Steering Committee meeting had taken place. During this meeting the members of the Steering Committee had discussed the involvement of the grassroots and the project not becoming an "elite project". Several ideas had been proposed;

- \* the factsheet could be written in easier language,
- \* people could go to local Deaf clubs to explain about the project and
- \* NADs could be asked to make their own videos in the national Sign Language.

Lars Åke Wikström (S) remarked that many translation mistakes had occurred in the Swedish translation of the factsheet. He stressed the importance of correct translation and using the right terminology.

Helga Stevens said the EUD and the Steering Committee were aware of these mistakes and said that a list of keywords would be made with correct translation in all 11 languages. Furthermore she added that it would be appreciated if the NADs could take care of the translations of the next fact sheet.

Knud Søndergaard said the Danish translation had been perfect. There were two possibilities:

- \* NADs could take care of the translation or
- \* Draft translations would be made by the translation office to be checked and corrected by the NADs.

Luis Cañón (S) expressed his confusion. He wondered if the NCs should already start their work independently or if they had to wait for Bristol university to contact them.

Helga Stevens replied saying that the NCs could already start the work and could decide upon their national priorities, but they needed to wait until Bristol had finalised the questionnaire which needed to be incorporated in the work of the NCs.

Furthermore she added that Bristol refused to start working before the contract between EUD and Bristol had been signed.

Markku Jokinen said that the help of the NADs was needed to make the project a success. He said this would be the opportunity of the century for Deaf people in the European Union to improve the status of Sign Languages in their countries

and exchange information with other countries. He stressed that now was the time to undertake action! This would be the chance for Deaf people; a one in a life time opportunity. Together the Deaf people would be strong!

Christopher Jones (EIRE) said Ireland had a problem. If they would ask top level government representation in the NC, the Irish government would send a junior secretary. He asked for suggestions how to solve this problem.

Andre Lathouwers (B) asked how the NCs would know what was going on in other NCs? He asked if the NCs could cooperate with each other?

Helga Stevens said the NCs needed to make bimonthly reports and send them to her. Helga Stevens would summarise the reports and distribute them to the other NCs for information. Furthermore, it would be up to the NCs to decide if they wished cooperation with other NCs.

Knud Søndergaard thanked Helga Stevens for her information and welcomed Diane Sutton, lobby person of the Disability Intergroup of the European Parliament who would present a lecture.

## **6 LECTURE AND DISCUSSION WITH DIANE SUTTON**

### **7 DISCUSSION ON THE POST HELIOS II SITUATION**

Diane Sutton thanked the EUD for inviting her to the Annual Conference. Her speech was based on three key areas of her work;

- \* the Post HELIOS II situation,
- \* the Mary Banotti MEP Report on the Rights of Disabled People and
- \* the non discrimination clause in the Treaty.

*See for speech Diane Sutton attached paper.*

During and after Diane's speech the delegates were able to raise questions.

#### Questions and discussions with regard to the Post HELIOS II situation.

Liisa Kauppinen (SF) asked how the future of HELIOS II would look like.

Knud Søndergaard asked if the Sign Languages Project could continue after one year.

Marjan Stuifzand (NL) asked suggestions how to make a good impact on the European Parliament.

André Lathouwers (B) asked tips how Deaf people needed to lobby.

Diane Sutton responded André Lathouwers and Marjan Stuifzand by saying that lobbying depended on each situation. If Deaf people wanted to lobby on a special subject with an appointment rapporteur, it would be a good idea to make contacts

with this rapporteur. Furthermore, it was a wise idea to build up good personal contacts with a view MEPs.

The report of Mary Banotti on the rights of disabled people could be used as a reference framework. If the Parliament or Commission would not follow up on the resolutions the report could be used to demonstrate what they had agreed upon. Diane Sutton demonstrated this with the example of Autism Europe which had made a written declaration; a charter on the rights of people with autism. The charter had been adopted by European Parliament and now could be used on national level to press national governments to undertake actions to improve the situation of people with autism in their countries.

Diane Sutton responded to Liisa Kauppinen by saying that she did not expect a successor programme for HELIOS ever. The Commission had adopted the idea of "mainstreaming" and Diane Sutton thought it would be most likely that disabled people needed to mainstream as well in other European Programmes. Germany had blocked the legal base for both a programme on Poverty and on Elderly. However, the programme on equal opportunities for men and women had been adopted thanks to a very effective lobby by the womens lobby. Therefore Diane Sutton stressed the need for lobbying the German government; show them the needs and wishes of disabled people and convince them of the need for a programme for disabled people.

MEPs were convinced that a special programme for disabled people would help to achieve mainstreaming. Diane Sutton stressed again the need for lobbying the social affairs ministers of the national governments as they would finally decide to adapt or reject a post HELIOS programme.

The Commission had tabled a Communication Paper on Equality of Opportunity for People with Disabilities. In this paper the Commission had expressed the need to support disability NGO's and the independent European Disability Forum. Diane Sutton encouraged everybody to send in their comments on this paper to Mrs. Barbara Schmidbauer MEP.

Diane Sutton responded Knud Søndergaard by saying that a budgetline of 6 Mecu of "prepatory measures for cooperation to foster equal opportunities for disabled people" had been proposed.

This budgetline included allocations for

- \* pilot projects involving at least two Member States to promote full citizenship and equalisation of opportunities using the UN Standard Rules on the Equalisation of Opportunities as a framework.
- \* resources to explore possibilities of the information society for disabled people,
- \* resources for information and public awareness measures,



\* resources to promote access to information, sign language and national information days.

As sign language had been specifically mentioned Diane Sutton said there was no reason why the Sign Languages Project could not continue and she added that she hoped that the Sign Languages Project would establish a precedent.

A discussion followed on the term "mainstreaming".

Lars Åke Wikström (S) informed the delegates about his membership in a social integration Commission within the HELIOS II Programme and said that the term "mainstreaming" was used all the time.

Rudi Sailer (D) said this term was extremely dangerous for Deaf people and that it should be carefully used. He explained about the cochlear implant problem in Germany and that the medical world tried to make Deaf people in Germany hearing.

Johan Wesemann informed about his visit to Germany on 17 and 18 October and that he would talk with Mr. Ulrich Hase, Chair of the Deutscher Gehörlosen Bund and adviser to the Schleswig-Holstein government about the cochlear implant problem in Germany and the position of the German government towards European Social Programmes.

#### Questions and discussions with regard to the non discrimination clause in the Treaty.

Diane Sutton explained about disabled people being invisible in the Treaty of the European Union and the need for disabled people to lobby on a national level for the need of a non discrimination clause in the treaty.

Diane Sutton informed that Ireland (current Presidency of the European Union) had placed social policies and the non discrimination clause on the agenda of the Inter Governmental Conference preparing the revision of the Treaty, which was extremely positive.

But changes in the Treaty needed unanimity. Diane Sutton explained that the UK government was against the non discrimination clause, but elections in the UK would take place before 9 May 1997 and it was hoped that a new government would not block the clause.

Diane Sutton furthermore explained that the Netherlands would take over the presidency of Ireland and that citizenship and the non discrimination clause needed to stay a high priority. The Dutch government needed to be made aware of this.

Liisa Kauppinen (SF) asked if the non discrimination clause would be based, next to disabilities, on languages and Diane Sutton responded by saying that this was

not the case.

Ida Collu (I) and Knud Søndergaard both stressed the need for lobbying national government representatives.

Diane Sutton added that an external institute called Tavistock worked on the evaluation of the HELIOS II Programme. The final report should be ready in 1997.

The Commission itself would make the decision to continue HELIOS or not. Especially it would be important for disabled people to convince Social Affairs Commissioner Mr. Flynn of the need of a post HELIOS Programme. But, disabled people needed to come up with new innovative ideas in order to convince him.

Johan Wesemann explained that the word HELIOS had a very negative impact and that this word should not be used anymore. He stressed the need for reading the Communication Paper of the Commission and supported the delegates to send in their comments to the Commission and to Mrs. Schmidbauer MEP to make sure the Deaf view would be represented in the final version of this paper.

Lars Åke Wikström explained about the four sectors within the HELIOS II Programme:

- \* Education,
- \* Functional Rehabilitation,
- \* Economic integration and
- \* social integration.

and his involvement within the last sector and in specific working group number 7; Ways to reduce the socio-psychological barriers experienced by people with a sensorial disability.

Lars Åke Wikström explained that Deaf issues always had been a low priority on their agenda. Lars had tried to put Deafness higher on the list of priorities and had tried to create awareness among hearing people for Deaf people by organising study visits. He had explained the group that integration and removal of barriers not only meant the removal of physical barriers but also the use of sign language interpreters. This had been adopted in the 1995 report of this group.

Furthermore, Lars Åke Wikström explained that other sectors like Education needed to be made aware as well of the need of sign language for Deaf children at school.

He explained that because the term "mainstreaming" now was used by everybody, it would be useless for Deaf people to fight against this term. Deaf people should explain everybody their views on integration.

In November 1996 final meetings would take place and afterwards final reports would be drafted and Lars Åke Wikström hoped he could make Mr. Lamoral (Director of HELIOS II) and Mr. Wehrens (Head of Division DG V E3 disabled people within the European Commission) aware of the needs of Deaf people and their interpretation of mainstreaming.

*Copies of the 1995 reports of the HELIOS Sectors are available from the HELIOS Team of Experts in all 11 EU languages (an English report of the working group of Lars Åke Wikstrom is attached to these minutes).*

The discussion on the post HELIOS II situation was closed. Knud Søndergaard thanked Diane Sutton for attending the Annual Conference, presenting a very useful speech and answering questions.

## **8 TO RECEIVE THE ANNUAL REPORT 1995-1996**

Knud Søndergaard explained that the 1996 subvention of the European Commission had been received on time, except for the subvention of the Sign Languages Project. Knud Søndergaard thanked all NADs who had hosted a Conference in 1995 and 1996. He furthermore stressed the need for the NADs to work on the implementation of the adopted resolutions during EUD Conferences.

Luis Cañón (E) asked what happened after the Seminar on cochlear implants in December 1995 and if a final report was available.

Johan Wesemann explained that after the Seminar the working group felt that an extra meeting was needed in order to produce a final report and accordingly a subvention had been asked to the European Commission.

Mr. Wehrens (European Commission, Head of Division DG V E3) wished producers of cochlear implants to be included in the working group which Johan Wesemann had refused. After months of discussions the Commission finally agreed to fund a final meeting for the original members of the working group. One of the members of the working group; Professor Blume (university of Amsterdam) had drafted a report including the conclusions of the working group. Due to the different opinions present in the working group it was difficult to reach consensus on the report. Johan Wesemann hoped that a final report would be ready for distribution in November 1996.

Annegrethe Pedersen (DK) said that the DDL had covered a lot of EUD debts in advance before HELIOS funding was received. The set up of an independent legal organisation to Belgian law would be highly appreciated by DDL. Furthermore DDL had agreed the chairpersonship for Knud Søndergaard to continue one more year.

David Bullock (UK) thanked, on behalf of all delegates, Denmark for allowing Knud Søndergaard chairing EUD one more year and taking financial responsibility for EUD.

The Annual Report 1995-1996 was adopted.

## **9. INFORMATION ON THE FINANCIAL SITUATION**

Knud Søndergaard explained the EUD accounts of 1994, 1995 and 8 months of 1996 had been audited by a Danish accountant. Due to late receiving of payments of the European Commission in 1994 and 1995 this revision could not take place in an earlier stage.

Christopher Jones (EIRE) asked why the amount under assets in 1996 was 0 and why under current liabilities the loan of DDL (54.267 Ecu) was not paid back in 1996.

Knud Søndergaard answered that probably the Irish and Danish people had different ways of bookkeeping and he suggested that the Irish delegates and he would discuss the accounts in a separate discussion.

Liisa Kauppinen (SF) remarked that EUD had received a large gift from DDL in 1995 (31.955 Ecu) and asked if this gift had been necessary to keep EUD running.

Knud Søndergaard explained that DDL had received money from the Danish government for the EUD management & leaderships course and that the Board of DDL had decided to cover all expenses in relation to this course.

David Bullock (UK) emphasised the great support of DDL to EUD and thanked the DDL for this on behalf of all delegates.

Peter Dimmel (A) asked if the loan of DDL would be paid back with interest. Knud Søndergaard answered that the loan of DDL would be paid back with a small interest.

Miguel Jimenez Mesa (E, member of Council) thanked Denmark for their support to EUD the past five years.

Christopher Jones (EIRE) remarked that EUD should clear off all debts and that EUD needed a credit controller.

Knud Søndergaard answered that EUD should first become an independent legal



organisation.

The final accounts of 1994, 1995 and the eight months of 1996 were accepted.

## **10 ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT AND A COUNCIL MEMBER**

Dimitra Kokkevi Fotiou (Gr, member of Council) said that this would be her last time as Council member. She had decided to withdraw from the Council in order to make place for new people with new and fresh ideas.

Knud Søndergaard thanked Dimitra Kokkevi Fotiou and remembered all the long discussions the Council members had had together, Dimitra Kokkevi had always been the only woman in the Council, defending the rights of Deaf women in the Council dominated by men. He said they always had had a good cooperation.

Decided was that Murray Holmes (Chair BDA) would chair the election procedure.

Maurice Hayard (B) announced to withdraw his candidature as the situation of EUD becoming an independent organisation and the statutes to be revised was too unclear for him at the moment.

Three candidates for the position of Council member presented themselves;

- \* Ida Collu (I),
- \* Helly Christopoulou (Gr) and
- \* André Lathouwers (B).

Helly Christopoulou was elected as new Council Member.

Knud Søndergaard remained President for one year without objections of the delegates.

## **11 PRESENTATION BY AND DISCUSSIONS WITH JEFF MC WHINNEY ON THE VISION OF EUD**

Jeff McWhinney (chief executive director of the BDA, UK) explained that during the EUD Conference "The Way Forward" in Portugal in May of this year three working groups had worked on the Vision and priorities of EUD. Afterwards, a strategy working group had been established with:

Jeff McWhinney (UK) as Chair and

Johan Wesemann (EUD)

Feliciano Limia (E)

Lars Åke Wikström (S)

Liisa Kauppinen (SF) and

Rachid Mimoun (F) as Members

to implement the vision and priorities as chosen in Portugal into a strategy work plan. A meeting had been held in London on 29 June 1996 with Jeff McWhinney,

Johan Wesemann, Feliciano Limia and Lars Åke Wikström.

After this meeting Jeff McWhinney had further analysed the external trends of EUD and had made an internal review of EUD. Furthermore he had analysed the strengths and weaknesses of EUD, its opportunities and threats and had made an overview of the strategic choices available and had analysed the main purpose of EUD; to achieve full and equal citizenship for Deaf Europeans. (*see annex*)

Jeff McWhinney ended his presentation by saying that he hoped he had given the delegates "food for thought".

The mission statement of EUD (equal opportunities) perfectly connected with the non discrimination clause based on disabilities and he urged the delegates to lobby their national governments.

He furthermore indicated that the proposed budgetlines by the Parliament meant great opportunities for Deaf people.

He furthermore stressed the need for Deaf professionals establishing their own European network.

Other ideas given by Jeff McWhinney:

- \* NADs handing over 0,5% or 2% of their annual budget to EUD in order to create a more independent organisation.
- \* More dialogue and consultancy with FEPEDA.
- \* Create an organisation following WFD model.
- \* Reinforce lobby activities.

Knud Søndergaard thanked Jeff McWhinney for his excellent presentation and said this was a good starting point to work further upon and meant a challenge for the NADs.

Christopher Jones (EIRE) thanked Jeff McWhinney and stressed the need for more details of the working plan and asked more in depth information on the external threats.

Johan Wesemann said that involvement of EUD within HELIOS was not enough. He agreed with Jeff McWhinney that constant lobbying was necessary and that more cooperation between the EUD and the NADs was needed.

Liisa Kauppinen (SF) apologised for not attending the meeting of the strategy working plan and congratulated Jeff McWhinney for his excellent work. She expressed being happy with the model of the NADs being professional organisations. She added to external threats, the parents organisations but also cochlear implants. She said that the paper of Jeff McWhinney was an excellent

paper to start working from. She stressed the need for a long term strategy plan for EUD even if subvention was yet uncertain.

Rudi Sailer (D) said he was impressed by the presentation of Jeff McWhinney. He said that even with financial support from the NADs this would be insufficient to keep EUD running. He said because the first priority would be sign language, Deaf people needed to become managers focussing on marketing strategies to "sell" sign language as a commercial product. Society should become more visual of which everybody could profit from. EUD needed to impress politicians by marketing and selling its own "product", like hearing people earned money by producing and selling hearing aids. He said it would harm the profile of EUD if it would continue to "beg for money".

*Feli Cañón*  
Luis Cañón (E) said Jeff McWhinney had invested a lot of his time in order to make this strategy overview. He added that the strategy working group during its meeting in London had had insufficient time to cover all topics. The working group needed more time and more meetings in order to present a more detailed strategy plan.

Lars Åke Wikström (S) said that during the strategy group meeting in London many discussions had taken place on the visions of EUD and how to achieve these visions as the EUD secretariat was too small to do all this work. He furthermore said that the Swedish Deaf Association (SDR) had good contacts with the parents organisation. A lot of parents in Sweden were not convinced anymore of the oral method and were more and more interested in bilingualism. He stressed the importance of Deaf people influencing this positive process.

Knud Søndergaard said he had been informed that the secretariat of FEPEDA in Paris, France would close down due to a lack of financial resources.

Luis Cañón (E) asked more information about the proposed new budgetlines and what this would mean to EUD.

Johan Wesemann explained that two budget lines had been proposed of each 6 Mecu with the argument that one could not wait for the evaluation of HELIOS II by the Tavistock institute. The budgetlines now had been voted through the Budgets Committee of the European Parliament.

One budgetline was called "preparatory measures for cooperation to foster equal opportunities for disabled people".

It would include:

- \* pilot projects involving at least two Member States to promote full citizenship and equalisation of opportunities using the UN Standard Rules

- on the Equalisation of Opportunities as a framework.
- \* resources to explore possibilities of the information society for disabled people,
- \* resources for information and public awareness measures,
- \* resources to promote access to information, sign language and national information days.

The second budgetline was called "cooperation with NGOs and associations formed by disabled people and support for their activities". These budgetlines now went to the Council for final agreement or rejection.

Johan Wesemann added that even if EUD would get a subvention through one of the budgetlines, it would still be a good idea if the NADs would hand over 0,2% of their annual cash flow to EUD. At the moment the NADs contributed only marginal and it would make a good impression on EU level if the NADs would support the EUD more strongly.

Knud Søndergaard stressed the uncertainty of EUD getting a subvention in 1997.

Christopher Jones (EIRE) warned for FEPEDA being a strong, rich and powerful organisation.

Ida Collu (I) thanked the strategy working group for its work and Denmark for supporting EUD. She said that the future EUD strategies had both a political and economical aspect. On political level, EUD needed to maintain its high prestige at European level.

On economical level, it would be of extreme importance that the two proposed budgetlines would be adopted by the Council and she stressed the need for lobbying the social affairs ministers on national level. She informed that the Italian social affairs ministers was in favour of Deaf people and he would certainly help to get the budget lines adopted.

Markku Jokinen (SF, member of Council) reminded the delegates of the short remaining time and the need for concrete actions to be taken now. He remembered the delegates that a vision already had been adopted in Portugal (equal opportunities) and that the presented objectives by Jeff McWhinney had been agreed upon. He suggested that the NADs should get time to read and evaluate the strategy paper of Jeff McWhinney and send in their comments. Furthermore the NADs should think about a working plan. He reminded the delegates that still the future legal position of EUD needed to be discussed as well.

Jeff McWhinney added that the establishment of a legal basis for EUD was a very



positive step forwards and that the idea of EUD becoming an international non profit organisation needed to be further investigated by the Council.

## **12 MOTIONS TABLED BY NADs**

The Dutch Deaf Association (NEDO) proposed the following motions:

EUD is asked to

1. develop an Anti Poverty Programme which will lead to
  - \* an improvement of the position of Deaf people on the labour market;
  - \* better and more opportunities to be protected against poverty;
  - \* creating measures that free Deaf people of being or becoming 'social parias'.
2. take proper measures on European and national scale to improve the quality of education of Deaf youngsters and to develop projects that lead to the emancipation of Deaf people.
3. take all necessary steps - alone and/or in cooperation with other NGOs - to protect Deaf people against discrimination and to create sufficient equal opportunities on European and national level.

Decided was that the Anti Poverty Programme was too broad to be accepted by the Annual Conference.

The motion to improve the position of Deaf people on the labour market was accepted. To improve the quality of education of Deaf youngsters agreed was that possibilities within the SOCRATES and LEONARDO Programmes would be explored.

Lars Åke Wikström said that EUD only focused on HELIOS and that there were many other possibilities; like the HORIZON programme.

The British Deaf Association (BDA) had proposed the following motions:

1. That the EUD conducts research into the effects on Deaf children who are educated in mainstream schools within member states, with regard to their identity, culture and language.
2. That the position of President is disassociated from the Secretariat and that the President be nominated and elected from and by the member states at the Annual Conference of Delegates.

Decided was that the first motion would be incorporated in the Sign Languages Project. With regard to the second motion, Knud Søndergaard suggested the set up of a special working group looking into the necessary changes of the statutes when EUD would become an independent legal organisation according to Belgian law.

The French Belgian Deaf Association (FFSB) proposed the following motions:

1. The EUD should press the ministries in each country of the European Union to appoint a Deaf person in each National Association of the Deaf, to be paid by the national governments.
2. The EUD should follow and monitor closely all actions of the ministries concerning Deaf people in each country of the European Union.
3. The EUD should lobby for the official recognition of the International Day of the Deaf in each country of the European Union.
4. The EUD should develop actions for the recognition of sign language in each country of the European Union.

Concerning the first and second motion it was agreed that because EUD could not interfere in national affairs these motions were unacceptable. Alfred Fievet (B) proposed that each NAD would send information on national affairs to the FFSB to be used for their contacts with the Belgian government.

Concerning the third motion Alfred Fievet (B) explained that the International Day of the Deaf in the French speaking part of Belgium had been a big success, but unfortunately he did not have any information of celebrations of this day in other countries.

As 11 NADs celebrated this day in their country, it was agreed that they all would send reports on the celebrations to EUD for further distribution.

Luis Cañón (E) supported this Belgian motion and asked if the United Nations (UN) had officially recognised this day.

Liisa Kauppinen (SF) answered that the World Federation of the Deaf (WFD) had chosen each third Sunday of September as International Day of Deaf people, but this had not been recognised officially by the UN.

It was agreed that the fourth motion of Belgian would be included in the Sign Languages Project.

The Swedish Deaf Association (SDR) proposed the following motion:  
The SDR believes that it would be more powerful for EUD, if the Deaf associations from the EES countries were also members from EUD.

Knud Søndergaard explained that according to the statutes only National Deaf Associations in EU Member States could become member of EUD and that if the NADs wished Norway and Iceland to become member of EUD the statutes needed

to be changed and examined by a special working group.

Christopher Jones (EIRE) expressed his concern by dealing with the motions too fast and asked clarification of what happened with the adopted motions afterwards.

Knud Søndergaard explained that everything would be minuted and that the adopted motions would be followed up.

Lars Åke Wikström added that the EES countries were involved in the HELIOS II programme and agreed with a special working group to follow this motion up.

The Norwegian representative Tone-Brit Handberg was asked to look into this motion as well and was asked to make a paper of what Norway wanted from EUD.

Knud Søndergaard added that the position of Norway was unclear in the future and Norway would not be a member of the independent European Disability Forum.

Jeff McWhinney asked what happened with the Danish motion.

Knud Søndergaard replied that the motion of DDL was an idea of a Seminar "how to help the developing countries?" and that the Council had decided that this was not a motion but needed to be included in the working programme of 1997.

Concerning the motions of the Council; EUD becoming an independent organisation with a legal status according to Belgian law, Knud Søndergaard informed the delegates that Helga Stevens had prepared an extensive document explaining the four different options and suggested that this document would be sent to the NADs for further investigation and to compare the four different options.

Peter Dimmel (A) asked for this paper in the German language and Knud Søndergaard replied that due to a lack of money, papers were only available in English.

## **12 TO AGREE THE EUD PROGRAMME FOR 1997**

It was agreed that the NADs would send in their comments on both the strategy paper of Jeff McWhinney and the paper of Helga Stevens concerning the legal status of EUD before the end of the year.

Liisa Kauppinen (SF) said that the Sign Languages Project should be the main work of EUD in 1997 including lobby activities.

On 2 and 3 October 1997 a Conference to present the results of the Sign Languages Project would be organised. Liisa Kauppinen stressed the importance of the NADs taking more financial responsibilities for EUD. With some extra money more staff members could be employed. For example, text telephones were not mentioned in any EU directive and with extra staff members more political work could be carried out.

Knud Søndergaard suggested an extra meeting of one delegate per NAD to discuss these things further in depth. The NADs would have to pay for the delegates themselves and international signs would be used to save money.

Alfred Fievet (B) agreed to thoroughly examine the papers and stressed that the second form of legal organisation (foundation) would be impossible for EUD as EUD could never meet the strict requirements of the set up of a foundation and he asked the NADs to take this into consideration. He furthermore encouraged the NADs to read the papers carefully.

Knud Søndergaard promised that the Council would further investigate the set up of a legal organisation under Belgian law.

Lars Åke Wikström agreed with Knud Søndergaard that the Council should further investigate this matter. He concluded that one thing was certain; everybody wanted to keep EUD no matter what it would cost. He furthermore suggested another special meeting like the Conference "The Way Forward" in Portugal.

Christopher Jones (EIRE) foresaw difficulties in his organisation to analyse the papers.

Luis Cañón (E) stressed the importance of making decisions and said he would trust the Council to follow up on the discussions. He suggested the set up of a special working group to further examine the future legal status of EUD and to make a more detailed plan of the presented paper of Jeff McWhinney.

### **13 CLOSURE**

Knud Søndergaard apologised for the last moment stress and thanked everybody for their useful comments and contributions. He also thanked the interpreters for their excellent work. He said all delegates and the Council and staff members of EUD had benefit from the discussions. He dedicated a special welcome to Helly Christopoulou (Gr) as new member of the Council and wished everybody a good

trip home before closing the 12th EUD Annual Conference of Delegates.



## ANNEX

# LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

### 12th ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF DELEGATES 1996

### EUROPEAN UNION OF THE DEAF

#### PORTUGAL

Helder Duarte  
Carlos Martins

#### BELGIUM (FEVLADO)

Andre Lathouwers

#### BELGIUM (FFSB)

André Fievet

#### FINLAND

Liisa Kauppinen

#### FRANCE

Pierre Adeline  
Arlette Morel

#### SPAIN

Luis Jesus Canon Reguera  
Feliciano Sola Limia

#### ITALY

Ida Collu  
Franco Zatini

#### GREECE

Helly Christopoulou  
Yiannis Christodoulakos

#### AUSTRIA

Peter Dimmel  
Gerlinde Wrießnegger

#### UNITED KINGDOM

David Bullock  
M. Aitken

#### IRELAND

Johan Bosco Conama  
Christopher Jones

#### DENMARK

Lene Ravn  
Annegrethe Pedersen

#### SWEDEN

Lars Åke Wikström  
Elisabeth T. Lundqvist

#### THE NETHERLANDS

Dik Kerkhoven  
Marjan Stuifzand

#### OBSERVERS

Carol-lee Aquiline (WFD)  
Jeff Mc Whinney (BDA)  
Murray Holmes (BDA)  
Maurice Hayard (FFSB)  
Henri Bimont (FNSF)  
Tone-Britt Handberg (Norway)  
Alex de Ronde (Woord & Gebaar, NL)  
Marije Schadee (Woord & Gebaar, NL)

#### EUD COUNCIL

Knud Søndergaard  
Miguel Jimenez Mesa  
Dimitra Kokkevi Fotiou  
Markku Jokinen

#### EUD STAFF

Johan Wesemann  
Monique Boone  
Helga Stevens

#### SIGN LANGUAGES INTERPRETERS COORDINATOR

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