



CONFERENCE OF INGOs
OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

CONFERENCE DES OING DU
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

STANDING COMMITTEE CONF/SC(2012)SYN1

Strasbourg, 5 March 2012

DRAFT SYNOPSIS OF THE MEETING HELD ON Tuesday 24 January 2012

1. Opening of the meeting

The President wished the members of the Standing Committee a Happy New Year and said that he hoped that they were preparing for the session calmly as, in addition to the problems relating to the elections, they could only be credible and continue to be the spearhead of civil society if the climate were peaceful. This was also the spirit in which he wished to undertake this new mandate.

The agenda for the session would be particularly busy given the activities scheduled and the holding of the elections. He particularly thanked all the members of the INGO secretariat for their commitment and the preparations they had made for the coming week.

The Standing Committee:

2. **adopted** the meeting agenda [[CONF/SC\(2012\)OJ1](#)]
appointed the Rapporteur for the meeting, Maritchu Rall, A.I.C.
3. **adopted** the synopses of the meetings held on 3 and 4 October 2011 [[CONF/SC\(2011\)SYN9](#); [CONF/SC\(2011\)SYN10](#)]
4. **Preparation of the meetings of the Conference of INGOs on 25 and 27 January 2012.**

The Standing Committee raised the following main points and:

- **approved** the arrangements for the various meetings to be held during the session. The committee chairs were asked to ensure that the texts submitted to their committee by the working groups were forwarded in time to have them translated and presented in both official languages. It was proposed that, like in the Parliamentary Assembly, documents should be marked "**Provisional version**". After an exchange of views, it was decided to create a detailed guide on how to proceed for the attention of the working groups.

- **informed members of** the meeting with Ms Michelle Bachelet, UN Deputy Secretary General and Executive Director of UN Women, former President of the Republic of Chile, on Thursday 26 January, with a delegation from the Conference of INGOs responsible for women's issues.

- **said** that the Chair of the Expert Council on NGO Law would present his report and proposals at the Conference Plenary on 25 January 2012 with a view to its adoption at the June 2012 session [[link to the progress report](#)]

- **proposed to try out** “Open questions” at the Conference of INGOs on 25 January 2012

5. Action to be taken in response to the Civil Society Forum on “Living together”, Strasbourg, 13-14 November 2011

- **pointed out** that a large number of NGOs had taken an active part in the Civil Society Forum and that the Secretary General of the Council of Europe and the Chair of the Committee of Ministers had also been present.

- **drew attention to** the study day organised by the G3I (Intercultural, International and Interfaith) working group, headed by François Becker, as a follow-up to the discussions at the Forum on 13 and 14 November 2011

6. Preparation of the civil society debate in the context of the World Forum for Democracy (5-11 October 2012)

Listened to François Friederich, Forum co-ordinator, present the following main points:

- The aim of the new project was to organise a Forum to strengthen Strasbourg’s European image, along the lines of the summer universities for democracy and drawing on the positive reaction to them across Europe;

- The Forum would be open to wide participation. In addition to the annual participants of the schools of political studies, national and European parliamentarians, government leaders, local elected representatives, public officials and academics would be invited to Strasbourg over one week for a series of events and working meetings in which public stakeholders from all continents would take part.

- The aim would be not only to discuss experiences and good practices in democratic governance but also to propose new initiatives for strengthening the process of democratisation throughout the world and to consolidate all democracies, including the oldest, given the problems with which they are confronted.

- Participation by civil society, the media and socio-economic stakeholders in the meetings of the Forum would open the way for worldwide dialogue on safeguarding and promoting the universal values of peace, democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

- The Forum would comprise various events such as a hub of democratic excellence, bringing together high-level experts to provide input for the Forum debates, conferences and workshops, “democracy in the 21st Century” workshops bringing together all those who take an active part in public life by professional groups, and events open to the public at large (youth parliament, NGO Fair, film festival, literature prize...).

- In conclusion, the Conference of INGOs would have a full role to play in the organisation and preparations for the Forum.

7. Participation of the Conference of INGOs in intergovernmental committees: for information

Listened to Jutta Gützkow, Head of the Civil Society Division, present the list of intergovernmental committees likely to be of relevance to the Conference of INGOs and possibly requiring its participation. The choice would be made in accordance with the priorities identified and the budget. This would be approved in principle at the meeting of the Conference on 27 January 2012, but the final decision and appointment of the persons concerned would only be made at the Standing Committee meeting in April.

8. INGO Service: discussion of the 2012 budget

Listened to the Chair of INGO Service address the following issues:

- the 2012 budget, which would be approved by the General Assembly to be held on 27 January 2012;
- The need to plan for the corresponding expenditure as soon as possible;
- The impossibility of reimbursing the expenses of guests invited to address committees.

9. No other business.