

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

24 May 2018 (17.30 – 20.00)

Held at:

Södra Teatern at Mosebacke Square, Stockholm

KEY		
João Lázaro	JL	VSE President
Aleksandra Ivankovic	AI	VSE Project Manager
Helgard van Hüllen	HVH	VSE Vice President
Levent Altan	LA	VSE Executive Director
Leena-Kaisa Åberg	LKA	VSE Executive Board Member
Gabor Veisz	GV	VSE Temporary Treasurer
Aleksandra Ivankovic	AI	VSE Project Manager

1. President's Report

President JL welcomed all those present for the Annual General Meeting including three new Associate Members:

- EMDR Europe Association – Switzerland;
- V-Europe, Belgium and
- Women's Room – Centre for Sexual Rights, Croatia.

As customary the meeting started by approving the minutes of last General Meeting dated 7 December 2017 in Brussels. LKA went page by page through the minutes and these were approved unanimously.

JL then introduced Mazen Alsiufi, the new Finance Officer. Subsequently AI provided an overview of the projects being undertaken by VSE while LA spoke about the past and foreseen work of VSE with the European Commission. LA explained that with respect to VSE's operating grant objectives, the key activities since January have focused on the preparations for a policy paper and research on compensation problems and recommendations. LA stated that VSE has also been asked to support the European Commission and Parliament at various Committee hearings on terrorism and on the implementation of the EU Victims Directive. He added that a lot of VSE's focus in the first months has been to improve the functioning of the website and intranet. VSE now has new pages providing information on crime abroad, terrorism and female genital mutilation.

2. Financial Report

The financial and audit reports were introduced by GV. He first presented the financial report and then asked for its approval by Members. This was done by a show of hands and it was decided by a unanimous vote. He also asked for the approval of the audit report 2017, which has been sent to all Members some weeks beforehand. GV went over the audit report page by page and there was a unanimous vote on it as well as on the extension of VSE's audit contract for another three years with Callens, Pirenne & Co. The approval was also done by the raising of hands.

3. Presentation from V-Europe

Philippe Vansteenkiste, Director V-Europe explained that the idea behind the set-up of his organisation came after he lost his sister in the tragic terrorist attack in Belgium on the 22 March 2016, as well as the realisation that many victims of the attacks were struggling and need of support. He emphasised the importance of providing good information to the victims' relatives at the right time and as quickly as possible.

4. Resolutions

4.1 Resolution 1: Amendments to VSE Constitution

LA provided an overview of the main amendments of VSE's Constitution. The amendments were approved unanimously by a show of hands.

4.2 Resolution 2: Approval of the Standards and Accreditation Systems (SAS)

LA provided a brief overview of the Standards and Accreditation Systems. Kurt De Backer from SAM suggested including a reference that the present SAS are only applicable to organisations that directly support victims. This was accepted by everyone present and therefore the SAS were also approved, subject to this amendment, by the raising of hands.

5. Elections

5.1 Voting for the Vice-President and Executive Board Members

VSE had several positions for the Board open this year – for vice-president, Richard Olszewski, who presently is also the Vice-President of "France Victimes, as well as for three other executive board positions. These were Leena-Kaisa Aberg, Executive Director of Victim Support Finland, Olga Kostina, Chair of Russian Victim Support Foundation and Tobias Kortner, Team Leader from Weisser Ring, Austria.

In line with the Constitution, all VSE full members who are not currently on the Board had the opportunity to submit nominations. In terms of process, JL announced each nominee and then asked them to present themselves to the Members. The Members were provided with ballot papers and asked to indicate their vote for each nominee – yes, no, abstention. All contestants were elected by a unanimous or majority vote.

5.2 Voting for the Treasurer

Following the resignation of Brendan Loughran, from his position as Treasurer, VSE's Member Victim Support Northern Ireland generously offered to nominate Geraldine Hanna – their Executive Director for this position. Since the resignation was announced after the deadline for the nomination process, it was agreed to follow an extraordinary procedure as provided under Article 10.8 of the Constitution.

Under that Article, VSE may elect Board Members at the Annual General Meeting outside of normal procedures:

"If, for whatever reason, no-one can be elected using the normal procedures, the President of the meeting may call for further nominations at the meeting and an election will take place forthwith."

VSE accepted the nomination of Geraldine Hanna from Victim Support Northern Ireland as an immediate replacement for Brendan in the position of Treasurer. Members were given the opportunity to nominate other candidates, but none were put forward.

In accordance with voting procedure, voting was anonymous and took place by ticking either "yes", "no" or "abstention". Geraldine Hanna was well elected by a majority vote.

6. Any other business

VSE's member Fehér Gyűrű Közhasznú Egyesület presented a project which they will be carrying out in the near future.

Their planned project focuses on a board game on crime prevention. This communal game would be the part of a training program that addresses different members of the society in accordance with the needs of life. The board game named 'One more throw' would appear in various parts of the project in order to guarantee the coherency of the components and continuity. This professional concept is the result of several conciliations on panel discussions. This crime preventive communal game would be the basis of a following training program.



7. Closing

JL thanked VSE's Swedish friends who together with VSE's dedicated staff had made the whole week of activities possible.

Lastly, he congratulated the new elected Executive Board Members as well as the Vice President. He stated that he looks forward to work with all of them and with all Members, partners and stakeholders to help more victims collectively in the near future.