



# MARS & MERCURY - EUROPE

## *INTERNATIONALS COORDINATION COMMISSION*

### **Report of the General Assembly of the 22 October 2021 in Grundhof (LUX)**

At the request of the General President, members of the Association Mars & Mercury – Europe met this day in General Assembly.

Were present, Sirs :

Gaston REINIG	General President (LUX) & President M&M Gr D Luxembourg
Philippe GIELEN	Secretary General (BEL)
Jan LENIÈRE	Treasurer General (BEL)
Lon VAN DER ZON	Communications Manager (NLD)
Michel COURTIN	Auditor, Hon. General President (BEL)
Eddy DE BOCK	President M&M Belgium
Marc VAN DE WAL	Vice-President M&M Belgium
Pierre DISSEL	Hon General President & President M&M France
Christian CUNY	Delegate M&M France
Wolf-Arthur KALDEN	Hon General President & Delegate M&M Germany
Michel GRETSCH	Hon General President & Delegate M&M Gr D Luxembourg
René FABER	Delegate M&M Gr D Luxembourg
Peter PIETERSEN	President M&M The Netherlands
Jen FONGERS NIEUBUURT	Delegate M&M The Netherlands
Sławomir MICHAŁSKI	Vice-President M&M Poland
Olivier CINGRIA	Delegate M&M Switzerland

Were excused, Sirs :

Torben von LOWZOW	President M&M Denmark (via VTC)
Stefan JAENECKE	President M&M Germany
Pierre ZUMWALD	Hon Gneral President & President M&M Switzerland
Zygmunt BUGOWSKI	President M&M Poland

### **0 - Composition of the delegations**

This year, the General Assembly, due to COVID-19, was limited to the format 1+1 (Presidents of the national Circles or their representatives, assisted by one delegate), the members of the European Board and the Auditor.

For personal reasons, the Swiss and German Presidents asked to be replaced respectively by Mr. Olivier CINGRIA, delegate M&M CHE and Mr. Wolf-Arthur KALDEN, Hon General President and delegate of M&M DEU.

The Danish President, unable to be present, requested a VTC.

### **1 – Opening GA**

The meeting was opened at 17.15 h.

## 2 – Welcome of the General President

After his introduction and the welcome words of the hosting country, the General President continued in line with the proposed agenda.

## 3 – Adoption of the Agenda and potential addition of new points.

The draft agenda, sent to all participants, was adopted.

The General President added an item to the agenda, a discussion on the issue of membership in national Circles.

## 4 - Report of the meeting of 17 October 2020 (VTC)

The minutes of the 2020 GA were adopted without remarks.

## 5 - Report of the General President

2020 was a year of constant global change as the world contended with a multitude of challenges, a global pandemic, social change, Brexit negotiations and the withdrawal of the US and allied armed forces from Afghanistan to name a few. These events further stressed global political relationships as distrust and a nationalist mindset influenced government decisions on an almost unparalleled level. In a world dominated by COVID-19, we saw governments scramble to be the first to reserve as many vaccine doses as possible. Such a mindset influenced abnormal geopolitical behavior, not just in relation to the vaccination procurement, but in a wide variety of unprecedented geopolitical risks, as corporate contracts were challenged in public by political leaders. These connections also deepened as digitalization accelerated and the world became more technologically interdependent. Private companies are increasingly exposed to geopolitical acts such as cyber breaches, with several vaccine companies experiencing attempted breaches. These events are testing business resilience and contingency plans, along with a growing risk of large fines as companies in every industry amass vast amounts of private data. With the pandemic still raging, 2021 looks to be much of a continuation of 2020. However, there is no doubt that geopolitical risks have evolved in 2021 and still will to produce even more unpredictable events and developments.

The US election in November last year saw Joe Biden elected as Donald Trump's successor. The last 10 years of American politics has seen the near collapse of bipartisanship, and the rise of social division within the country. After four years of a Trump administration, President Biden has taken a hard reverse on some significant issues impacting domestic and international businesses operating in the US and abroad. Despite most of the risk here being domestic, the rising distrust in the democratic system in a country as influential as the US may lead to negative effects for the efforts of democratization around the world, potentially paving the way for increased authoritarianism. As geopolitical events can often provoke intense reaction and supply chains continue to grow longer and more complex, a swift change in global sentiment may leave supply chains vulnerable to geopolitical tension.

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown great co-operation between countries, however it has also catalyzed much of a realist international - or worse nationalist - approach as we have seen governments increasingly utilize a g-zero mindset, a concept that Ian Bremmer defined in his book *Every Nation for Itself* where countries are increasingly self-interested and less concerned with international order. Self-interested competition for vaccinations, resources and foodstuffs has seen traditional supply chains put under real pressure, and international travel restricted to almost war-time levels; increasing the operational and productive strain on international organizations worldwide. As vaccinations are rolling out at various speeds and success levels around the world, 2021 asks important questions on how resident-status, vaccination passports and how countries without enough vaccination reservations will be treated nationally and internationally.

As the pandemic prompted organizations to adopt new technologies at an unprecedented rate, organizations that previously did not have to protect against cyber-attacks and threats are now finding themselves in increasingly unfamiliar territory. Organizations may be at risk of geopolitically motivated cyber-attacks, with previous cases seeing trusted services such as Outlook and LinkedIn being targeted. As cyber threats expand both through geopolitical developments and through an organization's growing reliance on new technologies, it has never been more important to look at cyber risk holistically through targeted risk assessment surveys and analyzing risk in conjunction with other key geopolitical lenses.

As a conclusion, I want to state that the world is changing quickly in all aspects of private enterprise and geopolitics. As it becomes increasingly interdependent and connected in many ways, there is also a coinciding trend of distrust and Darwinist thinking amongst international leaders. And just as the world becomes more connected, so do the risks. It has never been more important to assess and mitigate risks in a holistic manner, analyzing how exposures in different areas overlap and intertwine. With the world changing in more drastic and unpredictable ways than ever before, so too does the necessity for businesses to adapt in order to minimize risk and maximize opportunities as they present themselves. Taking an integrated view will help future-proof organizations ; exposing opportunity and helping to protect the business from known and unknown risks.

Unfortunately, I have to report that my Vice-President Eddie Van Raemdonck resigned his function, due to professional challenges. I want hereby to thank him very much for his precious collaboration during his tenure.

During this year, the Board of Mars & Mercury Europe wasn't idle. Indeed, we met 9 times in VTC format and once in physical mode. We also met twice in a website working group format to define the revision, overlook the achievements and progress of the website.

Philippe will briefly outline the essential points covered in the various VTC meetings. I will outline the most salient points.

First, as part of our communications strategy, we focused on the revision of our website, with the valuable help of the daughter in law of Pierre ZUMWALD. I want to thank her again for her most valuable support. Moreover, as I informed you, the Board is now assisted by an administrator in CIS, Lon VAN DE ZON. I want to thank him again for volunteering and his striving actions in this domain.

We consider that the static part of the website is now more or less completed, thanks to all nations which provided further information to us, and we would like to get your thoughts about the website and also your advice, how we could render the website more attractive, that's to say "dynamic". We started to feed it with news and also with links and we would be glad to hear your opinion about this. Last, I am pleased to inform you that our project to create an European activities list progressed well, and I would like all of you to allow to progress on this project.

Second, as a follow up of the definition and agreement of the vision statement during last GA, the Board looked into the issue of the mission statement of Mars & Mercury Europe and I am glad to report that we found an agreement on the statement of the mission.

Third, concerning the issue of enlargement or extension of Mars & Mercury Europe, I tried very hard to push forward. I am in contact with Estonia, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway and Spain to seek ways of cooperation. I must admit that the enlargement process is a very thorny and difficult one and it is a real long time issue which needs permanent contact with the nations to look for associations which might share the same values as Mars & Mercury Europe. I want to highlight that we had excellent exchanges with the association Ave Fénix of Spain, sharing the same values and objectives as Mars & Mercury and to report that the Board of Directors of Ave Fénix has been elected, Brigadier-General Gonzola Sanchez URBON nominated as its President. We are in close contact to define the modalities of a mutual cooperation.

Let me inform you too that the “association des anciens des sessions européennes des responsables d’armement” (ASERA) wants to hold their GA embedded in an Mars & Mercury Europe event, 3-4<sup>th</sup> trimester of 2022 in Brussels. I would like to invite you to think about it and maybe to suggest different ways how we could organize this multinational event.

Finally, let me thank you again for your confidence and your approval to extend my mandate by a further 3 years.

Thank you very much for your attention.

## 6 - Report of the Secretary General

Since the General Assembly of the 17 October 2020, held by the means of a video conference, we experienced, despite the Covid restrictions, a fairly large number of M&M EU Board meetings, mainly in virtual form.

Apart from the traditional items, welcome of the President, review and approval of the previous report, financial situation, planning of the next meeting, I will only mention the highlights of these meetings.

### - 30 October 2020 - VTC

Conclusions of the recent GA.

In order to develop a general database, formation of a BEL-NLD-LUX Working Group, called "BENELUX", which later should be extended to all Circles.

Recruitment of a "communications manager".

Report on the attempts of extension of M&M EU to new countries.

Intention of the President and Secretary to participate in the November 11 webinar organized by M&M NLD.

### - 22 December 2020 - VTC

Definition of the first draft defining the "mission" of M&M EU which will be discussed in all subsequent meetings until its potential approval during the 2021 GA.

Constitution of the BENELUX Working Group, proposal and approval of the respective representatives of the different Circles and announcement of a first meeting, January 11, 2021.

Analysis of the "membership fee" situation and proposal to limit the 2021 membership fee to the fixed part of it.

### - 11 January 2021 – VTC – WGr BENELUX

Members: Peter PIETERSEN and Lon VAN DER ZON (NLD), Paul BRUYNOOGHE and Félix VANHEUKELOM (BEL), Gaston REINIG (LUX), Philippe GIELEN (EU).

The General President thanked the NLD and BEL Circles for their collaboration and explained his vision about the purpose of the multinational database.

The national managers NLD and BEL explained the potential of their respective databases, and it was commonly agreed to base on the Belgian model, in construction, which seems to offer more potential.

During the test period, the two NLD representatives will be admitted to the Belgian model. As soon as the BEL model is operational, the work to form the EU database, active and transnational, should begin.

### - 26 January 2021 - VTC

Preparation of next day's VTC meeting with the President M&M CHE to settle the functioning of the new website.

Report of the BENELUX WGr meeting. The members and the road map are confirmed.

Extension to new countries : - Spain: el Circulo Ave Fénix is officially approved, the election of their Board is upcoming.

- Norway: negative answer.

2021 membership fee: the limitation to the fixed part is confirmed.  
GA 2021: study of the potential of a physical meeting

- 27 January 2021 – VTC – Website

Discussion with President ZUMWALD (CHE) and his daughter-in-law Mercedes PINTOS concerning the website revision, structure, content and how the website should be used.

- 12 March 2021 - VTC

Communication strategy: study of the different pages of the new website.  
M&M EU's mission statement is discussed and revised.

Extension to other countries:

-Spain: evolution continues.

-Norway: following another negative answer, decision not to insist.

-Other countries: no change, despite numerous attempts by the General President.

Proposal of the Board to extend the mandate (3 years) of the current General President.

- 22 March 2021 VTC – Website

Coordination meeting concerning the revisiting of the website.

- 30 April 2021 - VTC

Communication strategy - website:

o Establishment of a summary sheet of each national Circle

o Setting up a pictures gallery

o Adoption of Ir Lon VAN DER ZON as Director of Communications and Information Systems (CIS).

Study of the comments of the different Circles concerning the draft proposal of the mission statement of M&M EU.

Extension to new countries: no further progress

Proposal of President ZUMWALD (CHE) to allow associations to become an "Associate member".

AG 2021: the national Presidents will be consulted concerning the physical version.

AG 2022: proposal to integrate the ASERA GA into an M&M EU event in the 3rd or 4th quarter 2022 in Brussels.

- 27 May 2021 - VTC

Website: - continuation of the revisiting of the website

- proposal to create an European agenda of all activities of the Circles, aimed at giving nations ideas of potential events, not to offer the possibility of registering

Extension to new countries: new lines of contact are sought for Lithuania and Italy.

Preparation of the 2021 GA program.

- 28 June 2021 – VTC

Revue of the traditional items, the "mission" statement and the content of the website.

Extension to new countries: the former M&M Circle of Torino still exists, but pursues a purely social aim, not corresponding to M&M objectives. Other associations are sought in Italy.

GA 2021: limitation of the delegations to the format 1+1 due to the Covid restrictions and establishment of the full program.

- 05 August 2021 – VTC

A new draft "mission" statement will be forwarded to all national Presidents.

The statutes were updated by the General President.

GA 2021: the location is confirmed: Hotel Brimer, Grundhof (LUX).

The national and EU reports will be requested for 15 September 2021.

- 15 September 2021 – at the home of the General Secretary  
GA 2021: study of all national reports available and final preparation of the GA.
- 11 & 19 October 2021 – VTC  
Last preparations for the GA of next 22 of October.

## **7 - Report of the General Treasurer**

See separate document  
This document and all subsequent financial documents have not elicited any comment.

## **8 - Report of the Auditor**

See separate document

## **9 – Discharge of the General Treasurer and of the Auditor**

The General President expressed his thanks to the two officials and asked for their discharge which was granted unanimously.

## **10 – Financial situation on 19-10-2021**

See separate document

## **11 – Membership fee 2022**

The 2019 application formula was reintroduced with unanimous agreement, i.e. a fixed part of €150 for each Circle increased by €0.75 times the number of members registered on December 31 of the previous year.

## **12 – Budget for the year 2022**

See separate document

## **13 – Reports 2020-2021 of the national Circles**

### **BEL**

#### **M&M Belgium report of October 22, 2021**

##### **The balance sheet from the membership's point of view**

At the end of the year 2019, the circle gathered 760 and at the end of 2020 711 members, a decrease of 6,5%. Apart from the reasons already mentioned last year, death rates from corona increased in 2020. In addition, a significant number of members canceled their membership because of the postponement of the meetings. The challenge will be to reconnect with these people as soon as they return to normal life. We will also have to re-motivate the members who paid their membership fee, to participate again in the various activities.

##### **A few words about the events of the past year**

Concerning the events of 2020, we can be brief. As soon as the lockdown entered into force March 13, 2020, nothing more was organized in the clubs in Belgium, except committee meetings via videoconference. However, we may mention a few activities in January and February, such as meetings for New Year's greetings and some meals organized with or without a guest speaker.

It is worth mentioning, among others, the following presentations :

- the very interesting presentation of Doctor Bram Vanthournout on Biomimetics, and what we can learn from nature,
- the fascinating presentation of Lieutenant-General Guy Buchsensmidt on a European army,
- the conference of Lieutenant-General Marc Thijs, Vice CHOD, on the future of the land component.

In addition, the Circle's Board of Directors has not remained inactive and several meetings have been organized online, including statutory general assemblies at national and at club level. The greatest success of this long period of lockdown was the bringing into conformity of the national statutes with the new legislation on non-profit organizations. The National Day 2021 had to be cancelled and was postponed to the year 2022.

### **How do we see the future of M&M?**

The corona crisis has considerably disrupted the objectives. The planning of the conferences for the interns of the Higher Institute of Defense has been put on hold.

We do our best to relaunch them as soon as we receive permission.

In support of this initiative, we underline the good relations hold with the Chief of Defense and the Commander of the Royal Military Academy.

Due to the pervasive pandemic, the "Members for Members" project has also been put on hold. A restart of this project is planned in September 2021.

Regarding the future of Mars and Mercury, I would like to conclude by mentioning the same goals as last year.

The biggest challenge right now is the recruitment. We fear many departures at the end of this year, due to the corona crisis. It is therefore more than ever necessary to try to compensate this loss through the recruitment of new members. The ways pursued are:

- Increase the number of meetings and conferences with the Federation of Belgian Enterprises at national and local level, and with other employers' organizations (VOKA, etc.).
- Inform active military through all possible channels to become members of the association.
- Ask club managers to make an extra effort to attract new members, preferably young people, who will help rejuvenate and increase membership and generate interest from business and industry and services.
- Provide members with a brochure explaining the objectives with pictures of interesting events organized by the Circle.
- Increase the visibility and recognition of the Circle's name being present at important public events, eg. ex. by wearing a badge with the name and logo of the Circle.

Dear friends, this concludes my brief report on Mars and Mercury Belgium.  
With my best regards

*Presented by Col ret. Eddy DE BOCK, national President M&M Belgium*

**CHE**

### **Report of M&M Switzerland of October 22, 2021**

Mr. President of M&M Europe, Dear Friends,

As for the year 2019, the Committee of M&M Switzerland has opted for a "mailing" GA and it is above all "common sense" reasons that have pushed the Committee to this decision. In the context of a major effort by the population and the authorities to curb the spread of the virus, it seemed normal and responsible to us not to expose our members unnecessarily during a meeting, even in compliance with health standards. The situation has evolved since then, but caution remains the order of the day, even if a large part of the population has been vaccinated.

I hope that you are well, as well as your loved ones, and I am pleased to summarise the results of the year of the Swiss Circle of Mars & Mercury, which will be brief insofar as the Circle was not able to organise the programme initially planned. Thus, no activity could take place and the actions in view of a possible rapprochement with a society sharing the same goals were postponed to 2021. This is the society that brings together officers who are studying at university. I told you about it at a previous GA.

In terms of membership, the number of members has fallen from 77 to 72 and no recruitment campaign is planned for 2021 for lack of a sufficiently attractive programme.

As regards the accounts, the situation is healthy and the Committee has taken the decision, given the lack of activity, not to collect membership fees in 2021. With regard to the renewal of the Committee and the auditor, which should also have been done this year, it was decided, given the exceptional situation, to postpone this point until the GA to be held in 2022, which should be held in "face-to-face" mode. There is therefore no change at this level

On the European level, the President has taken up the challenge of putting M&M Europe back on the agenda of national circles. M&M Switzerland approves of this orientation and expects a lot from it, since it is this dimension that allows us to differentiate ourselves from other military companies. Bravo and thank you, dear President!

In summary, even with no activity in 2020, Mars & Mercure Switzerland exists and has a reason to exist that deserves to be attached to it. The Committee will do everything to guarantee its development and its future even if the conditions of 2020 and 2021 are not favourable to this exercise.

I would like to take this opportunity to officially thank the members of the Committee of Mars & Mercure Switzerland who are committed to keeping our Circle alive. I am honoured by their Friendship and Camaraderie. Thanks also to the M&M Europe Committee for their commitment and support to our wonderful cause!

On behalf of the Committee of Mars & Mercure Switzerland I send you my best messages. Long live Mars & Mercure Switzerland. Long live Mars & Mercure Europe and I look forward to seeing you again on a future occasion.

*Presented by Mr. Pierre ZUMWALD, national President M&M Switzerland and Hon General President M&M EU*

## **DEU**

### **Report of M&M Germany of October 22, 2021**

1. Membership : approximately 125. Unfortunately, we lost some strong personalities who passed away during the year. But the recruitment of younger, well-qualified members continues and works well.
2. Strengths and weaknesses:
  - a. Strengths : good relationship with the armed forces and with important companies.
  - b. weaknesses: ./.
3. Activities:
  - a. spring 2021: ZOOM meeting
  - b. autumn 2021: Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (FAZ)
  - c. spring 2022 planned: NATO and EU in Brussels
4. Projects: introduction of a well-secured intranet

*Presented by Wolf-Arthur KALDEN, Hon General President M&M EU*

## **DNK**

### **Activities in Mars and Mercury Denmark during 2020/21**

Due to the Covid 19 outbreak all physical activities were suspended in 2020

The only member event was the AGM, which was held as a digital meeting in October. Following the 2020 AGM the departing Chief of Defence for the Danish forces held a briefing, where he reflected on the time as Chief of Staff.



In 2021 we have had two events until today. Following the 2021 AGM in May, the incoming Chief of Defence briefed the members on the Danish operations in the Arctic Commando. This event was followed with a members meeting in September, where we had further presentations and discussions on the future development in the Arctic and in particular with regard to Greenland.

The number of members in the Danish circle are roughly unchanged at 184 (August 2021).  
Regards,

*Presented by Torben VON LOWZOW, national President M&M Denmark*

## **FRA**

### **Report M&M France of October 22, 2021**

#### MEMBERSHIP NUMBER

Uncertain. I fear many defections linked to the pandemic. In addition, we have to deplore several deaths of members during these last two years.

#### BALANCE OF THE YEAR

##### **2020**

##### Dinner conferences

One single activity : conference dinner January 25, 2020.

##### EMIA internship

No internship in 2020.

##### General Assemblies

They did not take place in 2020

##### **2021**

##### Dinner conferences

No activity.

##### EMIA internship

No internship in 2021.

##### General Assemblies

We hope to organize them before the end of 2021.

#### FUTURE PROJECTS 2021

##### Conference dinners

Resumption of conference dinners starting October 2021.

*Presented by Pierre DISSEL, national President M&M France and Hon General President M&M EU*

## **LUX**

### **Report M&M GrD Luxembourg of October 22, 2021**

2020-2021, period marked by many important events, the investiture of the new President of the United States, the NATO summit, the United States-European Union summit, but also, the continuation of 2020 of the issue of the COVID-19 pandemic with all its health, but also socio-economic consequences and ultimately not least, the withdrawal of the American and allied troops from the theater of operations of Afghanistan.

Our last General Assembly was held on April 16, 2019, that of 2019-2020 was scheduled for March 27, 2020 and had to be postponed for obvious reasons.

At this stage, it is planned to hold the 2021 General Assembly in March 2022.

Once again, we have to report that our membership has shrunk as a result of deaths. Here we are firmly anchored in the forty members (47 in August). The average age has not dropped and is over 74 years old.

The reasons for this continual decline are well known: the abolition of compulsory military service in the Grand Duchy since 1967, the lack of reserve service, a compulsory reservoir for continual Mars & Mercurian recruitment.

Planned contacts with the civil economic sector (Chamber of Commerce) have been postponed. They will be done as soon as possible. It is indeed crucial that we find a solution to the recruitment, otherwise the Circle will cease its activities in the long run.

Following the COVID-19 pandemic, activities of all kinds have been canceled since March 2020, or even postponed, due to the fact that the members of the Circle constitute a high-risk population.

As a follow-up to the vaccination campaign in the Grand Duchy, activities will resume at the beginning of October with a reunion outing, friendly lunch, and the programming of the General Assembly 2021 and the gala day, 25th anniversary of the Circle.

Just as already indicated last year, we will try to restore in the future visits with military, economic and civil interest. Indeed, the new equipment of the army on the way to become an army of modern technologies, but also a new law governing the armed forces will certainly arouse the interest of our members.

*Presented by Hon Gen Gaston REINIG, national President M&M GrD Luxembourg & General President M&M EU*

## **NDL**

### **Report M&M The Netherlands of October 22, 2021**

*Note:* This report covers the period GA Europe 2020 (Oct 17) to GA 2021 (Oct 22).

#### *The year 2021*

This year was also a Covid year. So no physical meetings but again videoconferencing making use of BlueJeans. To minimize the risks of losing members as result of not seeing each other for a long time, we continued these VTC-meetings on Board level as well for the Clubs.

For the longer term matters, I refer also to the Dutch report on 2020. Most matters mentioned there are still being worked on.

#### *GA Dutch Circle 2021*

Due to the restrictions we organized our postponed annual GA in Lunteren in July 2021 as a hybrid assembly. 35 members were allowed to come to the GA, others could follow the livestream. See:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-44PnInE\\_uo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-44PnInE_uo)

During this member meeting our Policy Plan & Roadmap was discussed. Beforehand, a Member Survey was conducted on six goals and actions regarding our brand awareness, communication, growth and member policy. The members agreed with our proposals. The most important item was whether or not to admit non-officers. It has been decided on a limited trial under strict conditions, with the possibility of veto by the board or a member. Digital voting and Q+A was possible in the meeting room as well as via the livestream.

#### *Social media*

The Dutch M&M website has been improved again. Beyond that, we have started a [Facebook](#) and a [LinkedIn](#) account for the Dutch Circle. Most Clubs do have their own WhatsApp group.

By the care of our Secretary and Board member for Communication and the Board member recruitment/retention we communicated more often, with a broader scope and various Mars as well as Mercury subjects. The Newsletters are well read.

And for M&M Europe there is an new active working group in which our national secretary Lon van der Zon participates: <http://mars-mercurius.eu/>

#### *Mission / Vision*

In the EC and the Board we discussed the Dutch ideas concerning the 'Mission / Vision' of Mars and Mercury Europe. The Dutch Circle has agreed with both statements. The plan is to approve these both during the EU GA 2021.

#### *Activities*

Our second M&M symposium in November 2020 was intended to be hybrid but actual it was a livestream only because only a few people were allowed to be present at the same location. Both YouTube you find here:

part 1 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mAtZyA3xtvQ&t=41s>

part 2 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HkSjmrq3d9w&t=3s>

Due to the Corona crisis we again had to postpone our Lustrum Gala 2020 (60 years Dutch Circle) and some excursions, like the DNA (Afsluitdijk levee dike, new sea barrier). Plans are now being made to reschedule this activity.

In due course of this year, the local clubs were able to organize some regular meetings again. Besides we were involved in the St. Joris Rally and also our own National Golf event took place in August.

Unfortunately, it was still not realistic to plan a new 'Jaarfeest' (Lustrum Gala 2020) this year and by that, we are working now to prepare that event for spring 2022.

This year we will organize (in cooperation with KVBK, HCSS and the Dutch Army) the *third Mars & Mercurius symposium* together with our national partners including the Dutch Land Forces Command per November 3<sup>rd</sup> 2021, again as a hybrid event. The theme will be European defense. We do have a high quality line-up of five speakers. We hope that it will be allowed to have over 100 persons in the Auditorium.

Info: <https://marsenmercuriussymposium.nl/>

#### *Troubling issues and problem areas*

We are still confronting some issues. The average age of our 177 Members is about 68 years and we do not see a growth in membership yet. But we are working to attract new members and on brand awareness. And we still try to interest younger Dutch officers who are still working for the Army or have recently left the service. There are also ex officers (retired or reserve), who joined the Army again. Both groups are more than welcome in the Dutch Circle.

In this regard, we presented M&M and held discussions with the Military Academies KIM (Navy) and KMA (Army and Airforce), and additionally with the Head of the Reservists and with the staff of the Dutch Land Forces Command, including its Second in Command Major General Rob Jeulink.

Working on more recognition and awareness, member recruitment and member retention is of great importance. Making 'Mars en Mercurius Nederland' more attractive especially for younger Dutch (former active) officers of the Armed Forces, male and female.

Finally I like to thank the Board members, the Club Boards, the Committee members, all Dutch members and the European Board for their contributions.

*To complete this report we give some Dutch facts and figures:*

### Members and concerns

#### *Facts*

- August 2021: about 177 members in 6 Clubs.
- About 3 new members in 2021 and a loss of about 12 in 2020.

#### *Concerns*

- Decrease in members; not growing yet.
- Average age (68); 21 members between 55 and 59.
- Lack of younger new members, but it is somewhat getting better.
- Club ZH-Z is still of high age and have few younger members.

### Financial position

- Still a healthy financial position, which enables us to support activities to support member retention and increase the number of new members.
- Our relatively high equity allows us to keep membership fees at €100 per year, with a return to the Clubs of €40 per member for doing activities. (During last Covid year we lowered the membership fee to € 30.)

### Activities in the year 2021

- Approx. 1 EC-meeting + 5 videoconferences via BlueJeans
- Approx. 2 Board meetings + 2 BlueJeans
- 3 Committee New Young Members meetings
- 1 GA annual meeting (hybrid in July)
- Regular monthly Club meetings in all clubs, often including a lecture or excursion. Since August Clubs are 're opening' again.

The clubs have (had) their regular monthly meetings again. Dutch activities: 7 Circle activities and 47 Club activities.

### Plans 2021

- Implementing the membership policy adopted during the GA.
- (Still) performing the postponed excursions and the lustrum party.
- Get out M&M more. Show who you are and what you mean.
- To reverse the reduction in membership.

### Circle and Club projects 2021

- Circle excursion 'De nieuwe afsluitdijk' (renovated Sea Barrier) on September 21<sup>st</sup>.
- Circle excursion 'Sea Barrier Casemate WWII Kornwerderzand on September 21<sup>st</sup>.
- Organizing our third M&M Symposium per November 3<sup>rd</sup>, combined with a webinar and streaming via YouTube.
- Clubs:
  - Club meetings combined with presentations
  - Events, with and without partners
  - Visiting military bases and civil companies
  - Recruitment.
- Lustrum Gala 2020 (M&M 60 years) is postponed and now planned for spring 2022.

*Presented by Peter PIETERSEN, national President M&M The Netherlands*

**PLD**

### **Report M&M Poland of October 22, 2021**

**Mr President,  
Dear Colleagues,**

Firstly I would like to wish all of you good health and I am very happy that we returned to normal activities.

Last year was very difficult time for all of us due to pandemia and caused that our activity was far from normal and in the case of Poland is still quite frozen. During the last time only members of board contacted and gathered together some times to exchange ideas and discussed preparation bases for a new activities which I believe that started now.

We had some meetings with people who would like to support our activities. Among them are politicians and a number of military retired officers ,generals for whom which a new form of M&M Vision and Mission seem very interesting and would like to join us and support as well.

Our main idea for further cooperation within M&M Europe, which will introduce Col. Sławomir MICHALSKI during GA 2021 is that Polish Circle of Mars & Mercury highly appreciates your modified draft of Mission Statement. This very version corresponds excellently with the new philosophy of M&M – discussed during our last meeting in Warsaw.

The only point we would like to discuss at General Assembly is the initial description of Mars & Mercury Europe as: ENG : **“an active informal commercial network”** FRA ; **“un réseau commercial informel actif”**.

Polish proposal is to take the wording “informal/informel” into consideration.

At the end I would like to wish all of us a very successful GA meeting 2021.

Col.e.r.Antoni Zygmunt Bugowski

*Presented by Col.e.r. Sławomir MICHALSKI, national Vice-President M&M Poland*

### **Interventions of the Circles**

As announced in the invitation, the Circles reports were not read. No questions were raised. Each Circle had the opportunity to express itself:

**BEL:** The President insisted on the need to launch a recruitment campaign.

He asked the question how to convince people to become an M&M member and proposed to exchange the national answers to this question between Circles.

**DEU:** No specific remarks.

**FRA:** The President insisted on individual contact for recruitment.

**LUX:** The reserve having been removed for more than 50 years, the Circle has expressed its agreement to the policy of openness of M&M EU.

**CHE:** Waiting for the resumption of activities.

**NLD:** Following COVID, meetings of members at national level and clubs were made in video format. The Circle is studying openness to non-commissioned officers.

The November 3 symposium currently has 200 physical and 140 electronic registrations. Sponsors for the 2022 edition are already in demand.

**PLD:** Recalled the difficult political situation. The army would have lost so much that it would have to be rebuilt. Sponsors would be hard to find due to fear of the government. The Vice President is asking for help finding business and trading opportunities.

## 14 - Membership of the national Circles

The General President introduced the subject.

It was agreed to establish a file for each National Circle elaborating on the national issue of membership of National Circles. M&M EU will take care of exchanging these sheets between National Circles.

## 15 - Discharge of the Executive Board

The General President thanked the members of the Board for their management and requested discharge from the Assembly, which in response was granted unanimously. He then thanked the delegates for their trust.

## 16- Designation of the Auditor

The Hon General President Michel COURTIN, accepted, on request, to continue in office.

## 17 –Statutes and Standing Orders

The draft Statutes and Standing Orders presented were adopted without comments.

## 18 – Discussions

### - Statement of the "mission" of M&M Europe:

After the deletion of the term "informal", which follows "commercial" in the first line, the draft statement was accepted unanimously and subsequently reads:

*Mars & Mercure Europe is an active commercial network, initiated by reserve officers, which contributes to the widest possible cohesion between all national circles on the basis of shared moral values, integrity, loyalty, respect and solidarity by highlighting the points of convergence. It supports the development of the professional activity of its members by promoting the exchange of knowledge, experiences and opportunities, guaranteeing professional and personal mutual assistance at the international level. In addition, Mars & Mercure Europe seeks to extend the network of circles to leaders of the corporate world without a military background, who share the same moral values and have an interest in cooperating with the defense sector.*

The next step will be to establish a Roadmap.

### - Evaluation of the M&M Europe web page

The General President asked all the Circles to transmit to the webmaster EU Lon the data of the webmasters or national communications managers.

The question arises if the future "E-Platform" should be added to the site.

The website layout laid out by Lon will be transmitted electronically to all underlying Circles and clubs.

The "News" page is considered to be very interesting and to be maintained, but Marc VAN DE WAL suggested that it should also include, apart from geopolitical information, "business" type information. The General President asked all Circles to send him any new article or potential interesting link for publication on the website.

### - Extension of Mars & Mercure Europe to non-Mars & Mercury associations

The General President, after having explained the contacts and the efforts necessary to gain new European member countries, asked to receive comments on the draft statutes presented. The approval process will be started later.

## **19 - GA of ASERA (Association des anciens des sessions européennes des responsable d'armement )**

The General President proposed that the General Assembly of the ASERA association should be organized in collaboration with Mars & Mercure Europe in order to increase our visibility. This event is scheduled to take place in the 3rd-4th quarter of 2022 in Brussels.

The General President asked the question how to organize this event, which formula (symposium?) to adopt, which potential participants to consider. The help of the National Circles is highly desired. As the start-up times are fairly short, a rapid response is necessary.

## **19 – GA 2022**

The 2022 General Assembly will be organized by the Circle M&M The Netherlands around week 42, possibly for 2 days (October 21-22 (TBC)), in an hotel of the NH chain. Two cities are in the balance: Maastricht and Rotterdam.

## **20 - AOB**

Questions :

Lon VAN DER ZON: M&M Germany is hosting a meeting at NATO HQ in Brussels. Would it be possible to expand participation? Wolf-Arthur KALDEN will inquire, but doubted the possibility.

Golf tournament :

Would it be possible to revive the annual golf tournament? Pierre ZUMWALD (CHE) and Jen FONGERS (NLD) volunteered for the organization.

## **21 – Closing remarks by the General President**

The agenda being exhausted, the General President expressed his satisfaction, thanked the organizers, all the participants for their support and the host Circle for the offered dinner. He closed the meeting at 7.20 p.m.

Philippe Gielen  
General Secretary