



CONFERENCE OF INGOs  
OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

CONFERENCE DES OING DU  
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

## **STANDING COMMITTEE CONF/SC(2013)SYN3**

### **DRAFT SYNOPSIS OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 22 APRIL 2013**

1. Opening of the meeting by the President, *Jean-Marie Heydt*, who paid tribute to Marie-Claude Rivière for her commitment to the work of the Conference of INGOs.

#### **The Standing Committee:**

2. **adopted** the meeting agenda [[CONF/SC\(2013\)OJ3](#)]
3. **adopted** the synopses of the meetings held on 21 and 23 January 2013 [[CONF/SC\(2013\)SYN1](#) and [SYN2](#)]
4. **Standing Committee members' participation in events and activities**
  - Jean-Marie Heydt:
    - Ankara: Conference organised by HUGO (Hacettepe University) on "Migration, Islam and Multiculturality" with the presence of the President of the Republic of Turkey and various ministers <http://www.hugo2013.org/en> (11-12 April);
    - Moscow: meeting with officials and NGOS to discuss the impact of the new so-called Russian law on "Foreign Agents", which concerned NGOs receiving international funding (16 April);
    - Moscow: Conference of Ministers of culture (15-16 April)
  - Jean-Marie Heydt and Alain Mouchoux:
    - High-level Conference on intercultural issues, held by the Andorran Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers (6-8 February)
    - Session of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities (19-21 March)
  - Anne-Marie Chavanon
    - 7<sup>th</sup> Conference on the European Landscape Convention – speech on "human rights and the landscape" (26-27 March)
    - CDLR – address at the World Democracy Forum (2-3 April)
  - Claude-Laurent Genty, Maritchu Rall and Daniel Zielinski
    - Colloquy on "Poverty and Inequality in Societies of Human Rights: paradox of democracies" (21 - 22 February)
  - Israël Mensah
    - Budapest: Advisory Council on Youth (3-5 April) – new "No Hate Speech Movement" campaign (2012-2014)

## 5. Working methods

5.1 Lessons to be learned from the method used to prepare the declaration on genuine democracy by a working group of the “Democracy, Social Cohesion and Global Challenges” Committee - Anne-Marie Chavanon and Jean-Marie Heydt.

**underlined** the importance, in this connection, of communication between the working groups and the chair of the relevant committee as well as the obligation to name the source of all documents

5.2 Jane Crozier reported on the findings from the 4-yearly reports which concern the Conference of INGOs :

- Information on the reports received and the situation of the INGOs which might lose their participatory status because they had failed to respond or to co-operate with the Council of Europe or were not representative enough in Europe
- Information on the way NGOs worked with the different Council of Europe bodies and statistics on the different forms of co-operation. Finding: approximately half of the INGOs had taken part at some point or other in the meetings of the Conference during the period in question
- Information on INGOs’ satisfaction with the way in which sessions were organised and suggestions for improvement

## 6. Participative democracy

6.1 Follow-up to the declaration on genuine democracy - Anne-Marie Chavanon and Jean-Bernard Marie

**endorsed the** proposed a posteriori amendment of the text adopted by the Conference of INGOs at its January session, forwarded to the President of the Conference of INGOs by Giuseppe Guarneri, head of the working group;

**took note** of the establishment of a group, co-ordinated by Jean-Bernard Marie, to follow up this declaration.

6.2 Interaction between NGOs and the public authorities in the democratic process: preparation of the June session – Anne-Marie Chavanon, Biljana Zasova (Association of Local Democracy Agencies - ALDA)

- Methods and structures to allow NGOs to take part in political decisions
- Use made of the Code of Good Practice
- Participation of the Conference of INGOs in the “My Europe: young, equal, inclusive” event, held by ALDA at the June session to promote the Code of Good Practice
- Co-operation with the Congress of Local and Regional authorities to promote the Code of Good Practice
- Involving representatives of civil society in countries where the Council of Europe was preparing co-operation programmes (Azerbaijan, Russian Federation and Ukraine, for example) in the June session

Biljana Zasova (ALDA) presented the “My Europe: young, equal, inclusive” project, which would be held during the June session in co-operation with “Democracy, Social Cohesion and Global Challenges” Committee .

The Code of Good Practice was used both by civil society players and by public institutions and initiatives had been taken in various countries.

Cyril Ritchie reported on his participation in a conference in Ankara on interaction between the authorities and civil society.

**was informed** of the co-operation with the Congress in promoting the Code of Good Practice. Antonella Valmorbida would be in charge of this joint activity.

6.3 **confirmed** the working group on promoting the Code of Good Practice under the leadership of Antonella Valmorbida and under the auspices of the “Democracy, Social Cohesion and Global Challenges” Committee.

6.4 **was informed** about the holding of the World Democracy Forum “Re-wiring democracy: connecting democratic institutions and citizens in the digital age”, 27-29 November 2013 – Jean-Marie Heydt, Eladio Fernandez-Galiano and Jane Crozier

**reminded members** that, in February, the NGOs had been invited to declare their interest in presenting an initiative at the forum;

**said** that all working sessions would be genuine think tanks, and that, in the light of developments, the date, and the action taken, two persons had been appointed to maintain links between the Conference and the Forum: Antonina Dashkina and Marie-José Schmitt;

**said** that the Conference of INGOs was involved in all the preparatory work for the Forum and that all responses would be dealt with. Eladio Fernandez-Galiano said that the Council of Europe wished to refocus its activities on democracy and give a voice to those who worked in this field every day and did not have access to e-democracy

## 7. Expert Council on NGO law

**heard** Cyril Ritchie, Chair of the Expert Council:

- inform participants that the Expert Council currently comprised 9 members and that their evaluation work had focused on national surveys so as to identify a different theme each year.
- stressed the need to follow up work in Azerbaijan where the Expert Council on NGO law was considering further measures, following the Venice Commission’s visit. Further surveys were planned, for example in Russia and Belarus where the situation was deteriorating. The next meeting of the Expert Council should take place in Moscow.

The Expert Council’s role in monitoring the situation of NGOs was an asset from which all Council of Europe bodies should be able to benefit.

## 8. Strategy for concerted action by the Conference of INGOs in countries in the Mediterranean neighbourhood.

8.1. Follow-up to the visit by the President of the Conference of INGOs to Tunis (17-20 February 2013)

**Asked** the members of the delegation which had visited Tunis to develop various practical co-operation projects (conferences, training seminars, workshops) and to conduct appropriate fundraising, focusing in particular on:

- exchanges of experience on civil society’s role after a change of political system / sharing of post-revolutionary experience;
- exchanges of know-how, experience and best practice on organised civil society’s role in good governance;
- assistance with making civil society more structured and enabling NGOs to network more effectively;
- training on the respective roles of NGOs, the authorities and political parties in the democratic process, while safeguarding the independence of NGOs;

- training in the application of the methods of dialogue and co-operation in the various stages of the democratic process as described in the Code of Good Practice;
- boosting of the work of the Conference of INGOs through co-ordination of efforts with local players, members of the Conference of INGOs in Tunisia and other Council of Europe players;
- taking into consideration the partnership proposal developed by ALDA entitled “support to civil society in Tunisia”.

**Asked** the INGO members of the Conference to act on the requests made to the Conference of INGOs by Tunisian civil society players during the visit to Tunisia, in particular concerning:

- the development of cultural forums;
- the intensification of North-South co-operation, as well as East-South (Caucasus-Maghreb) and South-South co-operation (Maghreb-Africa).

**Expressed the wish** that all the working groups send the results of their work to the representative of the Bureau – Alain Koskas – in charge of coordinating and ensuring coherence of the whole process.

**Agreed** to give priority to Tunisia and to regional activities involving nationals of several countries on the southern shore of the Mediterranean and in Europe, in its action in the Mediterranean neighbourhood countries.

8.2. Follow-up to the round table on the theme “Supporting the Wishes, Demands and Priorities of Women in the Arab World” (23 January) - Betty Doornenbal

**deferred discussion** of this item

8.3. North-South Centre: participation of the Conference of INGOs in the Committee of Ministers’ Ad hoc Working Group on the Future of the Centre (GT-CNS) - Jean-Marie Heydt.

The Centre was going through a difficult patch as the departure of a number of member states had led the Committee of Ministers to set up a think-tank to consider its future. As Vice-President of the North-South Centre, Jean-Marie Heydt had very often had to replace the President at meetings of the Bureau and Executive Committee and on the jury of the North-South Prize, as well as at conferences. The Committee of Ministers had now given the Centre a number of tasks to fulfil and operating criteria with which it had to comply . The work of the Centre would be re-assessed in late 2015 and the Committee of Ministers would once again give its opinion on the situation.

8.4. Progress in the working groups’ activities

- “ Social and political evolutions in Southern Mediterranean countries”, led by Jean-Pierre Estival, “Democracy, Social Cohesion and Global Challenges” Committee
- Migrations and democracy: Situation, problems and examples of answers” lead by Jean-Claude Gonon and Silvano Marseglia – Democracy, Social Cohesion and Global Challenges Committee
- “Mediterranean working space” of the Democracy, Social Cohesion and Global Challenges Committee

8.5. Preparation of a conference in Algeria

Roselyne Moreau, standing in for Sabine Rohmann, presented this item: a conference would be held in 2014 on the challenges of education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

It would summarise the work done by the Education and Culture Committee's four working groups.

#### Global security in the Maghreb – Challenges and prospects

G rard Gr neron said that a Tunisian Global Security Observatory comprising independent academics and representatives of organised civil society had been set up. The newly established Tunisian police trade unions needed to be clearly structured and the European Council of Police Trade Unions (CESP) had been asked to help them. A meeting was to be held in Tunis in June 2013 with the two trade union organisations of the Tunisian Police and training would be offered.

#### 8.6. Study Day organised by the Chamber of Counsellors of the Moroccan Parliament (February)

Veysel Filiz reported on his participation in the study day on the theme of citizenship and civic-minded attitudes and partnership as an essential tool for promoting them, and his address in the presence of several ministers on civil society's role in alleviating the effects of social setbacks.

#### 9. Preparation of the June 2013 session

**approved the** proposed order of business for the June session

10. Vera John-Mikolajewski reported on the European Citizens Initiative - quality education for all - submitted by MEET (Movement towards a European Education Trust). She informed the Committee that an educational platform would be set up to improve the quality of education for everyone on the continent. This activity was linked to the European Year of Citizens. The launch of this campaign was hosted by Henri Malosse, President of the Employers Group of the European Economic and Social Committee. The President of the Conference would meet the new President and information on the campaign would be presented at the June session de June.
11. **approved** the appointment of Jean-Bernard Marie as new representative of the Conference of INGOs on the Steering Committee for Human Rights
12. **was informed** of the publication of a Council of Europe book entitled "De 1949   nos jours", written by Birte Wassenberg, lecturer in contemporary history. A chapter of this book concerned the Conference of INGOs.

Rapporteurs: Veysel Filiz and Maritchu Rall