

CONFERENCE OF INGOs CONF/AG(2021)SYN1

MEETING OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Report

Tuesday 27 April 2021

10.00-12.30

14.00 -16.30

Remote meeting (Kudo)

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

The President of the Conference of INGOs opened the meeting by announcing the agenda of the meeting.

2. Nomination of the Rapporteur of the meeting – Richard Pirolt
3. Draft agenda – for adoption – *vote: 86 yes, 3 abstentions - adopted by majority*

Comments: Opportunity to reflect on developments in Russia and Turkey,

Vote: 86 yes, 3 abstentions, adopted by majority

4. Reports of the meetings of
 - 15 December ([CONF/PLE\(2020\)SYN3](#)) – *vote: 70 in favour, 1 against, 11 abstentions - adopted by majority*
 - and
 - 16 December 2020 ([CONF/PLE\(2020\)SYN4](#)) – *vote: 75 yes, 12 abstentions - adopted by majority*

5. Appointment of 5 members of the Verification and Dispute Committee, proposed by the Standing Committee, for a term of three years (2021-2024) from Thursday 29 April 2021.

Mr Salomon Levy, current president of the Verification and Dispute Committee thanked the members of the VDC for the work done throughout the period. The composition of the new Verification and Disputes Committee proposed by the Standing Committee was approved by the General Assembly. The General Assembly appointed as members of the Committee:

- Cyril Ritchie, Civicus, World Alliance for Citizenship participation
- Marie-Claire Galibert, International Federation of Associations of the Elderly, FIAPA
- Anne Kraus, CISV International
- Jean-Bernard Marie, (Conference of European Justice and Peace Commissions - Justitia Pax
- Michalis Mittas, European Young Bar Association, EYBA

Vote: 72 yes, 7 abstentions, 10 against – adopted by majority

6. Appointment of 5 members of the Appellate Committee, proposed by the Standing Committee, for a term of three years (2021-2024), from Thursday 29 April 2021.

The composition of the Appellate Committee proposed by the Standing Committee was approved by the General Assembly. The General Assembly appointed as members of the Committee:

- Jean-Jacques Kuster, European Union of Court Clerks
- Daniel Guery, International Movement of Apostolate in Middle and Upper Classes - MIAMSI
- Kekeli Kpognon, Quaker Council for European Affairs
- Marie-José Schmitt, European Action of the Disabled
- Aycke Smook, Right to Die Europe

Vote: 81 in favour, 6 against, 8 abstentions - adopted by majority

7. Prolongation of the term of office of the President of the Expert Council on NGO Law due to the change in the calendar of the sessions (from June 2021 to October 2021)

Vote: 81 in favour, 4 against, 5 abstentions - adopted by majority

The term of office of Jeremy McBride, Chairman of the Expert Council on NGO Law was prolonged until October 2021.

8. Adoption of a [Recommendation on Access for all to social and medico-social services: a springboard to get out of poverty](#) introduced by Peter Verhaeghe

The recommendation called on states as key players to ratify the revised European Social Charter and to develop strategies to coordinate the fight against poverty.

After a discussion the recommendation was adopted with some amendments suggested by the members.

Vote: 87 in favour, 1 against, 1 abstention – adopted by majority

9. Results of the internal evaluation of the 2018-2021 Action Plan of the Conference of INGOs, presented by Robert Bergougnan, Vice-President and Richard Pirolt, Rapporteur of the Conference of INGOs, stocktaking by the chairpersons of the outgoing thematic committees, followed by an exchange.

The members of the Standing Committee presented the results of the internal evaluation of the Action Plan 2018-2021, conducted in a cooperative manner with all the entities of the Conference of INGOs highlighting some major reforms that had been carried out, namely the Code of Conduct, the Rules of Procedures or the revision of the Code of Good Practice for Civil Participation. The country visits were also mentioned as a valuable innovation involving many NGOs and making them more visible. Further achievements such as the fight against sexism and violence against women or activities regarding migrant people were essential. The speakers thanked the members of the Conference of INGOs for the work done over the last three years.

10. Exchange of views with Snežana Samardžić-Markovic, Council of Europe Director General of Democracy

Ms Snežana Samardžić-Marković shared with the Assembly her reflections on the work of the Conference of INGOs over the last three years. She highlighted the INGO Conference's efforts to enhance its visibility and communication as well as its determination to improve its functioning. In addition, she answered questions from the delegates regarding the implementation of the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture,

multilateralism and the Istanbul Convention. Finally, in her capacity as Director General of Democracy at the Council of Europe, she congratulated and thanked the President of the Conference and the members of the Standing Committee for their leadership.

11. Evaluation of the Conference of INGOs – communication on progress by the Evaluation Division of the Directorate of Internal Oversight of the Council of Europe

The Conference of INGOs heard the Secretariat of the Directorate of Internal Oversight of the Council of Europe on the provisional conclusions of the evaluation of the Conference of INGOs conducted for the first time since its existence within the Council of Europe. The main focus of the evaluation was on the improvement of the dialogue between the Council of Europe and civil society as well as the improvement of the institutional setup of the INGO Conference in relation to the Council of Europe, its added value, relevance and effectiveness of the Conference as the voice of civil society. The strong points and points to be improved in the functioning and in the synergies between the different components of the Council of Europe were exposed, followed by an outline of the recommendations. It was announced that the report must receive various opinions, including that of the Committee of Ministers, before being published.

12. Presentation and discussion on proposals for Committees transmitted by INGOs

- Committee for interreligious & interconvictional dialogue
- Committee: Action for Social Rights. For the respect of the dignity of every person and all their rights
- Environment, Climate Change, Heritage & Health
- Environmental and health crisis: governance and solidarity issues
- Human Rights and Artificial Intelligence
- Civil Society Committee on the Rights of the Child
- Committee on the rights of persons who are migrants
- Exchange with participants

The delegates presented their proposals for the creation of Committees, which would be voted on at the General Assembly meeting the following day.

13. End of mandate speech by the President of the Conference of INGOs

The President presented the [closing speech](#) of her final mandate, thanking everyone for the cooperation, contributions and the institutional and human adventure enjoyed during the last six years.