



CONFERENCE OF INGOs
OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

CONFERENCE DES OING DU
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

STANDING COMMITTEE

CONF/SC(2014)SYN1

Strasbourg, 10 June 2014

MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE

SYNOPSIS OF THE MEETING HELD ON 27 JANUARY 2014

1. **Opening of the meeting** by Jean-Marie Heydt, President of the Conference of INGOs. The President welcomed the participants, saying that progress was being made on the various initiatives under way, despite the problems encountered due to the current context.

Apologies for absence were received from the two vice-presidents, Antonina Dashkina and Sophie Dimitroulias,

The Head of the Civil Society Division introduced Yvan Nikoltchev, who had joined the team.

The Standing Committee meeting on 27 January 2014,

2. **Adopted** the meeting agenda*
3. **Approved** the synopsis of the meeting held on 30 September 2013 [[CONF/SC\(2013\)SYN5](#)]
4. **Preparation of the January session (except the Plenary)**

Mentioned the main events of the session, namely: the ad hoc working groups, the meetings of the three thematic committees, the side events, the arrangements for receiving representatives of Ukrainian civil society who would be attending the Conference meeting. At the next meeting of the Standing Committee on 29 January, a delegation would discuss, in a constructive manner, a draft declaration concerning the events in Ukraine.

Reminded participants of the importance of complying with deadlines for synopses and agendas, in keeping with the INGO Conference's rules of procedure.

5. Outlook for the work of the three committees for 2014

The three chairs **mentioned** the main points of the work under way and the outlook for 2014.

Education and Culture Committee (Sabine Rohmann)

A conference on "The professional image and ethos of teachers" (24 and 25 April 2014) was to be held under the Council of Europe's Pestalozzi programme (DGII) and the INGO Conference's Education and Culture Committee. It would focus in particular on the implications for the ethical image of the teaching profession, the competences of teachers and their day-to-day practices. The Conference would adopt a manifesto which would have an impact on the follow-up to the committee's work.

The Conference would encourage fresh thinking on education and adopt a manifesto, with tangible results. The conclusions would have an impact on the future direction of the working group "Teaching profession in the 21st century". This group had prepared a report in the light of a questionnaire sent out to European teachers.

Inclusive education and the work done by DGII would play a major role in “living together” in the field of education.

The findings of the former working group of the Human Rights Committee “Education for democratic citizenship and human rights in the digital media” would provide valuable input for the working group on “Access to digital media for all”.

The President said that the findings of the various working groups would inform the committee’s work programme.

Democracy, Social Cohesion and Global Challenges Committee (Anne-Marie Chavanon)

The Committee’s work echoed that conducted by the Parliamentary Assembly, with the focus primarily on democracy, social cohesion and global challenges.

Objectives: further discussions on climate including, in 2015, a conference to be held in Paris on “Climate and human rights”. The UN NGOs would be contacted. Attention would also be given to the subject of immigration and more specifically migration conditions, as well as migration flows. A working group on co-development was being set up. Reference would be made to the situation in Ukraine.

The working group “Habitat and health”: a practical guide was being prepared.

The working groups “Health risks and mobility: a global challenge” and “Landscape, a social cohesion tool under threat” would provide information in June.

The working group “Social Cohesion and Intercultural Dialogue” asked that a distinction be made between merging and a transversal approach. It suggested drawing on the themes examined by the Parliamentary Assembly, and the concept of “living together”, namely: strengthening Roma rights, migration, intercultural dialogue, terrorism, media freedom and minorities.

Human Rights Committee (Annelise Oeschger)

The work was based on the Recommendations put to the INGO Conference for adoption, such as:

- Combatting torture in Europe, with the side event that was to be held on 29 January. The ad hoc working group would be responsible for follow-up to the recommendation and the outcomes of the event;
 - The fight against poverty and human rights in Europe, with an annual event to mark International Day for the Eradication of Poverty on 17 October, and publication of the proceedings in association with the secretariat of the European Social Charter and the secretariat of the Civil Society Division. In 2014, the Day would be celebrated in Turin, as part of the high-level conference being held by the Council of Europe on the European Social Charter on 17 and 18 October 2014. A preparatory meeting had been held with Régis Brillat, Head of the Department of the European Social Charter, and fifteen or so NGOs;
 - The working group “Gender perspectives in political and democratic processes, particularly dealing with conflicts” was preparing a side event for June. It would be mentioned at the next meeting of the Human Rights Committee. The event was being organised in association with the Democracy, Social Cohesion and Global Challenges Committee;
 - The anti-hate speech working group, in association with the Education and Culture committee, was working with the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI). A declaration on anti-Semitism would be produced in time for June.
5. Resolution (2003)8 on participatory status for INGOs – “10 years of participatory status for INGOs – 10 proposals for improving the operation of this status” (Jean-Marie Heydt)

This item **would be dealt with** at the meeting of the Standing Committee on Wednesday 29 January.

6. Lisbon Forum: “Valuing civil society as an actor of governance: prospects for the Southern Mediterranean”, participation and implementation of the conclusions by the INGO Conference - *Jean-Marie Heydt, Israël Mensah*

Heard Antonella Cagnolati, Director of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, on the Forum held on 6 and 7 November 2013 in Lisbon on the theme: “Valuing civil society as an actor of governance: prospects for the Southern Mediterranean”. In her statement she focused on the key areas, i.e.:

- in May 2013, the Committee of Ministers had redefined the framework of the North-South Centre in Lisbon following a debate on the Centre’s future and potential. A new mission had been assigned to it under the Council of Europe’s neighbourhood policy;
- the operating structure of the quadrilogue was key to governance. It must be strengthened and developed between the four pillars, in particular between civil society and local authorities which formed the cornerstone of democracy, in order to jointly devise a frame of reference (as requested by the Moroccan NGOs), by asking questions such as “How should associations work together? At what level? How should this be organised? The Conference had a major role to play in the interim report to be submitted to the Committee of Ministers at the June session. Some co-ordination was needed.

Decided to set up a transversal group under the Democracy, Social Cohesion and Global Challenges Committee. Among other things, the group would explore the new arrangements for civil society in Morocco. The work done by the Expert Council of NGO Law could make a useful contribution here.

[Link to the conclusions of the Lisbon Forum](#)

- the theme of the 2014 Lisbon Forum would be “democratic transition”

8. Any other business

Heard Marie-José Schmitt on the work done by the Committee on Bioethics (DH-BIO) whose aim was to draft an additional protocol to the Convention on Human Rights and Biomedicine. The focus would be on the human rights and dignity of people who had to be placed in psychiatric institutions, voluntarily or involuntarily, because of mental disorder. She requested that, at its meeting on 29 January, the Committee adopt a decision in view of the importance of the subject.

Heard Cyril Ritchie on the Madrid Conference held on 10 and 11 December 2013 under the Lanzarote Convention on “Preventing sexual abuse of children”. See link http://www.coe.int/t/dg3/children/News/ProgrammeMadrid_en.pdf

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