



Friday, 4 April 2025

Ambassador Engelberg's conclusion

I am extremely honoured to address the closing of the Mid-Term Review Conference of the Fourth Strategy on the Rights of the Child and very proud of the fact that this event - an event which has been crucial in advancing the protection of children's rights across Europe - was organised under the auspices of the Luxembourg presidency of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.

As a founding member of the Council of Europe, Luxembourg took on the Presidency of the Committee of Ministers (for the eighth time) in November 2024, at a crucial moment for the Organisation. At a time when the fundamental values promoted by the Council of Europe are increasingly called into question, the Luxembourg Presidency has endeavoured to consolidate the three essential and intrinsically linked pillars of the Organisation, namely human rights, democracy and the rule of law. In so doing the Presidency has, in particular, emphasised the protection of vulnerable groups.

In this context, children's rights have been pivotal to the work of our presidency. This conference aligns perfectly with our broader goals of fostering equality, justice, and human dignity as well as enhancing the role of young people in building mutual respect and understanding in our diverse societies. Engaging children as active agents of change is crucial for creating inclusive and sustainable policies and building democracy. Their voices must remain at the heart of our efforts to ensure that their rights are respected and reflected in policies and decisions.

The crucial importance of these principles to our chairmanship is reflected by the involvement and participation of our Minister for National Education, Children and Youth, Mr. Claude Meisch in the opening of this conference and the subsequent exchanges in the panel on Children's rights in the era of digital technologies and artificial intelligence. In addition, BeeSecure, Luxembourg's Safer Internet Centre, has actively participated to the mid-term review, providing practical workshops for participants.



Throughout our Presidency, we have sought to foster such inter- and intra-institutional dialogue. Let me praise the presence, yesterday, of Najat Maalla M'jid, the United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children and the video message sent by Glenn Micallef, the European Commissioner for Intergenerational Fairness, Youth, Culture and Sport. Strengthening dialogue with other international organisations can increase the impact of the work of the Council of Europe on the lives of European citizens and has thus also been a priority of our work over the past 5 months. Our chairmanship has sought to support and mirror the Council of Europe's priority of fostering dialogue and collaboration to advance human rights.

As far as intra-institutional cooperation is concerned, I appreciate the transversal approach of this conference, involving several sectors of the CoE and enabling dialogue between all the actors in this field on an equal footing.

The past two days have been marked by stimulating discussions, addressing critical issues such as digital rights, child poverty, violence prevention, child-friendly justice, and health participation. You have afforded particular attention to the situation of Ukrainian children, with a special focus on their education.

Throughout your exchanges, several common challenges have emerged, challenges which require urgent action and collaboration among governments, international organisations, civil society, and children themselves. Successful implementation of potential solutions to such challenges entails strong partnerships and cooperation between member states, the Council of Europe, and civil society.

On behalf of the Luxembourg chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, I would like to warmly thank all participants for their commitment to this topic and their contributions over the past 2 days.

The Committee of Ministers will follow-up closely on the important recommendations and tools that will be further elaborated by the CDENF with the important input of the discussions during this Conference.



PRÉSIDENTIE DU / PRESIDENCY OF
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Together, we can ensure that the promises made here today translate into meaningful, lasting change. The work continues, and the journey to a child-friendly Europe is far from over. But with each step we take, we are getting closer to a future where every child, regardless of their background or circumstances, can grow, learn, and thrive in safety and dignity.