Standing Committee

CONF/SC(2018)SYN2

SYNOPSIS OF THE MEETING

Held on Friday 26 January 2018

Present: Robert Bergougnan, Miguel Cabral, Rares Augustin Craiut, Gerhard Ermischer, Jean-Marie Heydt, Julianne Lagadec, Salomon Levy, Thierry Mathieu, Simon Matthijssen, Anne Nègre, Luminata Petrescu, Richard Pirolt, Maritchu Rall, Cyril Ritchie, Anna Rurka, Katarzyna Sokolowska, Christoph Spreng, Iamvi Totsi, Claude Vivier Le Got

Secretariat: Mary Ann Hennessey, Jane Crozier

The Standing Committee:

1. Opening of the meeting by Anna Rurka, President of the Conference of INGOs.

2. **Adopted** the agenda.

3. **Appointed** Richard Pirolt as meeting rapporteur.

4. **Welcomed** the newly elected members of the Bureau of the Conference of INGOs.

5. **Discussed** the session in general and noted that on the whole there was broad satisfaction.

    a. Consultations with the INGOs had made it possible to enrich the roadmaps of the thematic committees;

    b. Interdisciplinary working groups were a new initiative which needed to be redesigned and structured in a more co-ordinated way. The objectives of the interdisciplinary groups needed to be clearer;

    c. *Market Place* had been well-received by participants. It was a new initiative, assessed positively thanks to its interactive format. It provided the bodies of the Conference of INGOs, INGOs, various divisions of the Council of Europe and guest NGOs with a networking platform. Preparation of *Market Place* should be done with the transversal groups of the Conference of INGOs;

    d. Translation deadlines. The translators at the Council of Europe always had many translations for the sessions and needed longer deadlines. It had not been possible to translate documents submitted late;

e. It was felt that the side event on the rights of LGBTI persons - the contributions submitted had been of high quality.

6. Planning of events for 2018

   a. **Was awaiting** confirmation of the theme and approval of the concept note of the World Forum for Democracy by the steering committee. Maritchu Rall would represent the Conference at the event. The most recent proposed topic discussed related to citizenship on the move;

   b. **Could not make any commitments** regarding the preparations for the 17 October 2018 event (see the letter co-signed by several INGOs) despite its support for the cause, as it needed to take into consideration the uncertainties surrounding the budgetary questions that were impacting the Council of Europe;

   c. Visits to member states would be to "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia", the United Kingdom and Armenia. The delegation would be composed in accordance with the expertise needed for each country visited;

   d. **Decided** to hold a discussion in April on the organisation of a major event in the course of the year (second half of the year, theme to be identified in line with the priorities of the Secretary General and the Conference of INGOs);

   e. **Decided** to hold a discussion in April on the interactive forum *Market Place* during the summer session;

   f. **Decided** to hold a discussion in April on the *side event* on the contribution of women to peace processes which would take place during the June session (Anje Wiesinga).[1]

7. **Postponed** the item on the work programme of the Expert Council on NGO Law (January – June 2018) and the call for candidates (new mandate for experts as of July 2018).

8. **Decided** that, following the presentation of the budgetary problems facing the Council of Europe by the senior management of DGII, it would send a letter to the permanent delegations of the member states, calling on them to show greater solidarity.

9. **Decided** that Jean-Marie Heydt would represent the Conference of INGOs on the Executive Committee of the North South Centre of the Council of Europe until the end of June 2018, after finishing his presidency in February 2018.

10. Information item on the following points: meeting of the Bureau (February 2018), ongoing work on the Code of Conduct (meeting on 9 February, adoption by the Standing Committee in April 2018), drafting by the Bureau of the Action Plan of the Conference of INGOs (adoption in June 2018).

11. Other business: postponed item on "Communication within the Conference of INGOs: domain, e-mail addresses for elected officials, 'gotomeeting' tool for exchanges" from the meeting of the Standing Committee on Monday 22 January.

    a. The Civil Society Division had consulted the Information Technology Department of the Council of Europe about creating email addresses hosted on the Council of Europe server for the Conference of INGOs. In practice, it should be possible to

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[1] *Note outlining the principles for the organisation of the side events during the session: https://rm.coe.int/side-events-information-note-en/168072b4e1. Side events must be linked to the activities of a thematic committee or the Bureau and need to be approved by the Standing Committee. Generally speaking, the Civil Society Division covers the cost of interpretation for one side event per session. Other costs should be arranged with INGO Service.*

create shared mailboxes with a domain name that was a subdomain of the Council of Europe, such as "@ingo.coe.int"; however this would require the existence and use of internal accounts at the Council of Europe to manage these mailboxes and to send and receive emails "on their behalf".[2] The members of the Standing Committee expressed the need to have more time to discuss this and decided to postpone this discussion until their next meeting in April.

b. The Committee decided that it should continue the discussion on the Communication Strategy and tools. A working meeting specifically focused on communication and expertise would be organised for the afternoon of 22 April 2018 (without interpretation).

12. Date of the next meeting (23 April 2018).

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[2] *On 5 February, the Information Technology Department informed the Civil Society Division that it was not in favour of creating internal accounts for non-staff users, unless there was a specific technical need and/or it was not possible for this need to be met externally. In point of fact, this need could indeed be met externally.*