

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**ESA – Yearly Conference 2006 in Vienna**  
Presentation of the new ESA Consumer Film

June 16<sup>th</sup>, Freiburg.

The European Sunglass Association hosted its Yearly Conference in Vienna on 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> June. Participants from all over the world joined the conference, including Tibor Gross, President of SAA Sunglass Association of America, William C. Thomas, CEO from VCA, Francesco Gili, General Secretary of ANFAO, Peter Frankenstein, Head Consumer Optics SPECTARIS and 40 ESA Members from Denmark, France, Germany, England, Italy, Spain and The United States.

ESA President, Rod Lane, welcomed all guests to two very informative days and pointed out that the new ESA Consumer Film would be the outstanding topic for this ESA Yearly Conference. One of the major ESA Goals is to support the growth of quality sunglasses by increasing the awareness of consumers for UV protection of their eyes.

Recent research shows that nearly 40% of Europeans do not wear sunglasses at all. Although the sunglass market shows growth in volume, the objective is to teach consumers about the need to wear good quality sunglasses. Petra Eckhardt, ESA-Managing Director, has discussed with ESA Members during a workshop how ESA Members can implement the ESA Film in their own corporate marketing activities. Even during the Conference, Members started ordering the film! It was interesting to note that all the participants from Italy, Germany, France, Spain and Britain gave very good feed back on the film both on content and tonality. This will certainly help ESA's approach to run communication and press activities together with national institutions across Europe.

Georg Weiss, chairman of Look4Company, gave the first presentation of the conference and providing an insight into electronic marketing to improve the data exchanges between suppliers, retailers and consumers. The latest technologies and materials used in sunglasses, including a vibrant presentation of different fashion trends, were visualized by Allan Rasmussen, Head of Design from the Danish company Pro Design. A very illuminating speech from Valerie Cuminet, Marketing Manager from Solaris, depicted the speeding up of trends and fashion life-cycles and their effects on the sunglass industry.

Silhouette, the well-known traditional Austrian family-owned enterprise on the one hand and very up-to-date producer of sunglasses and optical frames on the other hand, was introduced by Klaus Schmied, General Manager of Silhouette. His speech gave ESA Members the opportunity to see behind the curtain of a company that left its production in Europe very successfully and against the trend towards the Far East.

Counterfeits are one of the increasing risks for nearly all products, and for sunglasses as well. Dr. Jochen Schäfer, in his role as Legal Counsel of the World Federation of the Sporting Goods Industry, has inside information on how the counterfeiting business works and knows its

connection to terrorism and to the drugs mafia. He pointed out that the sunglass industry can learn from related industries how to restrict counterfeits and save on the millions that are lost due to this activity.

Helmer Schweizer, President of EuromContact, worked out the details of an efficient cooperation between industry members in order to establish and audit up-to-date market data using the European contact lens industry as an example. The latest developments on new international sunglass standards were explained by Graziano Marusi, QC Manager of Intercast and technical delegate of ANFAO. Then last but not least Tibor Gross, President of SAA Sunglass Association of America, highlighted the conference with an overview of the US sunglasses and reading glasses markets.

In a very comfortable atmosphere in the Hotel DAS TRIEST in Vienna, the conference participants had the opportunity to be the first to watch ESA's Consumer Film. The film, produced by CONDOR FILM in Zurich tells a small number of short stories about father and daughter playing together and then recognizing the need to protect adults and children's eyes against the glaring sun; about Grandpa who takes care of his eyes while spending time with his roses; about two young women preparing their holiday time overseas, and so on.

Via these short and smart stories, lots of information about the need to protect eyes against the sun is explained. ESA has defined the following worldwide target groups: end consumers, quality sunglasses retailers such as opticians and department stores, opticians training and education courses and of course employees of ESA members. The film is designed to be shown at the Point-of-sale on continual loop in opticians and department stores or on their websites, on ESA Members websites, at fairs, exhibitions, presentations, education and training courses at universities, technical schools, etc. and not least as a internal training tool for the entire sunglasses supply chain.

After having seen the film, the viewer is aware of the importance of eye protection. It is better not to wear any sunglasses than a bad pair of sunglasses. He understands the solar spectrum with its UV, visible and infrared light and why it is important to protect the eyes. UV and blue light – you don't see it and you don't feel it! Visible light produces glare and reflections. He realises that eye diseases will increase because of different aspects, like longer life expectation, the increase of outdoor activities, etc. The viewer understands that for different purposes (e.g. children, sports, driving, etc.) there is a need for better protection! And finally the viewer regards sunglasses as fashion accessories, high tech products and health items all at the same time.

The conference participants applauded the film and discussed a great variety of applications in their own companies.

More information on the ESA Film: [office@esa-sunglasses.com](mailto:office@esa-sunglasses.com)

The next ESA Event, the Annual Meeting, will take place on October 26 in Paris before SILMO opens its doors.

ESA Press Office