



THE DUTCH-RUSSIAN LAW ASSOCIATION

Report of the Meeting of 18 June 2021 *(virtual meeting by Zoom)*

11.00 am -12.00 pm Amsterdam time

Participants:

1. Wim Timmermans
2. Michail Wladimiroff
3. Rens Groen
4. Ruth van der Pol
5. Liudmila Valentinovna van der Pol
6. Rimma Antonova
7. Marit van Zandvoort
8. Arkady Gutnikov
9. William Simons (second part of the meeting)

1. Opening

At around 11.00 hours, the chair Wim Timmermans opens the virtual meeting with a word of welcome to all participants.

2. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted as it stood.

3. Report of the general meeting of December 2019

Mr Timmermans briefly explained why it is important that this report is still formally adopted by the General Meeting, as he was appointed as Chair during this meeting in December 2019. The General Meeting continued to unanimously adopt the meeting report.

Mr Van der Pol noted with regards to the Protocol, that it should be signed and sent to Professor Zholobov. Mr Timmermans indicated that the Board members will sign the Protocol so that it can be shared with Professor Zholobov. Mr Van der Pol offered to take care of sharing the Protocol with Professor Zholobov once signed.

4. Adoption of the meeting report of the General Meeting of December 2020

The meeting report of the General Meeting of 18 December 2020 was adopted without discussion.

5. Annual financial report 2020

First, Professor Wladimiroff and Mr Ruth van der Pol, the current audit committee, approved the 2020 financial report. Mr Wladimiroff provided some further explanation to the financial statement and the explanatory notes. He noted that the financial statement was rather concise due to the fact that the COVID-19 pandemic had prevented the DRLA from actively organizing (in person) events.

The Treasurer, Mr Groen, proceeded with his explanation of the financial statement. He explained that the DRLA Executive Board had decided not to levy any membership fees over 2020 in light of the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak. The money that had been received was all due to generous donations. Some costs had been incurred over the year 2020, notably the costs for a Zoom account to facilitate virtual meetings, the costs of a business bank account at ING Bank, costs for the webpage and some other, smaller categories. This resulted in an overall a loss of EUR 36,63 over the year 2020. As we are a small association, with no assets, we do not have to make provisions or keep reserves for expected losses. The overall financial situation is therefore sound.

As from next year, a special format will be used for the financial statement. This format has been developed and made publicly available by the Dutch tax authorities for use by ANBIs, non-profit associations for the general interest (*Algemeen Nut Beogende Instelling*).

Upon request of Professor Wladimiroff, the Executive Board indicated that, as with the previous General Meeting and the financial statement and explanatory notes over 2018-2019, the relevant documents will be shared on the website.

By a formal vote, the General Meeting formally approved the financial statement and explanatory notes over the year 2020 and discharged the Board from liability.

6. Other business

Mr Timmermans asked those present to incentivize their acquaintances with a potential interest in the activities DRLA to actively reach out to them with a request to join the association. Unfortunately, due to privacy restrictions, it is not possible to send out unsolicited invitation e-mails to groups of people. However,

individuals can be approached. Professor Wladimiroff notes in this respect that there is a template letter available for potential new members, that he offered to share. This idea was welcomed by the General Meeting.

Mr Van der Pol commented on the recent initiative from the Clingendael Institute to strengthen educational ties with China and Russia. Mr Van der Pol had reached out to Mr Tony van der Togt and indicated that the DRLA should be involved in these plans. Mr Van der Pol noted that this is a good moment to make ourselves known and reach out to ministries. This was also why he and Mr Feldbrugge spoke at Moscow State University recently. Mr Van der Pol and Mr Timmermans are also in talks with the University of Leiden Law Faculty on the revival of a course on Russian contemporary law and historical aspects.

Professor Wladimiroff agreed with Mr Van der Pol's statements and added that as the pandemic is drawing to a close, this would be the time to start organizing things again, especially as people are still available and their agendas are not yet fully booked.

Mr Timmermans raised the issue of funding. It is important if we want to broaden the scope of activities that we attract additional funds. He will be engaged in talks with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and suggested to also have talks with for example Russian lawyers or law firms that would be interested in the association and/or doing business in the Netherlands. Professor Wladimiroff agreed that there should be a focus on Russian law firms with an interest in the Netherlands.

Mr Gutnikov noted that it was difficult to organize events in Russia with foreign money. It would be good to instead organize something such as the translation of a book – like the book by Corstens – that is not too academic, that has for example already been translated into English. Mr Gutnikov also noted that there is currently a next wave of the COVID-19 outbreak in Russia, and society is closing up again. This however also means that many people have availability, also last minute, to join in courses and lectures.

Mr Timmermans noted that over the summer, the DRLA will activate the DRLA's LinkedIn page. This would be a good medium to attract new members. It was noted that LinkedIn does not work in Russia; the platform would therefore be mainly for potential members established in the Netherlands.

Professor Wladimiroff inquired how it is possible to reach out to new members if we are not sure about persons currently already a member of the DRLA. It was agreed that in such cases, members can check with the Secretary, Ms Van Zandvoort, to confirm whether someone is already a member or not.

7. Closure

At around 12.00 pm the Chairman, Mr Timmermans, briefly suspended the meeting as after 12.00 pm, the Symposium's first speaker would start his presentation.