



PRESS RELEASE

ECA General Assembly 2010

Board and Members of the European Casino Association (ECA) meet in Earls Court, London on 26 January 2010 for the ECA General Assembly 2010.

Brussels, 29 January 2010 --- The Board and Members of the European Casino Association (ECA) met in London on 26 January 2010 for the association's annual General Assembly, which was held during the IGE 2010 show at Earls Court. The main items on the agenda at the 2010 General Assembly were the recent regulatory and policy developments at EU level with regard to gambling services and the re-election of the ECA Board.

Election of Board Members

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The ECA Board Members are:

Guido Berghmans (Luxemburg)

Bruno Cagnon (France), who takes over from Nicolas Ricat

Heliodoro Giner (Spain)

Ron Goudsmit (Netherlands)

Matthias Hein (Germany)

Paul Herzfeld (Austria).

Ron Goudsmit and Guido Berghmans were also unanimously re-confirmed in their respective positions as Chair and Vice Chair.

EU Regulatory and Policy Developments

The ongoing debate on gambling services is driven by the Council Working Group

European Casino Association

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on Gambling, which is currently under the leadership of the Spanish presidency. The ECA welcomes the Spanish government's decision to actively continue the debate on regulatory issues and to focus on combating illegal gambling by seeking to establish a common position amongst Member States and elaborating a list of concrete measures.

The ECA remains committed to contributing constructively and pro-actively to this debate and to sharing its extensive experience and knowledge with a view to creating a sustainable future for gambling in Europe. It would welcome a stronger engagement on the part of the Commission in the ongoing gambling debate and attaches particular priority to the following issues:

- **Regulation of online gambling:** While gambling should remain regulated at national level, the transnational character and challenges inherent to online gambling require a coordinated EU approach. The ECA embraces the competitive developments in this sector of the industry, which some of its members are already strongly leveraging. A prohibition of online gambling cannot be maintained and enforced in a European context in the long term.
- **Consistent regulatory environment:** The ECA considers it crucial to establish a consistent regulatory environment which provides a fair and level playing field for all operators. This is particularly relevant in the light of the market openings underway in some jurisdictions (e.g. France) that will allow operators which formerly operated in an unauthorised manner by offering their services within the territories of an Member State without the required licence, to apply for a national license and begin offering their services legally. The ECA urges EU Member States to take appropriate measures to level out the unfair competitive advantage accrued to such gambling operators and to restore fair competition.
- **Effective law enforcement:** An urgent solution is required at EU level to allow Member States to fight the persistent flooding of European markets by illegal online gambling offerings from non-licensed and unregulated operators. To protect consumers and prevent fraud, a pan-European approach is needed to ensure compliance with and enforcement of national laws.
- **Requirements for licence holders:** It is in the public interest that licence holders fulfil the highest standards of responsibility, accountability and control. As legally appointed, strictly controlled operators, ECA members advocate a regulated environment for gambling services in Europe and consider corporate social responsibility and transparency to be matters of key priority for gambling operators and operations.
- **ECA regulatory and strategy working group:** This working group continues to consider the association's strategic focus, assess the gravity and urgency of current trends in the regulatory debate and determine required actions. The Board agreed to invest considerable resources into the

development of a long-term, viable, strategic approach to online gaming.

About the ECA

The ECA represents the interests of more than 1,000 casinos and around 83,000 employees in 23 countries across Europe. Founded in the early 1990s as the European Casino Forum, the ECA has grown steadily over the years and today includes members from the majority of EU Member States, Switzerland and Serbia.

Save the dates of ECA's future key events:

- **European Dealer Championship 2010**
11-12 May 2010, Olympic Casino, Vilnius, Lithuania
- **International Casino Conference 2011**
24 January 2011, Earls Court, London, UK

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