



Dr. Burkhard Mielke
ESHA President

Laudation - Honorary Life Member of ESHA for

Jan Gispen

The General Board decided in 2005 in Kiev to nominate Jan Gispen as Honorary Life Member of ESHA, the highest distinction that our statutes reserve to those that have greatly contributed to design and develop ESHA as an important European organisation and to the cause of Education in Europe. It is a pleasure and a great honour for me to honour him today during our Biennial Conference. He well deserved it, because he has dedicated many years to ESHA with engagement and passion.

Jan Gispen, born three months before the end of World War II, started his career as a school leader 27 years ago and only 10 years later he became a member of the Dutch National Board of School Leaders in the same year of ESHA's birth in Maastricht. General Board Member in 1992, Secretary General in 1998, President Elect in 2000, he finally and consequently(?subsequently) became President of ESHA in 2001 for a three year period till the end of 2003: He remained one more year on the Executive Board, as Past President, during 2004.

What are the Highlights of his time as General Secretary and President?

- ESHA changed from a secondary heads organisation to a school heads organisation when Primary Education entered ESHA in the year 2000

- he was the one to bring numerous new members to ESHA and to open our organisation for the school heads in the East European Countries
- he started the Cooperation with EUN, establishing the School Managers Centre (European Schoolnet) and ESLN
- he promoted the Manifesto for ESHA, a new Constitution and a Long strategy plan; and optimized the working structure of ESHA

These are excellent results which formed and made ESHA a stronger organisation in Europe.

Ladies and Gentlemen, for my speech I asked him to send me a short CV and this CV ended with the line : 2005 End of the story. We all understand the real meaning of this line and all of us being on the General Board at the end of Jan Gispens ESHA- life felt that, it was hard for him to say good bye after so many years of dedication and work for ESHA. But nobody really believed that this was the end of the story. Therefore you are here today and we hope you will join us as honorary member in the future.

On behalf of the General Board of ESHA and as President of ESHA I congratulate you and welcome you as a new Honorary Life Member of ESHA.

Rome, November 2nd 2006
ESHA 10th Conference