



CONFERENCE OF INGOs
OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

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CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

SUMMER SESSION DEMOCRACY, SOCIAL COHESION AND GLOBAL CHALLENGES COMMITTEE

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Strasbourg, 6 January 2013

DRAFT SYNOPSIS

FOR THE ATTENTION OF MEMBERS OF THE DEMOCRACY, SOCIAL COHESION AND GLOBAL CHALLENGES COMMITTEE

The Democracy, Social Cohesion and Global Challenges Committee of the Conference of INGOs, meeting on 26 June 2012 in Strasbourg with Anne-Marie CHAVANON, Chair of the Committee, in the chair,

1. Agenda

adopted the draft agenda of the meeting.

2. Synopsis of the previous meeting

adopted the synopsis of the meeting of 26 January 2012.

3. Council of Europe bodies' 2012 commitments on democracy

discussed, during a round table session, the efforts made by various Council of Europe bodies "**Towards an agenda in common**", in accordance with the wishes of the UK Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers in the sphere of democracy. It did so in the presence of Keith WHITMORE, President of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, Jean-Marie HEYDT, President of the Conference of INGOs, and Alfonso ZARDI, Head of the Democracy, Institution-Building and Governance Department. The President of the Congress emphasised the need for a partnership between civil society and local authorities, one made even more essential by the economic, political and institutional crises affecting Europe. He outlined his view of what a truly participatory democracy should be;

took note of some of the commitments of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities:

- European Local Democracy Week;
- monitoring the exercise of democracy;
- broadening the European Charter of Local Self-Government. The President of the Congress called on participants, and through them the NGO members of the Conference of INGOs, to encourage member States to sign and ratify the [Additional Protocol to the European Charter of Local Self-Government on the right to participate in the affairs of a local authority](#), which had come into force on 1 June 2012, but had been signed by only 17 states and ratified by only eight ([Chart of signatures and ratifications](#));

took note of the commitments of the Conference of INGOs relating to democracy, introduced by the President of the Conference of INGOs and presented through the work of the committee:

- Two contributions to the October 2012 World Forum for Democracy:
 - a preliminary draft Charter on Democracy based on the founding texts of the Council of Europe, presented by Giuseppe GUARNERI, head of the ad hoc working group;
 - a dialogue toolkit intended for those actively involved in participation;
- The start of drafting of a version for public stakeholders of the Code of Good Practice for Civil Participation in the Decision-Making Process;
- A contribution to European Local Democracy Week through awareness-raising activity via the European networks of teachers who raise awareness of the Week and the debate organised by the Conference of INGOs at the beginning of the World Forum for Democracy;
- The commitment of the “Migration and democracy” working group in conjunction with the Parliamentary Assembly’s Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons.

4. Declaration/Charter on Democracy

discussed the work of the committee asked to prepare a draft declaration/Charter on Democracy, presented by Giuseppe GUARNERI (International Institute for Human Rights Studies), head of the ad hoc working group.

5. World Forum for Democracy and European Local Democracy Week

undertook to make an active contribution to the World Forum for Democracy by organising a debate in the “Democracy in the 21st century” series;

undertook to make an active contribution to the European Local Democracy Week organised by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities;

6. Major global issues in 2012

6.1 UNCSO [RIO + 20](#)

heard the reports of Cyril RITCHIE, President of the Conference of UN-NGOs (CONGO), Maguelonne DEJEANT-PONS, Head of the Heritage, Landscape and Technical Assistance Division of the Council of Europe, and Anne-Marie CHAVANON, Delegate from the International Federation for Housing and Planning (IFHP), who said that the two texts adopted by the committee, one focusing on social aspects, the other on sustainable development aspects, had been distributed to the governmental and non-governmental organisations involved in Rio and were the subject of a special website;

6.2 UNFCCC – [United Nations Climate Change Conference – DOHA](#) – Qatar (26 November – 7 December 2012) – took note of the co-operation proposal made by the Parliamentary Assembly’s Sub-Committee on Environment and Energy.

7. Gender equality: a condition for success of the Arab Spring

adopted a draft resolution and a draft recommendation presented by Anje WIERSINGA, who heads the working group on “Including gender perspectives in political and democratic processes, in particular during and after conflicts”.

8. Working groups’ activities

took stock of the activities of the working groups, as presented by their heads:

- Climate change and human rights (Edith WENGER) [link](#)
- European citizenship (Hélène PICHON) [link](#)
- Housing and health (Bernard AUBERT) [link](#) (to site in French only)
- Landscape, a social cohesion tool under threat (Gerhard ERMISCHER) [link](#)
- Migration and democracy: situation, problems and examples of answers (Jean-Claude GONON) [link](#)
- Relations with the EU (organised civil society) (Claude-Laurent GENTY) [link](#)
- Health risks and mobility: a global challenge (Thierry MATHIEU) [link](#), who announced that a progress report would be presented in January 2013.

9. Representation of the committee and/or of the Conference of INGOs

- European Committee on Local and Regional Democracy (CDLR), 2 and 3 April 2012, Strasbourg - Anne-Marie CHAVANON;
- Bern Convention, 24-26 April 2012, Strasbourg - Edith WENGER (EEB);
- European Steering Committee for Youth (CDEJ) and Advisory Council on Youth, March 2012, Budapest - Israël MENSAH;
- European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), 24 April 2012, Brussels - Hearing of Anne-Marie CHAVANON and Antonella VALMORBIDA (ALDA);
- Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape (CDCPP), 15 and 16 May 2012 - Patrice COLLIGNON (RED), Gerhardt ERMISCHER (CIVILSCAPE) and Luc-Emile BOUCHE-FLORIN (ECTP);
- International Observatory of Participatory Democracy (OIDP), 12 June 2012, Porto Alegre (Brazil) - Participation in round table: Anne-Marie CHAVANON;
- Parliamentary Assembly Sub-Committee on Environment and Energy, 23 May 2012, Paris - Hearing of Anne-Marie CHAVANON on the committee’s contributions to the Rio and Doha summits;
- UNCSD, Rio de Janeiro, 11-23 June 2012, Cyril RITCHIE, Anne-Marie CHAVANON;

10. INGO-Service

took note of the request for contributions made by Marie-José Schmitt, treasurer of the INGO-Service association, a body essential to the proper functioning of the Conference of INGOs.

11. Date of the next plenary meeting of the committee: during the January 2013 session of the Conference of INGOs.

Anne-Marie Chavanon