

**DIRECTORATE OF EXTERNAL RELATIONS**

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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**Quarterly report of Council of Europe Offices**

**April – June 2017**

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**Introduction**

The Council of Europe Offices in charge of liaison with one or more international organisations or institutions:

- represent the Secretary General vis-à-vis international organisation(s) or institution(s);
- follow the activities carried out by the relevant international organisation(s) or institution(s) and report on developments relevant to the Council of Europe activities and policies;
- provide support for the organisation of and follow-up to high level co-ordination meetings and other meetings or events between the Council of Europe and the relevant international organisation(s) or institution(s);
- promote effective co-operation between the Council of Europe and the relevant international organisation(s) or institution(s);
- identify opportunities for joint activities and provide advice and support in planning, negotiation, implementation and reporting on these activities;
- conduct a proactive media policy in order to raise the visibility of the Organisation.

The present document covers the reporting period April-June 2017. Following decision [CM/Del/Dec\(2013\)1175/1.6E](#) of 3 July 2013, activity reports are published every three months.

## **Brussels - Council of Europe Office in charge of liaison with the European Union**

### **1. Meetings involving the Office**

The Head of Office, **Z. Taubner**, continued his round of courtesy calls to EU Officials and representatives of Member States. He met with the Heads and members of Cabinet of several Commissioners (Hahn, Avramopoulos, Andriukaitis) and of EP President Tajani. He also met with High Officials from the Commission (Directors General from DG Just and DEVCO, Managing Director in EEAS), various directors and officials from different parts of the Commission, EEAS and Council Secretariat). He met with the deputy head of President Juncker's think tank in the Commission, as well as with the SG of the "EU-Turkey forum" gathering MEPs.

He also met with the Ambassadors from Ukraine, Canada, Lebanon, Tunisia, Mongolia and with the Ambassador from OIC. He was also received by the Head of Cabinet of Belgian foreign Minister Reynders. On 9/5, he participated in the wreath laying ceremony organised by the Russian Federation.

HoO received a Brussels based representative of the UN Liaison Office for Peace and Security in Brussels, as well as the Representative of International IDEA. Z. Taubner represented the Organisation in the regional consultations held by the UN OHCHR, (25/4), attended a dinner debate "For a Sustainable Europe, an Opportunity to Preserve the EU-Turkey Relationship" (Harvard Club) and participated in the inauguration of the "Représentation du Panathlon International auprès des institutions Européennes à Bruxelles".

He also met with CEB Governor, Mr Wentzel, and Director Taylor, ODGProg, as CoE representatives invited to address COSCE (EU Council working group on the relations with the CoE and OSCE) – 28/4.

The Office welcomed CoE colleagues for meetings such as

- Bureau and working group of the European Charter for regional and minority languages
- DGI presenting HELP programme in EP- LIBE Committee (12/4)
- ODGProg for various events and meetings organised by/with DG Near, DG Devco and EEAS mostly, on Eastern Partnership, on Belarus,
- Presentation of the CPT general report 2016, by the Chair and Executive Secretary (20/4), and bilateral meetings in the general Secretariat of the Council and the EEAS
- DGI, meeting with the Cabinet of Commission President Juncker, and conference on social rights (9/10)
- DG II, 19/5 and on 7/6 for meetings related to women/Istanbul convention
- DGI, for the meeting with the EU CATS, 11/5, gathering the Maltese EU presidency, the incoming Estonian presidency, the Commission, and the EEAS.
- DGII, for meetings in the Commission (Just, Near) and a presentation of CoE activities on discrimination, in the Office (16-17/5)
- Presentation of GRECO by its Chair, and Executive Secretary, 7/6, in the Office
- Mr Killion Munyama (Poland, EPP/CD), PACE Rapporteur on "Promoting diversity and equality in politics", 13/6
- DGI's International Workshop on Law Enforcement Training Strategies on Cybercrime and Electronic Evidence, 15/6
- Head of SRSG Migration Team: conference "FRA 2007-2017: Is Europe doing enough to protect fundamental rights? – the children perspective–" 28/6

The Head of SG's Private Office, Ms Kayacik, paid a visit to Brussels and met with Cabinet members of President Juncker and Commissioner Hahn, Heads of cabinet of 1VP Timmermans and HRVP Mogherini, and high officials from DG Near, 16/6.

The Office hosted various events, such as,

- Meeting of the Bureau (COMEX) and working group on minority languages (23 and 26/5)
- Workshop on rights of elderly, with "Age platform", 14/6
- European Audiovisual Observatory – workshop 21/6

The Office also welcomed representatives from the Arab League Human Rights Department, the Director at Human Rights Education and Monitoring Center (EMC), Georgia (8/6), and group of visitors from Trans-Euro-Atlantic movement (TEAM). The Office presented the CoE to representatives of Southeast Asian NHRI Forum, hosted by the Fr. Neuman St.

The Office also received the Columbian ombudsperson (19/6), as well as the Head of department of Global Affairs, Canadian Foreign Affairs.

#### Developments on CoE co-operation programmes

The Programme co-ordinator liaised closely with CoE – ODGP and EU Commission (DG NEAR, DG DEVCO) and the EEAS to facilitate the implementation of the PCF, the HF and activate all channels available to fund CoE joint projects in priority areas, including in Russia and Central Asia.

He participated in the following events:

- With ODGP colleague in the Eastern Partnership platform I meeting (27/4),
- 1<sup>st</sup> steering committee meeting of "European Year of Cultural heritage 2018.
- "Informal Donor's Co-ordination Meeting on Belarus" (21/07)

The Programme co-ordinator pursued discussions with DEVCO in view of a substantial funding for a large regional Joint Programme in Central Asia to start early 2018 and organised a meeting mid-May in Brussels with ODGP and the Venice Commission.

He organised several meetings for ODGProg colleagues with DG NEAR, DG DEVCO, and other parts of the commission. Among other results, the commission confirmed its intention to allocate funding for a large regional JP in Central Asia as of 2018- 2019, involving largely the Venice Commission.

In addition, he coordinated meetings in the Commission of CoE activities related to non-discrimination. These meetings delivered concrete results in terms of future EU funding for cooperation projects

#### In the fields covered by the Secretariat to the Pompidou Group:

- meeting report of the "5th Working Group on **Controlled Deliveries**" (Bucharest, 11-12 April 2017) and preparations for the 6th meeting (The Hague , 18-19 July 2017)
- meeting report from "**General Aviation: a blind spot in drugs enforcement**", Madrid, 25-26 April 2017.
- "32nd Annual Meeting of cooperation of drug control services at **European airports** and in General Aviation", Strasbourg, 6-8 June.
- Preparations for the "2017 Annual meeting of the International Network on the control of **Precursors**", Strasbourg, 22-24 November 2017.
- Brussels office represented the Pompidou Group at the "International Workshop on Law Enforcement Training Strategies on **Cybercrime** and Electronic Evidence", Brussels 15-16 June 2017; it also participated in the "International Conference: NATO, EU & Industry: Cooperation on **Cyber Security**: A Transatlantic Exchange of Best Practices", EP, 28 June 2017, Brussels.

## **2. Communication, reporting, statistics**

The Spokesperson/Media Officer maintained his regular contacts with Brussels-based journalists on a number of issues including the Secretary General's report on the state of human rights and

democracy, the annual report on the execution of ECHR judgments, the CPT report on the UK, the Council of Europe study on threats to journalists, the publication of the first reports by GREVIO, HR Commissioners publications and various judgments and decisions from the European Court of Human Rights. He also co-ordinated the publication in several languages of an opinion article by the Secretary General's Special Representative on Roma Issues by EurActiv to coincide with International Roma Day.

The Spokesperson/Media Officer also organised the highly-successful Brussels presentation of the CPT annual report and represented the Council of Europe at a media freedom panel organised by the Committee to Protect Journalists, as well as attending the PACE session in Strasbourg – notably working on the debates on Turkey and Hungary, as well as having a number of preparatory meetings with colleagues in Strasbourg. He also gave talks on the Council of Europe and the European Court of Human Rights to a group of newly-arrived journalists and a regular study group from The Euro-Atlantic Movement (TEAM), as well as representing the Directorate of Communication at the working group meeting of the Committee of Experts of the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages.

### **Reporting**

Reporting was made on events organised in various EP Committees (LIBE, AFET, DROI, AFCO), as well as think tanks (EPC, CEPS), political foundations (Open society, Henrich Böll; Fr Neumann) and Universities (ULB), and covered topics such as Europe's future, US President Trump's first 100 days, French elections, Ukraine, Turkey, world press freedom day (3/5), migrations (High level conference with Pres Juncker, Pres Tajani, HRVP Mogherini, etc, 21/6), Brexit, Chechnya, radicalisation.

### **Statistics**

Some 614 information messages and documents as well as 13 weekly reports were prepared and sent to Strasbourg by the Information Officer. 72 notes for the files were sent from the Office. 31 members of CoE staff visited the Office and another 12 staff members were also in Brussels during the period. The Office hosted 51 events and visits and welcomed 281 external visitors.

### **Geneva - Council of Europe Office/Permanent Delegation to the United Nations Office and other international organisations in Geneva**

Assisted the participation of several colleagues from Strasbourg at the UNECE Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (25 April), and reported on it.

Participated in the UNHCR meeting on the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework Pilots (21 April).

Actively supported the process of securing participants and panelists for the 2017 World Forum for Democracy.

Assisted in preparatory work for the CoE visit to the OHCHR regional consultation and organizational cooperation in Brussels, drafted the speech for the Director of External Relations.

Continued courtesy visits to permanent representations and international organizations

Informed about numerous UN treaty bodies activities of interest for our mechanisms

Prepared the visit of the PACE President to Geneva (cancelled later on)

Our office was actively involved into the organization and preparation of the meeting of the CoE SG with the UN SG.

Our office made preparations for the 35th session of the Human Rights Council, which took place from 6 to 23 June, by informing the HQs of major topics and suggesting a number of events to be covered by statements and presence.

Our office reported on several sittings of the 27th session of the Universal Periodic Review (Tunisia, Morocco, Finland, United Kingdom, Poland, The Netherlands).

Our office informed about the High-level Platform on the SDGs to take place from 10-20 July in New York.

Our office was actively involved into the preparation of the Conference on business and human rights to take place on 9 June in Strasbourg (more specifically, in ensuring the high-level participation of the OHCHR).

Our office conveyed the contribution of the CoE in respect of Georgia to our OHCHR counterparts (Res 34/37).

Our office organized courtesy meetings with the permanent representatives of 9 CoE Member States in Geneva (Macedonia, Malta, Sweden, Spain, Bulgaria, Slovakia, Andorra, San Marino, Albania).

Our office informed about the Knowledge management report of the UN Joint Inspection Unit, and its potential use for the CoE.

Our office organised a meeting with Ms. Nadia Isler, Director of the SDG Lab, to discuss the role of the newly established SDG Lab and possible cooperation with the Council of Europe.

Our office has informed the CoE members states and international organizations present in Geneva on a number of the CoE events such as the CM session in Nicosia.

Our office reported on the briefing of the UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights and a webinar on the WannaCry ransomware attack.

From 6-23 June, our office participated in, and contributed to, the 35<sup>th</sup> session of the Human Rights Council. Seven statements have been made and uploaded on the Extranet of the Human Rights Council.

Our office reported on the speech, and subsequent lecture, of the US Ambassador to the UN in New York, Ms. Nikki Haley, who proposed significant reforms to the Human Rights Council and clearly reaffirmed US determination to carry these reforms out.

Our office also organised a bilateral meeting between Mr. Régis Brillat and the Ambassador of Ukraine to the UN in Geneva.

#### Logistical activities:

The Head of Office a.i. also met the representative of the UNHCR regarding the extension of the lease for the premises of the office.

### **Vienna - Council of Europe Office in charge of liaison with the OSCE, United Nations Office and other international organisations in Vienna**

#### **Attendance of high level meetings**

Visit of a Representative of the Chair of the Committee of Ministers of the CoE and Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs for Security and Multilateral Issues of the Czech Republic, Mr. Ivo Šrámek, 1 June.

Meeting with CoE Commissioner for Human Rights, Mr. Nils Muižnieks, 21 June.

### **Bilateral dialogue**

Meeting with Marietta König, External Co-operation Officer of the OSCE/ Office of the Secretary General, 24 April

Visit by Maria Goldman, Evaluator at CoE Directorate of Internal Oversight, meetings with Austrian anti-corruption authorities, OSCE, IACA and TI, 17-19 May

### **Participation in OSCE Permanent Councils**

OSCE Special PC - Update on the situation in eastern Ukraine, 5 April

OSCE PC with the Director of ODIHR, Mr. Michael Georg Link, 6 April

OSCE Special PC on recent security incident affecting a patrol of the OSCE SMM to Ukraine; 27 April

OSCE PC with the Head of the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Amb. Jonathan Moore, 27 April

OSCE PC with the Chief Observer of the OSCE Observer Mission at the Russian Checkpoints Gukovo and Donetsk, Mr. Flavien Schaller, 4 May

OSCE PC with the Special Representative of the OSCE CiO in Ukraine and in the Trilateral Contact Group, Amb. Martin Sajdik, the Chief Monitor of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine, Amb. Ertugrul Apakan and the presentation of the 2018 Programme Outline by the SG Zannier, 11 May

OSCE PC with the Vice-President of the European Commission, Mr. Maroš Šefčovič and the Head of the OSCE Centre in Ashgabat, Amb. Natalya Drozd, 18 May

OSCE PC with the Head of the OSCE Centre in Bishkek, Amb. Pierre von Arx and the Director of the OSCE Academy, Dr. Alexander Wolters and the Head of the OSCE Office in Tajikistan, Amb. Tuula Yrjölä, 25 May

OSCE PC with the SG of the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development – GUAM, Mr. Altai Efendiev and the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan, Amb. John MacGregor, 8 June

OSCE PC with the outgoing OSCE SG, Mr. Lamberto Zannier, 22 June

### **Participation in expert committees and conferences**

OSCE - 17th Alliance Against Trafficking in Persons Conference "Trafficking in Children and the Best Interests of the Child", 3-4 April

UNODC First Intersessional Meeting of the 26th Session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ), 7 April

Informal Briefing on the recent security incident affecting an SMM patrol; 24 April  
UNODC Informal Consultations on 26th CCPCJ: Chair's Proposal on the overall theme, agenda items and workshop topics for the 14th United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, 25-26 April

OSCE – Human Dimension Committee Meeting on the Participation of Women in Political and Public Life: Championing inclusive Policies, 2 May

UNODC Informal Consultations on the preparations for the 14th UN CCPCJ, 3 May

OSCE Human Dimension Committee on the "2017 Human Dimension Package" negotiation, 16 May

ICMPD Transnational Workshop: the mass media & the public awareness on trafficking in human beings, 17 May

UNODC Informal Consultations on the preparations for the 14th UN CCPCJ, 19 May

UNODC Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, 22-26 May

2017 OSCE-Wide Counter Terrorism Conference, 23-24 May

OSCE Human Dimension Committee Meeting on 'Freedom of Peaceful Assembly', 6 June

OSCE Gender Equality Review Conference, 10-13 June

OSCE Conference on Media Freedom in Volatile Environments, 19-20 June

Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting on "Freedom of Religion or Belief: Issues,

Opportunities and the Specific Challenges of Combating Anti-Semitism and Intolerance and Discrimination against Christians, Muslims and members of other Religions", 22-23 June

OSCE Annual Security Review Conference, 27-29 June

**Warsaw - Council of Europe Office in charge of liaison with international organisations or institutions in Warsaw, in particular with OSCE/ODIHR and the Community of Democracies**

### **High level visits/meetings**

19 April – meeting with the Undersecretary of State responsible for human rights and democracy in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland, Ms. Joanna Wronecka;

24 April – meeting with the Secretary General of the Community of Democracies (CoD), Amb. Maria Leissner;



19 May – meeting with the First Deputy Director of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), Ms. Katarzyna Gardaphadze;

22 May – meeting with the Director of OSCE ODIHR, Mr. Michael Georg Link;

13 June – meeting with the Polish Ombudsman, Mr. Adam Bodnar;

14 June – meeting with the representatives of the Governing Council of the CoD on the margins of the 25<sup>th</sup> session of the Council;

### **Activities of the Office**

- a) Enhancing the cooperation with OSCE ODIHR** – Apart from the high level meetings mentioned above, the HoO conducted a series of meetings on lower level to discuss the possibilities and modalities of enhanced CoE – ODIHR cooperation. These discussions included i.a. meetings with Mr. Marcin Walecki, Head of the Democratization Department, Ms. Tiina Kukkamäe-Bah, Chief of the Democratic Governance and Gender Unit, Ms. Alice Thomas, Chief of Legislative Support Unit in Democratization Department, Ms. Stephanie Selg, Adviser on Torture Prevention in Human Rights Department, Mr. Larry Olomofe, Adviser on Combating Racism and Xenophobia in Tolerance and Non-Discrimination Department, Ms. Tatjana Peric, Adviser on Roma and Sinti Issues in the Unit of Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues, Ms. Kateryna Ryabiko, Coordinator of the Civil Society Ukraine (CS UA) project, Mr. Richard Lappin, Deputy Head of Elections Department and Mr. Genadie Barba, Chief of the Rule of Law Unit within the Democratization Department.

The Office conducted regular consultations on the preparations to two major human rights meetings organized in Warsaw by the ODIHR (Human Dimension Implementation Meeting and Human Dimension Seminar) as well as on the appointments to the top OSCE positions. The HoO regularly attended the conferences and consultations organized or facilitated by ODIHR, including the inauguration of 2017 edition of the Leaders' School and the official farewell ceremony to ODIHR Director Michael Georg Link.

- b) Continuation of the cooperation with the CoD** – The Office followed closely the selection process of the new Secretary General of the CoD through regular consultations with the CoD Permanent Secretariat and with member States of the CoD Governing Council.
- c) Ensuring the visibility of the CoE** – Apart from the events organized by ODIHR and CoD, the HoO regularly attended seminars and conferences on issues pertinent to CoE activities. These included i.a. the conferences: *Representation of Poland before the European Court of Human Rights – two decades of experience of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs*, *The role of media literacy in the new media landscape*, organized by European Audiovisual Observatory and Polish National Broadcasting Council (KRRiT) and *Problems with our state*, organized by the leading Polish NGO – Stefan Batory Foundation.