

## **PRELIMINARY REPORT AT THE YEAR END OF 2018**

### **1. Introduction**

Following the adoption of its Mandate by the Standing Committee, the drafting group held three meetings. In summary, it launched the consultation by a Questionnaire that was addressed personally to the members of the Standing Committee, to the former chairpersons and made available to all members of the Conference of INGOs (CINGO) via its website.

Through this consultation by Questionnaire the DGRR drafting group first sought clarification on the main directions to be taken before undertaking detailed work on the Rules of procedures. The choice of this approach is explained by the fact that the main tasks in the Terms of reference set out its role to go well beyond editorial detail.

The DGRR then received and read the returns to the Questionnaire. The resulting picture has confirmed this need for in-depth reflection and even reorganization. And finally, this need was confirmed by the presentation of the Director of Human Dignity, Equality and Governance to the DGRR, statements that left no doubt about the need to join the Council of Europe in its own incisive reform under way.

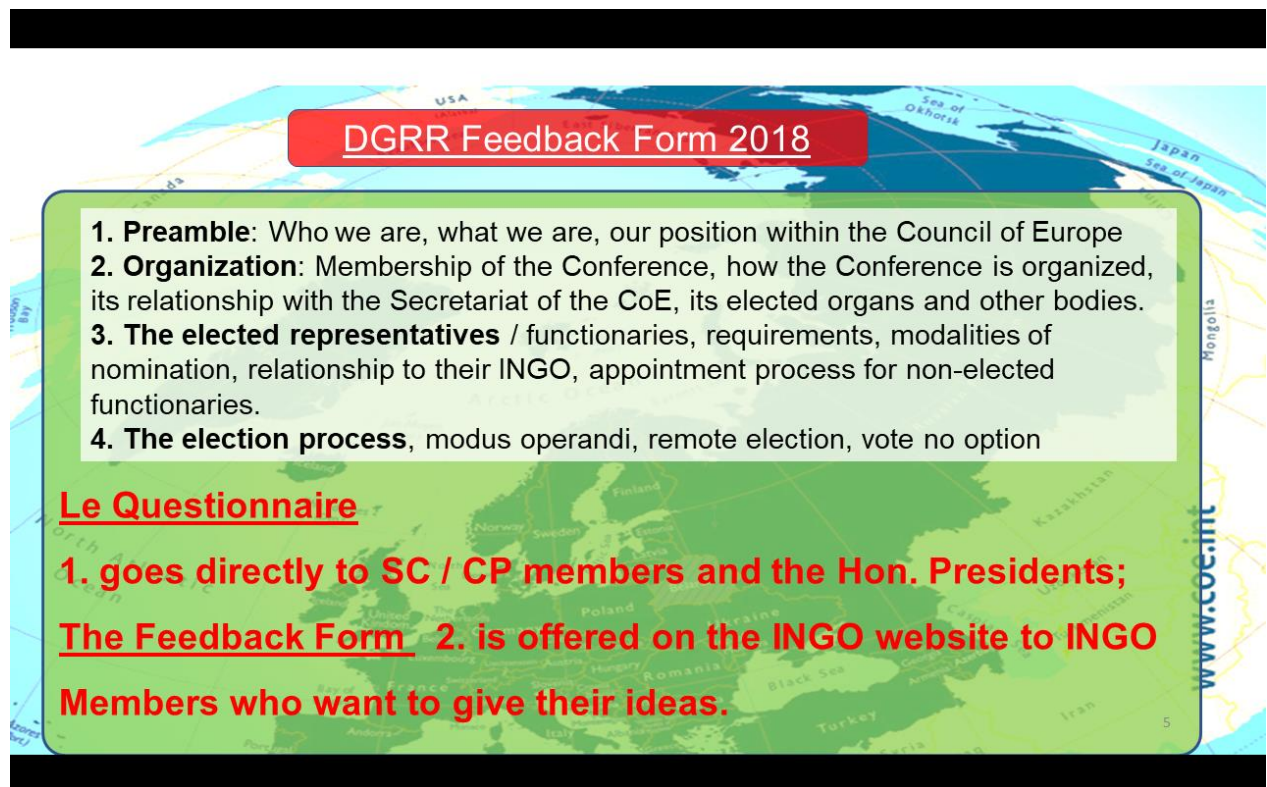
While simply calling itself "Drafting Group on the revision of the Rules ..." the group realizes that its work of the year 2018 outlines a more important track, that of connecting with the present and the future of the COING as one of the four pillars of the Council of Europe.

The Report now continues by chronological order, as follows:

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## 2. Summary Feedback to the Questionnaire

We received 18 replies to the Questionnaire and in addition 4 letters, two of which were of a substantial nature. Given the number of returns it seemed that a quantitative analysis would be an unrepresentative exercise. At the content level, very briefly seen, we have a wide sweep of varied and contradicting replies, which is useful at this point. Among the respondents too, we have the old, the new, those from within, as well as those less active and yet attentive.



Point 1 - Preamble: total of 852 words, useful additions were proposed; overall agreement.

Point 2 - Organisation: total of 5'698 words. Wide range, mutually contradicting.

Point 3 - Elected Representatives: total of 1'684 words, diverse, interesting.

Point 4 - Election Process: total of 2'543 words, contradictory.

Four quotes from the feedback:

- "It takes frustratingly long to find out what it is all about."
- "We always represent our associations. But for all that we are we work on common objectives to overcome our differences and any simple emphasis on who we are."
- "The Rules are still in the logic of the old way of functioning when we had 4 weeks of INGO meetings per year. »
- "Will we be free enough to change?"

### **3. Exchange with Claudia Luciani, Director of Human Dignity, Equality and Governance**

The Drafting Group had the opportunity to have an exchange with Mrs Claudia Luciani who gave an update on the current financial difficulties facing the organisation due to the uncertainty of the Russian Federation's contributions to the budget and the decision by Turkey to cease being a major contributor.

She informed the group about the on-going reform process which would most certainly lead to a downsizing of the Organisation to focus on the main priorities. An administrative reform was also planned to improve and modernise the Organisation.

Mrs Luciani underlined that civil society would remain a key part of democracy and human rights and stressed that the Council of Europe needed an active civil society. She was pleased to learn that the Conference of INGOs had taken the initiative to begin its own reform process and in this respect highlighted two changes she would like to see with the Conference of INGOs. Today she sees the Conference too detached from the priorities agreed by the Committee of Ministers and would like to see the Conference matching its activities more closely to these priorities.

Secondly, she questioned the necessity of the structures of the Conference. She encouraged the drafting group to look at what was essential, what could change, where there was added value, how could the Conference react more swiftly to issues of urgency.

The drafting group welcomed this opportunity to have an open exchange with Mrs Luciani which came at a timely moment in their reflections and gave "much food for thought" for their future work.

### **4. Assessment and Proposal by the DGRR**

Here are some ideas assembled from the conversation of the DGRR after reading the Questionnaire feedback as well as after the time with the CoE Director of Human Dignity, Equality and Governance.

#### **Assessment**

The inputs from the Questionnaire are very divided. On some of the most complicated topics we have the same number of people in favour and against. So, we are free to innovate. The preamble seems consensual.

The Organization chapter is the part that has the most pages and contradictions, which was predictable. About the elections there are also some discussions /contradictions and it is good to have them expressed now.

There is the need to do a proper "Reset" from the current composition to a lighter format.

In order to make it possible, we probably need to rename the new bodies to make sure that no one feels that they have been deleted and others were retained.

Mrs Luciani told us that if we are part of the priorities we will be heard and if we want to put forward a proposal we will have to be efficient and do that with a high quality level, otherwise it is not worth it. She didn't put it that way, but it means that we have to look at ourselves, act and be effective and efficient.

It has become clear that we will need to do a deep restructure. Having that in mind, to allow it to happen in a timely fashion, we need to start to communicate this to the INGOs and the Secretariat.

We need to end up with something that is very different from what we have and that allows for more functionality, responsiveness and quality.

### Proposal

In order to do so, we need to focus on functions, not posts, nor entities. We need to define which are the essential functions we should have, so that from there what structure we should build. From what to how, having in mind the need to reduce the number of structures we have, eventually to 3 levels.

The aim is to be more effective and more readable.

Before the April meeting write a draft of the new Rules of Procedure which could be discussed, so that we can produce a final draft for the October meeting to put it up for adoption. That way the elections in 2020 would already be under those Rules.

### **5. Points underlined for the Bureau of the Conference of INGOs**

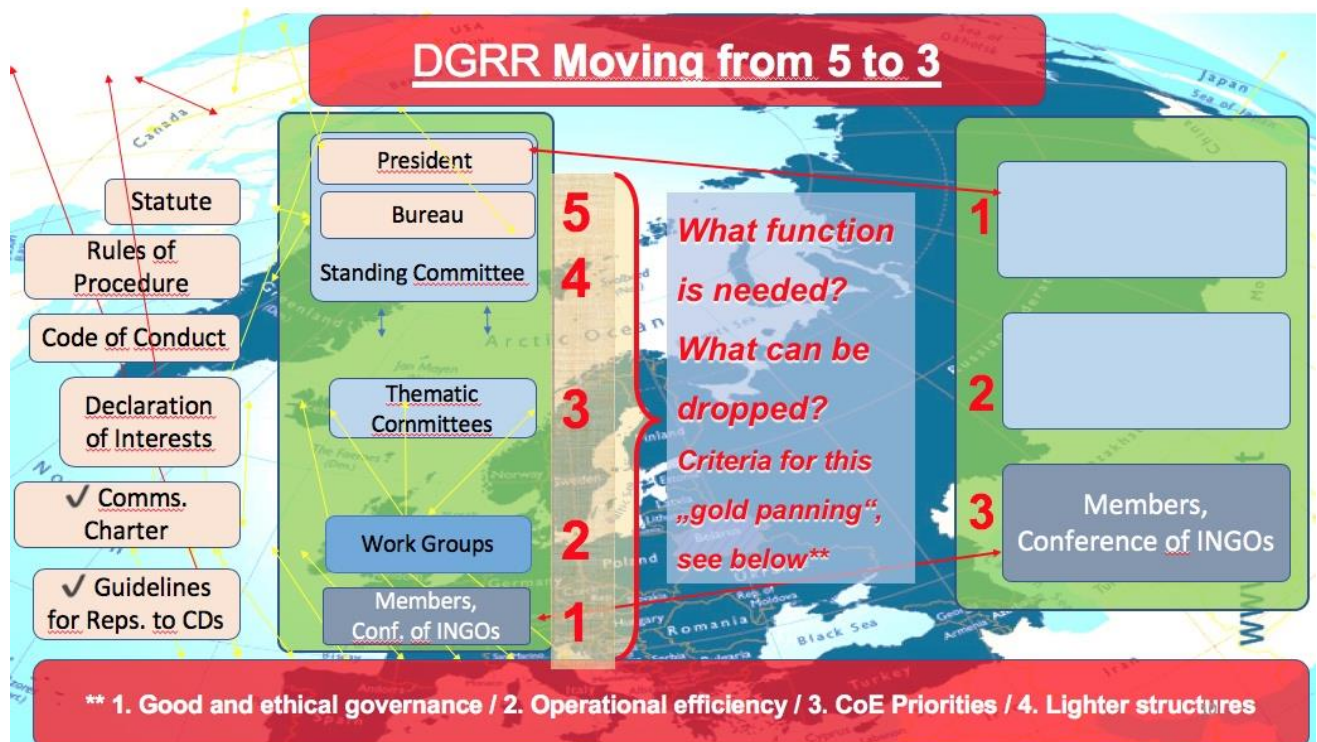
From the evaluation of the returns to the questionnaire there is an additional point to bring: Many returns were snapshots, only a few have pointed the change through the years with the schedule of 4 to 2 sessions per year.

Clearly, CINGO's current procedures are too costly for the CoE. The reform work of the Secretariat is very difficult, dealing with a French administration format from the 1950s. Potentially the COING can more easily respond to challenges. Let's give a good example of implementing a reform. The last 10 years, although the rules have been revised, some aspects have not been completely absorbed. Today, the two internal perspectives shared through the returns to the Questionnaire and the general context of the CoE shared by the Director of Human Dignity, Equality and Governance show the need to press the "reset" button.

The key question in reducing our structures is: What functions are needed?  
It is the functions that matter, not the posts, nor the entities.

The criteria for this “gold panning” should be the following:

1. Good and ethical governance (derived from DGRR ToR)
2. Operational efficiency (derived from DGRR ToR)
3. CoE Priorities (derived from Dir. Dem. input)
4. Lighter structures (derived from Dir. Dem. input)
5. Greater outreach (derived from Dir. Dem. input)



During this process, it is advisable to leave behind the denominations used so far.  
 Good thought needs to be given to communications in this process.  
 The process can enhance “shared ownership”, a key CINGO concept.  
 There is little time; consultations before sharing results can save some...  
 Finally, the timeline is set by the ToR, so we better perform properly.

## **6. Position of the Bureau of the Conference of INGOs**

The decision was to support the proposal of the DGRR group, with risks expressed that such a change will be poorly accepted by some groups and that if the conference fails to adapt / lighten its structures and its institutional functioning in a democratic way, we can expect an administrative decision, motivated by the budgetary restriction.  
 It has been proposed that elected officials finish their current mandates and that change occurs with new mandates.  
 Finally, in view of the election of the new Secretary General, it is important to show our evolution and adaptation to the needs of the CoE and the reality of working within the CoE with the new SG.

28 December 2018

the Drafting Group