

STEERING COMMITTEE FOR CULTURE, HERITAGE AND LANDSCAPE (CDCPP)

CDCPP(2012)16

14 May 2012

1st Plenary Session
Strasbourg, 14 – 16 May 2012

2013 Council of Europe Conference of Ministers of Culture

“Governance of culture – promoting access to culture ”

- Draft Concept -

DOCUMENT FOR DISCUSSION AND DECISION

Item 3.1.1 of the draft agenda

Draft decision

The Committee:

- **noted** the draft concept for a Council of Europe Conference of Ministers of Culture on “Governance of culture – promoting access to culture” and welcomed the initiative taken by the Russian Federation to host this conference in spring 2013 in Moscow;
- **supported** the proposal to set up a small working group composed of three CDCPP members to further develop the concept and prepare the conference in the light of discussions held, reporting progress to the Bureau;
- **asked** its Bureau to ensure detailed follow-up of the conference dossier at its autumn session;
- **asked** the Secretariat to keep the CDCPP informed of developments.

BACKGROUND

At the Plenary Session of the CDCULT in May 2011, the Delegate of the Russian Federation suggested holding a Conference of Ministers of Culture in autumn 2012, hosted by her country in Moscow.¹ The Committee noted the plans for such a Conference and asked the CDCULT Bureau to study a detailed proposal at its forthcoming Bureau meeting. The Bureau, during its 10th meeting on 8 July 2011, welcomed the invitation by the Government of the Russian Federation to host a Conference of Ministers responsible for Culture in November 2012². In the course of consultations and due to the scale of preparation required, the date for this event has been changed and the Conference is now envisaged for spring 2013 (Moscow, 1½ days between early April and end of May – exact dates still to be confirmed).

PROGRESS

Progress has been made since summer 2011 on the planning of the Ministerial Conference and an initial concept has been developed by the Russian Authorities, in consultation with the Secretariat. This concept was presented to the Committee of Ministers Rapporteur Group on Education, Culture, Sport, Youth and Environment (GR-C) on 31st January 2012³ and once again discussed by this body on 13 March 2012. Whilst most delegations were supportive of the idea of holding the ministerial conference in spring 2013 in Moscow, a number of delegations felt that the concept should be further refined by the CDCPP in line with the provisions of Resolution CM/Res (2011)7 (see Appendix 3) and with particular attention given to defining the expected results of the event, its link to the Organisation's priorities and the budgetary implications. Following a further exchange on 5 April, the Deputies decided at their 1140th meeting (11 and 12 April 2012) to instruct the CDCPP to develop a concept and road map for the conference in the above sense, taking into account the conceptual contributions by member States⁴, and to report back to the GR-C. The GR-C would resume consideration of the item in the light of the CDCPP's proposal, with a view to taking a decision on the holding of such a conference pursuant to paragraph 2 of Resolution CM/Res (2011)7.

¹ The last Conference of European Ministers responsible for Cultural Affairs dates back to 2005 (Faro, 27-28 October).

² Decisions taken by the CDCULT Bureau session, 8. July 2011:

The Bureau:

- **welcomed** the suggestion by the Russian Federation to host a CoE Conference of Ministers of Culture in Moscow in autumn 2012;
- **invited** the Government of the Russian Federation to revise the initial draft concept provided in the light of discussions held both on the content and on the specific timing requirements;
- **offered** to follow up on this matter until the new Steering Committee is operational in 2012, to ensure the smooth co-ordination of planning for this Ministerial Conference through the Committee's transition period.

Decisions taken by the CDCULT Plenary session, 3-4 May 2011:

The Committee:

- **noted** the plans for a Conference of Ministers of Culture in October 2012 hosted by the Russian Federation in Moscow;
- **asked** the Bureau to study a detailed proposal at its forthcoming Bureau meeting on 8 July 2011 and ensure follow-up with CDCULT delegates via written consultation;
- **asked** the Secretariat to ensure follow-up as regards provisions and procedures for Council of Europe Ministerial Conferences.

³ See Appendix 1

⁴ See contribution of Poland received in March 2012 in Appendix 2.

The following conference brief offers a revised concept in the light of initial comments made by the GR-C, but does not reflect in detail specific contributions by member states, which are to be addressed by the CDCPP's working mechanism for the preparation of the Ministerial conference.

Conference brief

Conference participants:

Ministers of Culture of the 50 States Parties to the European Cultural Convention.

Conference subject:

In accordance with the Council of Europe's aims concerning human rights, democracy and the rule of law, the Council of Europe's Resolution CM/Res(2011)7 on Council of Europe conferences of specialized ministers and the strategic axes of the Programme priorities of the Council of Europe for 2012-2013 on "Democratic Governance", "Democratic Citizenship", "Culture and Democracy", the following theme for the forthcoming Conference of Ministers of Culture is suggested:

"Governance of culture – promoting access to culture".

Conference sub-themes

Emphasis will be placed on three major sub-themes:

- The role of ministries of culture in promoting access to culture,
- Perspectives for Council of Europe activities in the field of culture,
- State of and perspectives for Council of Europe cooperation with UNESCO, the European Union and other international organisations in the field of culture.

Conference objectives

In line with the priorities of the Third Summit of Heads of State and Government and the ongoing reform process of the Council of Europe, the conference will:

- identify strategies for Member States to promote access to culture, in particular in a situation of economic crisis, including via digital means;
- analyze the current work in the field of culture of the Council of Europe and provide the possibility to ministers to give a political impetus to the cultural sector of the Council of Europe;
- make recommendations on future Council of Europe action in the cultural field including proposals for co-operation projects with other international organisations.

Conference results and follow-up

Adoption of a final conference declaration addressed to States Parties to the European Cultural Convention and the Council of Europe, including:

- conference statement (a) affirming culture as an important resource for democracies, changing societal challenges and economic development and

- (b) presenting a number of principles and recommendations for integrated cultural policy making;
- recommendations related to priorities of future activities of the Council of Europe including common projects with other international organisations in the cultural and cultural heritage fields, as these relate to the key conference theme.

Conference links to the Organisation's priorities

The Conference of Ministers of Culture will highlight the key role of cultural resources in enhancing democracy and democratic participation in culture in European societies facing multiple challenges. The conference will link specifically to the following current CoE strategic priorities and work:

- The priorities of the Warsaw Declaration and the Action Plan of the Third Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe (2005) in the field of culture including the challenge of democratic management of cultural diversity, fostering of European identity and unity based on shared fundamental values and the enhancement of intercultural dialogue
- The priorities and projects of the Programme and Budget of the Council of Europe in the field of culture for 2012-2013
- examination by the Committee of Ministers of the PACE's recommendation on "The right of everyone to take part in cultural life" (REC 1990, adopted in January 2012⁵) http://assembly.coe.int/ASP/Doc/ATListingDetails_E.asp?ATID=11396) which underlines the necessity to advance in this respect.⁶
- The launch of the Council of Europe White Paper on intercultural dialogue, "Living Together as Equals in Dignity" (2008), reinforced intergovernmental activities that require follow-up. http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/intercultural/source/white%20paper_final_revised_en.pdf)
- The Council of Europe's Internet Governance Strategy (2012), <https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?Ref=CM%282011%29175&Language=lanEnglish&Ver=final&BackColorInternet=C3C3C3&BackColorIntranet=EDB021&BackColorLogged=F5D383>), in its action line on "*Maximising the Internet's potential to promote democracy and cultural diversity*", inter alia, asks for activities focused on "facilitating access to a wide variety of rich and diverse cultural content and promoting active participation in its creation".

Conference budget

The Council of Europe will cover costs related to the preparation of conference background papers and reports, the translation of these into the second Council of Europe official language and possibly, other conference languages as well as costs related to the travel of experts and of the Secretariat to the conference and preparatory meetings. I Other costs related to the Ministerial

⁵ To be adopted by the Committee of Ministers later in 2012.

⁶ Innovative work on indicators related to cultural participation and access is currently pursued in the framework of the Compendium and CultureWatchEurope initiative.

Also, the Council of Europe Faro Convention (2005, <http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/EN/Treaties/Html/199.htm>) is of interest here since it recognises the rights relating to cultural heritage as inherent in the right to participate in cultural life, as defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Conference will be covered by the Russian Federation. The budgetary impact of the conference on the future Council of Europe work programme of the cultural sector cannot be defined at this time.

NEXT STEPS

Suggested Roadmap

Following discussion by the Committee, a small task force of three experts and three representatives (including a Bureau member and the Chair) from the CDCPP shall be entrusted with the final development of the concept, continuous follow-up and preparation of the Ministerial Conference and reporting to the Bureau of the CDCPP. The group will mainly work via electronic communication methods, with a maximum of two meetings between summer 2012 and spring 2013. A first meeting can be scheduled for June 2012 to revise the present draft concept as required. The revised draft concept for the conference will then be consulted with CDCPP members over the summer (electronic communication means).

The Secretariat, in co-operation with the Russian Authorities, will submit and present the conference concept to the GR-C for information and approval at its meeting on 11 September, and pending decision by this body, then submit to the Ministers' Deputies of the Council of Europe.

The Bureau of the CDCPP will discuss the Conference dossier as one of its main agenda items at its first session in October or November 2012 and make recommendations for follow-up to the CDCPP. The CDCPP will subsequently amend/approve the conference documents including draft conference recommendations by February 2013 (either by electronic procedure, or scheduling the 2013 Plenary session early in the year), followed by discussion at a GR-C meeting on the final draft documents.

It will be important that CDCPP delegates alert their Ministers of Culture to the event and ensure that the dates are reserved. The Secretariat and the Russian Authorities will communicate as soon as possible the final conference dates chosen in spring 2013.

Appendix 1:**Proposal to hold a Council of Europe Conference of Ministers of Culture, prepared by the Russian Federation, in consultation with the Secretariat****SECRETARIAT GENERAL**

SECRETARIAT OF THE COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS
SECRETARIAT DU COMITE DES MINISTRES

Contact: Francine ARNOLD-PAULI
Tel: 03.88.41.32.79

Date: 12/01/2012

DD(2012)7

Meeting:	GR-C – 31 January 2012
Item reference:	Item 4: Proposal to hold a Council of Europe Conference of Ministers of Culture (Russian Federation, November 2012)
Document distributed at the request of ⁷ :	Russian Federation, in consultation with the Secretariat
Réunion :	GR-C – 31 janvier 2012
Référence du point :	Point 4 : Proposition de Conférence du Conseil de l'Europe des ministres de la culture (Fédération de Russie, novembre 2012)
Document distribué sur la demande de ¹ :	Fédération de Russie, en consultation avec le Secrétariat

⁷In the application of Article 21.b of the rules of procedure of the Committee of Ministers, it is understood that distribution of documents at the request of a Representative shall be under the sole responsibility of the said Representative, without prejudice to the legal or political position of the Committee of Ministers (CM/Del/Dec(2001)772/1.4). / Dans le cadre de l'application de l'article 21.b du Règlement intérieur du Comité des Ministres, il est entendu que la distribution de documents à la demande d'un représentant se fait sous la seule responsabilité dudit représentant, sans préjuger de la position juridique ou politique du Comité des Ministres CM/Del/Dec(2001)772/1.4).

2012 Council of Europe Conference of Ministers of Culture
“The Influence of New Social Factors on Cultural Policy in Europe -
Culture, Democracy, Access, and Cohesion”

The CDCULT Bureau, during its 10th meeting on 8 July 2011, welcomed the invitation by the Government of the Russian Federation to host a Conference of Ministers responsible for Culture in November 2012. In accordance with the Council of Europe's Resolution CM/Res(2011)7 on Council of Europe conferences of specialised ministers and within the strategic axes of the Programme priorities of the Council of Europe for 2012-2013 on “Democratic Governance”, “Democratic Citizenship”, “Culture and Democracy” and “Addressing Crisis Situations”, the Government of the Russian Federation is pleased to provide the following information to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe in view of preparations for the Conference of Ministers responsible for Culture in November 2012:

1. **Dates** 1½ days between 19-24 November 2012 (*exact dates to be confirmed*)
2. **Location** Moscow, Russian Federation
3. **Budgetary implications for the Council of Europe** (*Prepared by the Secretary General*)

The Council of Europe will cover cost related to the preparation of conference background papers (expert contract) and reporting (rapporteur fee), the translation of these into the second Council of Europe official language and costs related to the travel of experts and of the Secretariat to the conference and preparatory meetings. The overall Council of Europe contribution will be 19 500 €.

4. **Subject**

In accordance with the Council of Europe's aims concerning human rights, democracy and the rule of law, the Russian Federation suggests the following theme for the forthcoming Conference of Ministers of Culture on “The influence of new social factors on cultural policy in Europe: “Culture, Democracy, Access and Cohesion”.

Sub-themes:

- Influence of new social factors and of the economic crisis on effective functioning of national policies of promoting access to culture including cultural heritage;
- Culture as the resource of economic growth through support of creativity, innovations and local and regional development;
- European cultural co-operation: current perspectives for development.

5. **Objectives**

In line with the priorities of the Third Summit of Heads of State and Government and the ongoing reform process of the Council of Europe, the conference will:

- underline culture's contribution to promoting democracy, mutual understanding, addressing today's societal challenges in Europe and the role of culture in creating a more secure, just and stable Europe without dividing lines;
- analyze the role and the potential of culture in contemporary Europe and inherent links between culture and sustainable democracies;- examine the link between culture and economic growth through support of creativity, innovation and local and regional development;
- provide proposals for the Council of Europe's future work in the cultural sector to be followed by the Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape;
- analyze the role of national ministries of culture, regional and local authorities as well as the private sector in promoting access to culture and cultural heritage in particular in the period of economic crisis; discuss the best experience in this sphere.

Specifically, the conference will:

- Analyse the experience of cultural co-operation in Europe (including the most effective examples of implementation of policies of European states aimed at dissemination of information about their cultures in other European states), current activities and possible ways to strengthen work of the Council of Europe in the field of cultural co-operation to contribute to greater understanding between peoples of Europe;
- Share recent developments of cultural policies, practices and forms of cultural expression in particular related to globalization (e.g. Internet, new media, digitization) as well as increasing international mobility that lead to the ongoing recomposition of European societies;
- Carry forward reflections on the enhancement of democratic governance of culture policy in European countries at different levels of policy making (national, regional, local) to further enhance access to culture, promote creativity, economic growth and social cohesion;
- Discuss the potential of further cooperation between the Council of Europe, the EU and UNESCO in the cultural field.

6. Expected results of the conference

A final statement including recommendations will be adopted proposing developments related to the activities of the Council of Europe in the cultural and cultural heritage fields addressed to States Parties to the European Cultural Convention, and an action plan for follow-up at intergovernmental and national levels which will contain proposals for the next biennial Programme and Budget of the Council of Europe.

This may take into account:

- Good practices on access to culture and on the role of culture in promoting economic growth;
- Proposals for future actions (including projects) of the Council of Europe in the fields of culture.

7. Links to the Organisation's priorities

Democracy

The Third Summit of Heads of State and Government (2005) identified the democratic management of cultural diversity, fostering of European identity and unity based on shared

fundamental values and the enhancement of intercultural dialogue as work priorities for the Council of Europe's cultural sector.

Intergovernmental activities were re-enforced by the launch of the Council of Europe White Paper on intercultural dialogue.

The envisaged Council of Europe conference of Ministers of Culture will reinforce the momentum already created by the Organisation, offering a practice-driven contribution to the further enhancement of the democratic governance of culture in European countries.

8. Participants

Ministers of Culture of 50 States which are Parties to the European Cultural Convention.

Appendix 2: Preliminary contribution of Poland to the debate on the proposed conference of the Council of Europe ministers for culture

SECRETARIAT GENERAL

SECRETARIAT OF THE COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS
SECRETARIAT DU COMITE DES MINISTRES

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DD(2012)315

Date: 21/03/2012

Meeting:	Follow-up to GR-C (13.3.2012)
Item reference:	Proposal to hold a Council of Europe Conference of Ministers of Culture (Russian Federation, November 2012)
Document distributed at the request of ⁸ :	Poland
<i>Réunion :</i>	<i>Suite du GR-C (13.3.2012)</i>
<i>Référence du point :</i>	<i>Proposition de Conférence du Conseil de l'Europe des ministres de la culture (Fédération de Russie, novembre 2012)</i>
<i>Document distribué à la demande de¹ :</i>	<i>Pologne</i>

⁸In the application of Article 21.b of the rules of procedure of the Committee of Ministers, it is understood that distribution of documents at the request of a Representative shall be under the sole responsibility of the said Representative, without prejudice to the legal or political position of the Committee of Ministers (CM/Del/Dec(2001)772/1.4). / Dans le cadre de l'application de l'article 21.b du Règlement intérieur du Comité des Ministres, il est entendu que la distribution de documents à la demande d'un représentant se fait sous la seule responsabilité dudit représentant, sans préjuger de la position juridique ou politique du Comité des Ministres CM/Del/Dec(2001)772/1.4).

The preliminary contribution of Poland to the debate on the proposed conference of the Council of Europe ministers for culture

The conference should encourage an in-depth debate on the following themes:

1. Contribution of the European cultural cooperation and the Council of Europe activities in the area of culture to the **main mission of the Organisation** of promoting human rights, rule of law, democracy and democratic governance.
2. Towards a **more effective model of cultural co-operation** in Europe – insight and analysis of the current situation, its strengths and weaknesses, shaping perspectives for the future – *inter alia* as regards the following:
 - interaction with civil society, artists, local governments and private sector;
 - development of the Council of Europe's programmes and initiatives responding to local, regional and supra-regional needs and challenges in Europe;
 - the Council of Europe's co-operation with other organisations (EU and UNESCO): analysing the current institutional set-up in Europe and respective roles and contributions of international organisations in the area of culture, defining opportunities and challenges, identifying areas of further synergy.
3. The Council of Europe as a **benchmark and laboratory of democratic governance** through culture – role and effective contribution of the Council of Europe's initiatives and programmes aimed at building cultural co-operation in Europe:
 - cross-cutting assessment of the whole "toolkit" for capacity building and enhancement of democratic standards;
 - assessment of the impact of the CoE initiatives on the democratisation processes and sustainable governance of culture and cultural diversity in Europe;
 - evaluation of how the CoE proposals have responded in the past to the challenges in Europe – lessons to be drawn for the present challenges;
 - identifying the current challenges and responses.
4. The Council of Europe's **more effective** contribution in the area of culture in the context of its ongoing reform:
 - holistic and horizontal look at the Council of Europe programmes and activities for the years to come taking into account the bases and present challenges of the cultural co-operation;
 - setting clear priorities, improving delivery, enhancing co-operation with and involvement of member States.

When defining the challenges, specific aspects and topics are worth consideration, *inter alia*:

1. Aspects of both economic and societal changes in Europe (e.g. increased mobility, development of new media, globalisation) which strongly influence cultural policy and cultural co-operation.
2. The influence of the economic crisis on the present and future functioning of the sphere of culture (decrease of investments in culture and in cultural infrastructure; main obstacles to the access to culture and cultural participation, etc.)

3. The role of culture as a contributor to sustainable development (support of creativity, innovation as building human capital, local and regional development, contribution of culture to the job creation) and European integration.
4. The role of culture and cultural co-operation as a practical means of responding to challenges linked with the rising intolerance and xenophobia in Europe.

Some further comments

We would like to thank the Russian Federation for the proposal and the written contribution concerning a possible conference of the Council of Europe ministers responsible for culture.

We are in principle open to and interested in the idea of a conference, which could serve as a next step in searching for a new model of cultural co-operation in Europe. We support the proposed focus on the role of culture in building democracy and the European integration. The conference could also give a chance to discuss how to shape national cultural policies in the context of the present-day challenges and economic crisis.

However, further **conceptual work is still needed**, especially as regards the expected results, links with the Organisation's priorities and the spectrum of participants. The meeting at the level of the ministers should bring concrete added value, which is important if we want to ensure the participation at high level and the following impact.

The reference to the Organisation's priorities requires reformulation in the concept document. The intercultural dialogue, although important, is not the only nor even the main priority of the Organisation as it could be interpreted from this part.

The concrete link with the Organisation's priorities, programmes and documents should be more developed.

The conference should give a basis to a more **holistic and horizontal** look at the Council of Europe programmes and activities for the years to come, taking into account the basis and challenges of the cultural co-operation in Europe at present.

We should start by putting the conference in a clear perspective of the **main mission** of the Council of Europe (human rights, democracy, rule of law). In particular, its concrete contribution to human rights, democracy and democratic governance should be more elaborated. We also propose to expand the aspect of European unity and the building of Europe without dividing lines.

The Council of Europe's role as a **benchmark and laboratory of democratic governance** including through culture should be preserved and made more effective. For this reason, it is important to analyse the most effective ways of responding to the challenges. The conference should provide for an opportunity of a cross-cutting assessment of the whole "toolkit" for capacity building and enhancement of democratic standards. In other words, the conference should give an assessment of what impact the Council of Europe initiatives have had and still have for the democratisation processes and sustainable governance of culture and cultural diversity in Europe. It should analyse what proposals the Council of Europe was offering to member States to respond to the current challenges in the subsequent historic situations in Europe and what their effectiveness and impact was. The current reform of the Council of Europe and its activities in the area of culture should be shaped and measured according to the present challenges which should also be defined by the conference. One of the objectives of the current reform of the Organisation is to increase its political relevance and impact. The agenda of the conference should give the ministers an opportunity to discuss the issues of appropriate political weight.

In this context, we welcome a discussion on the multilateral co-operation of the Council of Europe in the field of culture. The conference should define the role of the Council of Europe *vis à vis* other international organisations, including in particular perspectives of possible future co-operation with the EU and UNESCO. Reflection on this should be an important aspect of the conference.

The context of the ongoing Council of Europe reform should also be taken into account. The conference should actually serve the objectives of the reform (which are i.a. increasing the Council of Europe political role, setting priorities, improving the delivery, co-operation and involvement of member States).

For our part, we would like to propose to take into account in this conceptual thinking also other relevant documents and acquis of the Council of Europe. For instance the Wrocław Declaration on the Cultural Convention. Also the input from some expert meetings organised in the framework of CultureWatchEurope – *Culture and development 20 years after the fall of communism* (Kraków 2009), *“Culture and the Policies of change”* (Brussels 2010).

In our view, the conference should give a strong insight into the area of cultural co-operation in Europe, analysing its strengths and weaknesses, at the same time shaping its perspectives, so that we could expect the event to be attended by various stakeholders – representatives of civil society, artists, local governments and private sector – as well as the national delegations.

Finally, as regards the date, it would be useful to look at it carefully so as to avoid possible overlapping with some other similar initiatives planned earlier. Actually, the level of participation may be diminished if the ministers of culture were to be expected to meet on several occasions at short intervals.

Appendix 3

Resolution CM/Res(2011)7 on Council of Europe conferences of specialised ministers

(Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 15 June 2011 at the 1116th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies)

The Committee of Ministers,

Considering that the aim of the Council of Europe is to achieve greater unity among its members;

Considering that the efforts of the Council of Europe in pursuit of this aim can be facilitated by direct consultation within the framework of Council of Europe conferences of specialised ministers;

Considering the need to ensure that the work of conferences of specialised ministers be co-ordinated with that of the Council of Europe, particularly with regard to the choice of subjects dealt with and the convening and preparing of a conference;

Considering in particular that the proceedings and the texts agreed at such conferences can make a particularly useful contribution to the achievement of the objectives of the Council of Europe and of its Programme of Activities;

Recalling the ongoing reform of the Organisation aimed at focusing its activities on areas where it plays a leading role and at enhancing the Organisation's flexibility and responsiveness in the face of a rapidly changing world;

Considering, in this respect, that a Council of Europe conference of specialised ministers should meet in order to facilitate the action of the Council of Europe in accordance with its priorities, to provide high level input for intergovernmental activities in its particular field or to react to particularly serious events having repercussions for human rights, the rule of law or democracy;

Considering that there is no longer any need to draw a distinction between Council of Europe conferences of specialised ministers with which the Council of Europe has a special working relationship and other conferences;

Decides to repeal Resolutions Res(71)44 and Res(89)40 as well as the conclusions on Council of Europe Conferences of Specialised Ministers adopted by the Ministers' Deputies at their 1055th meeting (22-23 April 2009),⁹ and to replace them with the present resolution;

Agrees on the principles set out in the appendix to the present resolution, intended as guidance for the organisation of Council of Europe conferences of specialised ministers.

Appendix to Resolution CM/Res(2011)7

1. When the government of a member state of the Council of Europe or the Secretary General considers that a high-level political meeting (hereinafter "Council of Europe conference of specialised ministers" or "the conference") might significantly contribute to the achievement of the Organisation's strategic objectives or is necessary so as to react to important events having repercussions for human rights, the rule of law or democracy, they shall submit, at any time, a proposal for such a conference to the Committee of Ministers, stating the dates, location,

⁹ CM/Del/Dec(2009)1055/1.8.

budgetary implications for the Organisation,¹⁰ subject, objectives and expected results of the conference and the link with the Organisation's priorities.

2. The Committee of Ministers shall examine the proposal and decide on the holding of such a conference taking into account the Council of Europe's priorities, programmes and budgetary resources.

3. The government of the member state hosting a conference of specialised ministers shall bear the costs of organising and holding the conference. When a Council of Europe conference of specialised ministers is convened upon the proposal of the Secretary General, the corresponding costs shall be met out of the budget of the Council of Europe. Each delegation shall bear the costs of its participation in the conference.

4. When a government hosts a conference, invitations to the conference shall be signed jointly by the host government and the Secretary General of the Council of Europe. When a Council of Europe conference of specialised ministers is convened in Strasbourg upon the proposal of the Secretary General, invitations shall be signed jointly by the Chairman of the Committee of Ministers and the Secretary General of the Council of Europe.

5. The Secretariat General is authorised to provide secretariat services for the conference.

6. Ministers of Council of Europe member states having responsibility for the matters to be discussed at the conference shall automatically be invited to participate in the conference. Council of Europe institutions having specific expertise in the matters to be discussed shall also be invited.

7. High representatives of the European Union having responsibility for the matters to be discussed at the conference shall be invited to participate in the conference.

8. Ministers of states enjoying observer status with the Council of Europe shall also be invited to participate in the conference as observers, as shall high representatives of international organisations already participating, by right or as observers, in activities in the field covered by the conference, unless the Committee of Ministers decides otherwise. Ministers of any other non-member state or high representatives of any other international intergovernmental or non-governmental organisation may be invited to participate in the conference as observers after having obtained the consent of the Committee of Ministers, which shall determine the conditions of such participation.

9. The preparation of the conference shall be entrusted to the relevant intergovernmental committee or committees set up under Article 17 of the Statute of the Council of Europe in the fields covered by the conference, the membership of which may be modified in the light of paragraphs 6, 7 and 8 relating to participants, or to the Secretary General. The Committee of Ministers may decide to entrust the preparation of a conference to any other competent body.

10. The committees or, as the case may be, the Secretary General or any other body referred to in the previous paragraph shall ensure that each conference they are responsible for organising is consistent with the Programme and Budget of the Council of Europe and provide the Committee of Ministers with an analysis of the impact that the conference would have for the future Programme and Budget of the Organisation. In due time, they shall present to the Committee of Ministers a progress report on the preparations for the conference, which shall also include information on the criteria set out in paragraph 1 and indicate the draft agenda of the conference.

11. The Committee of Ministers shall hold an exchange of views on this report and address any observations to the relevant committees, the Secretary General or any other body referred to in

¹⁰ To be provided by the Secretary General.

paragraph 9, as the case may be, who shall take them into account without prejudice to the conference's prerogatives.

12. The Secretary General shall submit to the Committee of Ministers as early as possible (normally four to six weeks before the conference) any draft document to be submitted to the conference for consideration. The Committee of Ministers shall hold an exchange of views on such documents and address its observations to the Secretary General, the relevant committees or any other body referred to in paragraph 9, who shall take them into account without prejudice to the conference's prerogatives.

13. The Secretary General shall present to the Committee of Ministers, in a timely manner, a report on the holding of the conference and the texts agreed by it. The Committee of Ministers shall decide on the follow-up actions, including those with budgetary implications, to be given by the Council of Europe to the texts agreed at the conference, which it shall forward, as appropriate, to all relevant bodies including intergovernmental committees, other international organisations and other Council of Europe bodies for information.

14. The above provisions shall apply *mutatis mutandis* to ministerial level meetings to be held under the partial agreements of the Council of Europe without prejudice to the prerogatives of such agreements.