

Dr. Burkhard Mielke

Nikosia, 11th of April 2006

Calimera!

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As President of ESHA, the European Schoolhead and Principal Association, I pass on warmest regards and best wishes on behalf of our organisation. I thank you for the invitation and for the opportunity to come to your meeting and to be in your wonderful country. It is a great honour for me to be here and speak to you.

You invited me because you are interested in becoming a member of ESHA. I think, this is a wonderful idea.

Therefore, allow me to briefly explain our aims and our visions for Europe.

ESHA is the only European Schoolhead and Principal organisation and at the moment we represent 31 countries and 37 organisations from west and east, south and north, from Spain to the Ukraine and from Iceland to Israel.

The work of ESHA is based on the vision that Education and Investment in Education are fundamental for a successful future in a global word and the development of a strong and united European Union. Equal Access to education for everybody in Europe which means attending schools and universities has to be guaranteed by the politicians. We as Principals are a key factor in this process of school development and quality in our schools.

To reach this goal our aims are

- discussing and developing views within the ESHA membership on innovative education and school leadership**

- promoting these views on the European level
- influencing the policy of the European institutions (Commission and Parliament)
- promoting international exchange and cooperation
- supporting the member organisations to play their role on the national level
- emphasizing the particular role of the principal and promoting conditions that improve the quality of leadership

We do this through

**vision and position papers,
conferences,
international projects and research,
external cooperation with other**

European organisations

**and Internal communication through our
website, our newsletter and networking
training programmes for principals like
ESLN (European Schollleaders Network),
an online training on the job, evaluated by
Prof. Pashiardis.**

**Most important are our regular General Board Meetings
and Biannual Conferences, where the delegates of all
member organisations come together.**

**We invite you to join ESHA and to become a part of this
European family and network. It would be a great honour
for ESHA to welcome you. We invite you to come to our
next Conference in Rome “Future with an ancient heart”
from the 2nd to the 4th of November.**

Allow me Ladies and Gentlemen to make some final non education related remarks:

- as a person coming from the North, it is wonderful to experience the sun and the warmth in Cyprus**
- as a European, it is overwhelming to stand for example in Paphos, – like I did before coming to Nicosia – one of the places where our common European history and culture began to develop**
- As a German and as being born in Berlin, I know what it means to live in a divided city and country. But our example shows that occupation and separation are never justified and successful. I hope that your dreams will come true in a very near future.**
- And last but not least I enjoyed your great hospitality in Cyprus. Special thanks go to Professor Petros Pashiardis- University of Nikosia - who works together with ESHA frequently and successfully– for establishing the contact with your organisation and to Gloria Sepou who invited me to come to this conference.**

I know how much work it is to prepare a conference and I hope you have a successful and interesting time.

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