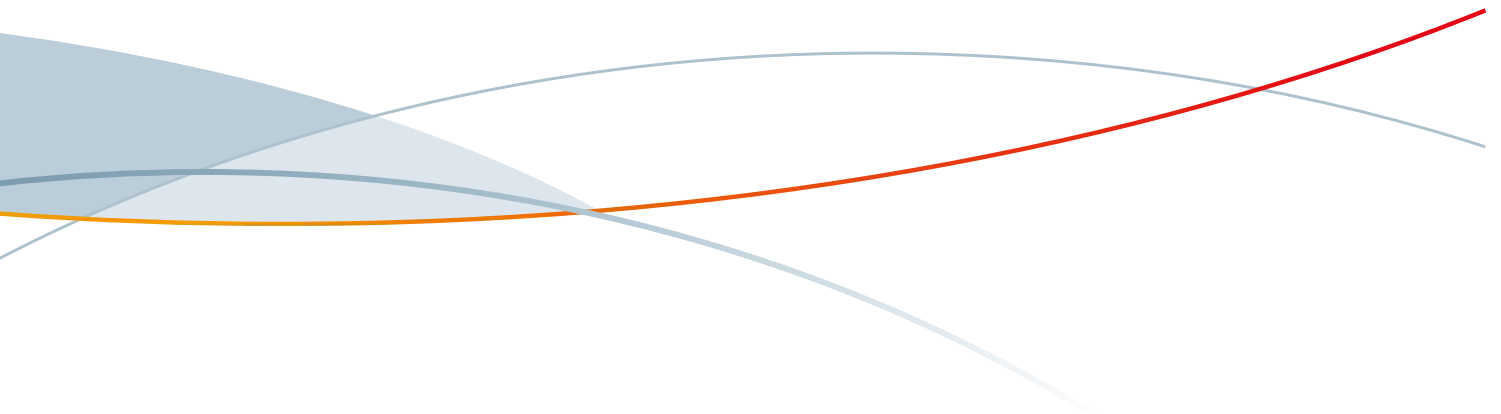
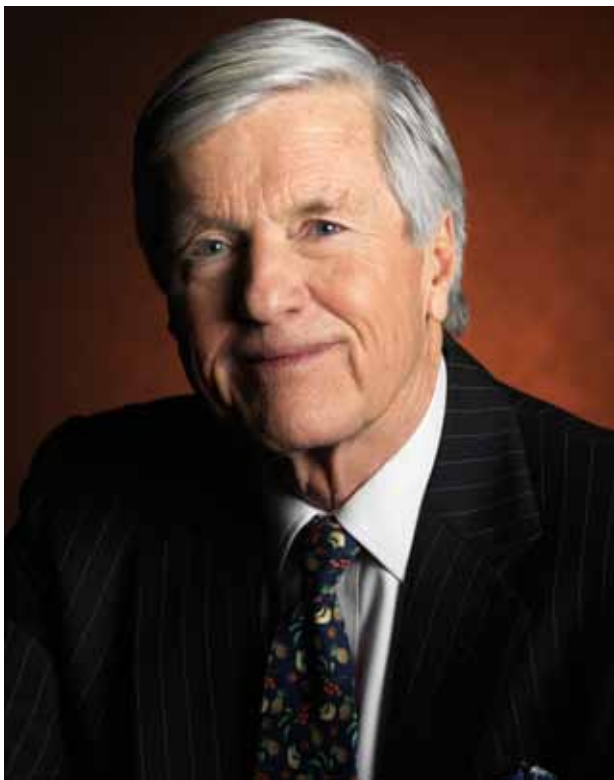


Interview with
Hans Eric Jansen





Interview with Hans Eric Jansen on the occasion of his forthcoming departure as chairman of Brunel International N.V.'s Supervisory Board.

The AGM of May 2011 will be the last one under your responsibility. How does that feel?

It's a strange feeling to be going after twelve years. But my term is coming to an end. That's simply the rule. Of course, I'm reconciled to it. But I'll miss the company and the people. Brunel is a unique company and I'm proud to have been able to contribute to its success.

Times weren't easy for Brunel when you became chairman in May 1999. How did that feel?

It's true that Brunel was facing stormy weather. The recession was hitting hard. But there were things that needed doing internally too. The company was in disarray: management changes, very high staff turnover, no clear strategy, and systems that didn't work well. It was clear that radical changes were needed. One of our first decisions was to appoint a new CEO. That was Jan Arie van Barneveld. We set out with him to get the company in order again.

Do you see that period as the low point in your chairmanship?

The low point came later for me, when we lost seven million euros in 2002. Although the sails had already been trimmed by then, it's still painful to reach the low point. It was a really testing time for management.

The company made a strong comeback afterwards. A succession of high points?

Actually, yes. The implemented reorganisation and restructuring made the company stronger. A good foundation had been laid for growth. And that's what happened. Company turnover and profits grew sharply from 2003 to 2008. And that wasn't just in the Netherlands but Germany too, and in the worldwide energy sector.

And then the company had to contend with a new recession?

That's true. The credit crisis came at the end of 2008, followed by a recession that we are starting to come out of at the moment. However, the major difference is that Brunel has come through this recession relatively well and under control. We also fared much better than the competition. It's a clear indication for me that the organisation has become strong.

What were the key features of your chairmanship over the past twelve years?

My main role, especially in the early stage, was to act as a sparring partner for management. I was of course also responsible for making sure that the Supervisory Board worked as a team. I was always successful in that, also thanks to my colleagues on the board. Finally, it was my job in the Supervisory Board to stay in touch with the controlling shareholder, Jan Brand, an important and visionary entrepreneur. I have a great deal of respect for the way he gave us room to get on with our independent task properly.

A whole lot of strategic decisions have been taken over the past twelve years. Which was the most outstanding in your view?

In the early stage, that was determining the future strategy, to get away from the lack of clarity. That was also the time when the back-office and reporting systems were put in order. The focus after that was on developing proper management, preferably home grown. That was actually the most important mission of all. I see the quality of the management as the determining factor for success in a company like Brunel. There were also important decisions about whether or not to merge, whether or not to splitting the company ...crossroads where we finally chose the right direction. Brunel fares well with independence and organic growth. I think another important step in stabilising senior management was the appointment of Rob van der Hoek as CFO, two years ago. In conclusion, I'm pleased to have been involved in the last phase of increasing the focus on Brunel as a brand. A strong company deserves a distinctive image.

What did you think of the cooperation with the Brunel organisation?

It was extremely pleasant. Brunel's CEO, Jan Arie van Barneveld, has a very open way of communicating. That enables in-depth contact with each other. The Supervisory Board always had direct access to the rest of the organisation. That's important. The more you get a sense of the operation, the more you can offer added value as a supervisory director.

How would you characterise Brunel?

Brunel is a people company. The quality of the people determines the company's success in the market. Brunel combines a strong entrepreneurial culture with a great love of the profession. Brunel employees like their business and each other.

What are your hopes for Brunel in the future?

I hope the excellent cooperation in the Supervisory Board and with the company's management continues. That's important because Brunel still has enormous potential for growth. By keeping a close eye on the market, Brunel will be able to become the norm in the international secondment sector. Working with Brunel should become a quality requirement.

What will you be doing after your departure from Brunel? Will you be working on your golf handicap after all?

I'm afraid I won't be able to make the time for that. A lot of new challenges are coming my way. I'm closely involved with the start-up of a new investment company, for example. Developments in the business world are fascinating at the moment and I prefer the role of participant to that of observer.

What would you like to say in conclusion?

The coming general meeting of shareholders will give me the opportunity to thank shareholders for the confidence they have shown. There will also certainly be an opportunity to say goodbye to Brunel's employees. I'm very grateful for their friendship and dedication. It's difficult to say goodbye to friends; I'll still be following developments. Brunel means a lot to me.