



MARS ET MERCURE - EUROPE

COMMISSION DE COORDINATION

INTER - NATIONS

MEETING MARS & MERCURY EUROPE - ASSOCIATION CIRCULO AVE FENIX **4 JULY 2022, MADRID**

What was the aim of this meeting ?

With the passing away of Mr Joaquin Illa Juando, last national President and last member of the Spanish circle Mars & Mercure España on 10 January 2020, the circle defacto did not exist anymore.

The secretary of the last President, Ms Marta Teixido informed the members of the Board of Mars & Mercury Europe thereafter that a new association was created in Spain in 2019, the association Círculo Ave Fénix, sharing the same values as Mars & Mercury.

It was clear to the members of the Board of Mars & Mercury Europe that the time had come to relaunch contacts with Spain. As soon as the association was approved by the Spanish Ministry of Interior and the Board elected, a common meeting was scheduled to discuss and explore the potential of a cooperation between Mars & Mercury Europe and the association Círculo Ave Fénix.

History and evolution of the circle Mars & Mercure España

A first attempt to create a Spanish Mars & Mercury circle took place starting 1986 under the leadership of the President of the Inter-Nations Mars & Mercury Liaison Commission (CLIMM), N D van Goethem (1981-1985) from the Netherlands and the President of the Royal Mars & Mercury Circle of Belgium, Karel Engelen (1989-1992), but this attempt had to be abandoned at the end of the year 1990. A second attempt took place in 1998.

Indeed, the Belgian President Roy Van Handenhove and his predecessor Michel Courtin were invited to the National day of the " Union Nacional de las Milicias Universitarias " (UNAMU). Local contacts were made and the creation of a Mars & Mercury section within UNAMU, called Círculo Mars et Mercure España took place.

The affiliation of Mars et Mercure España was introduced by the President Roy Van Handenhove on 22 August 1999. The membership was unanimously accepted at the General Assembly of Mars & Mercury Europe in Brussels on 8 October 1999. The first elected President of Mars et Mercure España was Fernando Piris Rodriguez.

In 2003, the status of complementary officer, the main source of recruits for Mars & Mercury was abolished, which gave a heavy blow to the enrollment of new members. The status of contract officer was created, but this creation, along with the decrease in interest of the Ministry of Defence had again a negative influence on the recruitment.

2 Mars & Mercury subgroups within UNAMU with about 20 members each were located in Zaragoza and Madrid, and a third, the largest one with some 50 members, in Barcelona.

In 2007, many of the members were retirees and mainly engaged in personal friendship relations and commemorations.

At that time, Juan Batista Bartroli and Joaquin Illa Juando were two very active members. The latter even took over the function of General President of Mars & Mercury Europe from 2008 to 2009, but the national recruitment problems increased also due to the increasing antimilitarism of young people.

2011 saw the death of the Zaragoza group's liaison officer and UNAMU lost interest and members were aging with no new recruitment.

Juan Batista Bartroli died in 2013. Disengagement increased sharply due to the economic crisis, unemployment and health problems - meetings were no longer organized.

The Circulo Mars & Mercure España was reduced to its simplest form.

Joaquin Illa Juando continued to hold the torch, but passed away on 10 January 2020. Mars & Mercure España lost their last member.

Asociación Circulo Ave Fénix



As every year a certain number of professionals belonging to the Armed Forces, the Civil Guard and the National Police of Spain change from the active service to various administrative functions provided for by the national regulations, it was recognized that most of these professionals have accumulated a lot of experience following their professional life through multiple assignments, training, courses, as well as through operational missions carried out inside and outside Spain. This professional profile makes them excellent candidates for responsible functions in the Spanish business world, especially in technology companies related to security, defense, logistics and other related fields.

In order to promote this professional integration, as well as to strengthen this civil-military cooperation in the field of business, the association Circulo Ave Fénix was created, constituted as a private, non-profit association.

The association Círculo Ave Fénix started its activity at the beginning of 2019, promoting meetings and fraternisation lunches between former members of the Armed Forces and the Civil Guard (officer and noncommissioned officer scale) and the National Police (executive scale and higher scale) to exchange experiences and support each other in their new jobs. The association's aims include maintaining contact and support among colleagues, disseminating the Defence and Security culture in companies, as well as promoting the Spain Brand beyond their borders, providing value, talent, and experience in the new working environment, encouraging and facilitating the transition and incorporation of other colleagues into the world of work, as well as strengthening the ties between the companies where they work and the institutions they come from.

The association's emblem symbolises the resurgence of its members, like a phoenix, from their professional origins to a new and rejuvenating stage of work in the business world.

With the colours of the National Flag, as a faithful reflection of the common ideal of service and love for Spain, defence of the Constitution and loyalty to H.M. the King of Spain of its associates.

Meeting Mars & Mercury Europe – Circulo Ave Fénix, 4 July in Madrid

Talks were underway starting in 2020 to discuss a potential cooperation between Mars & Mercury Europe and the association Circulo Ave Fénix which currently gathers some 160 members, centered around Madrid and which seeks to extend throughout Spain.



Fitr : BrigGen (ret) Gonzalo Urbon (ESP), President of Circulo Ave Fénix,
Honorary General Gaston Reinig, General President of Mars & Mercury Europe (LUX),
Ir Philippe Gielen, Secretary General of Mars & Mercury Europe (BEL),
Col (ret) Julio Serrano (ESP), Vice-President of Circulo Ave Fénix

This meeting, chaired by Honorary General Gaston Reinig, General President of Mars & Mercury Europe and Brigadier General (ret) Gonzalo Urbon, President of Circulo Ave Fénix took place in Madrid, 4 July 2022.

Detailed presentations of Mars & Mercury Europe and of the association Ave Fénix were made, and the discussions following thereafter ended with success, the President of Circulo Ave Fénix having expressed the intention to join Mars & Mercury Europe. A Spanish delegation will consequently be invited to the General Assembly of Mars & Mercury Europe, to be held 21 October 2022 in Maastricht (NLD) to allow for a presentation of the association to the assembly. It is expected that the statutes of the Spanish association will be disseminated to all delegates of the national circles of Mars & Mercury Europe to allow for their approval. Furthermore, the General Assembly of Circulo Ave Fénix, in 2023 will most likely approve the intention of the President to join Mars & Mercury Europe, thus allowing the association to officially join Mars & Mercury Europe as an effective member.

Welcome back, Spain.

Gaston Reinig
Honorary General
General President of Mars & Mercury Europe