

Conference of European Insurance Supervisory Services „Pan-European Conference“

The “Conference of European Insurance Supervisory Services” was initiated by the Netherlands and supported by Belgium and Switzerland and held its first meeting on the invitation of the Belgian Insurance supervisory authority in Brussels in 1949. This first Conference gathered supervisors from 13 countries aiming at cooperation in order to ensure the insurance companies’ solvency. Since then, for about forty years, the Conference took place every three or four years in a different host country, acting at the same time as the secretariat of the Conference, and its membership increased constantly. Each Conference was followed by a “Preparatory Conference” where the participants decided on the venue and topics of the next Conference and nominated for each topic a “rapporteur” and a “co-rapporteur” country, which had to prepare a basic report for discussion on their topic at the next Conference. One of the topics of the second Conference, held in 1952 in Amsterdam, was the goal of the Conference in general. The 15 participants agreed that the Conference should aim at (i) personal contacts; (ii) data exchange; and (iii) drafting of common needs and agreements regarding the fulfilment of the supervisory tasks.

Over the years the Conference was held in most European countries: Brussels, Amsterdam, Rom, Madrid, Paris, London, Berlin, Dublin, Vienna, Gent, Lisbon, Istanbul, Copenhagen, Malta, Warsaw, Budapest, Ljubljana, and Prague. The discussions covered all arias of insurance supervision: issues related to solvency of insurance companies, technical provisions, supervision of reinsurance, intermediaries, international cooperation of insurance supervisors and many others.

The Conference is a product of the time when Europe was to be reconstructed after the World War II. At the same time and in the following years other organisations have been created such as the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC) in 1947, which developed to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in 1961, and the European Community in 1957. At the Conference in Copenhagen in 1993, the question was raised whether the Conference was still needed or not in view of several others dealing with similar or even the same issues, especially the Insurance Committee of the OECD and the Insurance Committee of the insurance supervisors of the European Union Member states. The burden of the preparation and organisation of too many conferences and meetings was felt by most of the 22 participating countries. On the other hand it was recognised that the Conference was still especially important for Central and Eastern European countries, which were no EU member states. It was actually the only forum to exchange views with EU insurance supervisors. The participants therefore decided to postpone the decision on the future of the Conference to a special meeting, which was held in Lucerne (Switzerland) in 1995. The 1995 meeting resolved to carry on the Conference in a simplified structure (see “Resolution”).

Today the “Pan-European Conference”, as it is often called, is mainly a meeting point for supervisors to discuss the issues of the day informally. Regarding membership, Europe is understood in the broadest sense, and interested parties from the private sector are admitted as well in order to reach a better understanding of a problem.

Bern, 4.3.2005

Lucerne, June 30, 1995

RESOLUTION OF THE CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN INSURANCE SUPERVISORY SERVICES

1. The Conference of European Insurance Supervisory Services has been in existence since 1949. The resulting exchange of information has proved to be very useful. There is a continuing need for communication between European supervisors. There is no other organisation at the moment, whether in the IAIS or elsewhere, which is able to provide a basis for this communication.

It would therefore not be advisable at this time to discontinue the Conference. However, all participants agree that the procedures of the Conference need to be revised so as to:

- i) focus the work of the Conference more clearly on the issues of major concern to members;
- ii) avoid the imposition of unnecessary burdens on Conference members, for instance, by compiling extensive questionnaires or country reports; and
- iii) avoid duplicating the work of other organisations.

2. The agenda should cover developments in other organisations both within Europe (such as EU, Scandinavia, Central and Eastern Europe, CIS) and worldwide (such as IAIS, OECD).

Members may make proposals to the Secretariat for additional items to be added to the agenda. Issues of great complexity may be handled in seminars rather than in the Conference itself.

3. The Conference should meet every two years for one day only. Meetings should alternate between EU and non-EU countries. Seminars may take place more frequently, at any convenient location.

4. The Secretariat should be based in Switzerland. Papers may be submitted to the Secretariat in any of the official languages for the Conference and should be transmitted to members without translation.

It should be the responsibility of the host country, not the Secretariat, to organise Conferences and seminars.

5. The agenda for each Conference should be decided by the Chairman of the Conference, in agreement with the Chairmen of the previous and subsequent Conferences.

6. There should be no membership fee.