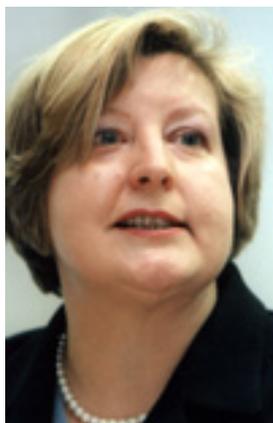


## Presentation of the European Women Lawyers Association by the members of the managing panel

This panel's function was to show those participants of the meeting willing to establish an organisation like EWLA the history of efforts so far concerning this project. Foremost the work that has already been done in order to find such an organisation, plans for upcoming work and lastly to request the participants to give authorization to the panel to formally launch such an association.



**Mrs. Ursula Nelles**, chairwoman of the German Lawyers Association (djb), the association that was primarily responsible for the application to the European Commission for getting sponsorship for this project, opened the presentation. She reported on:

the efforts that the djb constantly made for several years, to speak to women colleagues from all over Europe through its regional group in Brussels and to collect the heart of the EWLA there as well, the contacts especially to women lawyers from the UK on the occasion of the Conference "Women in Law" that was arranged in Paris in May 1998, who had taken up the same idea, the first concrete ideas to achieve the aim of launching the EWLA formulated on the occasion of the 50-year-anniversary of the djb in Dortmund in September 1998, the "launching" of the EWLA at the conference of the Women Lawyers Forum in London in May 1999, the conference in November 1999, that was arranged by the British Council and the djb (Bavarian Group) concerning the aim to make progress in connecting women lawyers from all parts of Europe, the efforts done to narrow down the scope of this project and to apply to the commission (DG V) for sponsorship.



**Mrs. Margaret McCabe**, who spoke for the Women Lawyers Forum as a partner-shiporganisation of the project, pointed out how important it is from her point of view to have a mouthpiece for Women in Europe working in the field of Law. She gave words to the expectation, that Women Lawyers should encourage the protection of Women Rights in Europe in general - one of her main issues being the struggle against "gender violence". Also she emphasized the aspect of connecting Women Lawyers in Europe. Women Lawyers should be aware of their professional career and help to add the number of women in keypositions in Law and Politics lastingly.



**Mrs. Anna Sporrer**, chairwoman of the Austrian Women Lawyers Association, the third partnership organisation of the project, reported on the political aims of an EWLA. Women Experts in Law are called upon to lobby for the Rights of Women in all European Institutions for example by giving statements and run "Test-cases" in front of the European (High) Court of Justice. As an example she mentioned the work on the European Bill of Rights. The development of Law in Europe could be taken as an example for the legal system of the member states. On the other hand solutions found in one of the member states could - as suggestions - also be used on an european level. Furthermore Mrs. Anna Sporrer pointed out that in her opinion it should be an important issue to encourage Women Lawyers from the joining countries for this purpose and involve them in joint projects as soon as possible.



**Mrs. Elisabeth Müller** (German Women Lawyers Association), one of the "mothers of the memorandum of association" of the EWLA, who - together with Janet Gaymer - had the challenging task of finding a suitable legal form for the EWLA and develop the text for the memorandum of association, presented the main contents of this draft, that has been handed out to all participants of the meeting in three different languages. She then concentrated on the rough structure of the statute, the organs and membership requirements.



**Mrs. Janet Gaymer** (Women Lawyers Forum) the second "mother of the memorandum of association" of the EWLA had the difficult part of explaining to the participants of the meeting that membership in the EWLA would cost money. She then clarified the staggered system of membership fees and tried to attract additional members by explaining that only half of the regular fee would be due in the year of launching.



**Mrs. Rosi Posnik** (Austrian Women Lawyers Association) focused on the aspect of mutual and border-crossing strengthening of feminist Women Lawyers - especially in times when chances for female interests in one's own country are not at their best. Furthermore she stated that young women colleagues - in particular those who already study or have studied Law as Europeans - will be attracted to EWLA and could be a valuable addition because of their special knowledge.



**Mrs. Cherie Booth**, well known and determined Queens's Council, who had not only moderated the panel competently, then continued to take the founding act into her experienced hands. She already had conducted the founding meeting of the European Employment Lawyers Association ("oh, it's just a redo") - although this founding was not going to be an exact repetition. Law is varied especially in Europe and a founding in Germany using Belgian law was even for Mrs. Cherie Booth a première. She petitioned the meeting to authorize the managing panel to get the

EWLA registered in Belgium on the basis of the draft of the memorandum of association that had been handed out to the participants before and furthermore to convene a members meeting with the aim of electing the board of directors in a way according to the memorandum of association. Her petition was met with constant applause. Reacting to a hint of representatives of the continental legal system on the podium that a formal vote might be required Mrs. Booth calmly asked the meeting the rhetorical question: "I presume this means a 'Yes'?!", which was answered with rhythmical applause.