

Speech: Tony Cooreman – 25th March 2009 in European Parliament - Brussels

Dear European Green Seniors, dear friends.

Welcome in the European Parliament for the 5th ENGS General Meeting.

Here in this EP started on December the 7th of 2005 our European Network of Green Seniors with participants from 8 European Green parties coming from 7 countries. I am very happy to see that the major part of this founding mothers and fathers are also present to day.

Now, just 3 years later, we work together with green seniors coming from 15 countries and 16 green parties. Today I would like us to look back on what we have achieved until now, but much more important, we will discuss about what we intend to do with our network. We will have a look into the organisation, the structure- the contents and themes. We also have to discuss the financial means; by the way it would be nice if we could not just discuss but also find these means.

Dear friends, also to day we will elect a new board for the next 3 years. From a Network without statutes we will move on to an International Non Profit Organisation (INPO) with official and legal statutes.

Since last year, ENGS is recognised by EGP as “ Observer” and now we prepare ourselves for a total integration in the European Green Party. ENGS must be ready to be accepted in 2010 as “full member- Elderly Wing” of the European Green Party.

Colleagues, we are aware that it has never been easy for any of you to cooperate with our network. Nearly all participants of our network also have an important roll to play in their local Green Party.

This requires lots of time and energy .On top of this, playing a pioneerroll in a European context is is not evident at all and for sure no sinecure! This asks much time and extra efforts and we are very thankful to all who spend a great part of their free time working for our network.

Dear friends, we must dare to think about all of this and we have to be conscient that we have to organise ourselves to the maximum of our possibilities. For example by finding new collaborators, co-workers inside our own local party, we have a greater chance to refine and elaborate the green ideology – so as to insert a European –green senior point of view into the green European program.

Further on we count on our Green MEP’s to transform our propositions into European guidelines or European laws.

I repeat what I already said in Ljubljana during the EGP Council last year. In 2050 , 45.6% of the Flamish population will be over 60 years old, more then 50% will be over 55! We, seniors ,are growing to a majority in numbers, shall we grow in the same way in importance?.

What’s true for Flanders, will be true without any doubt for the rest of Europe.

Dear Friends, we, green seniors have an important roll to play in our community. We have time, experience, knowledge, wisdom in life , we are creative, enterprising and are no longer related to carreer achievement and so we have “ freedom of speach”.Let us use these fantastic qualities , in these difficult economic, financial, social and climatological circumstances, to serve as well the EGP as our local Green Parties.

Don’t forget : what is important is not what the Green Party can do for the green seniors, what is important is what the Green Seniors can do for the Green parties.

I would say : I had a dream , change has come and yes we can !

Dear friends, let’s do it!

Thank you and now.... Au travail , at work, a trabago, zum arbeit en aan het werk.

Tony Cooreman – European Parliament – Brussels – 26.03.2009