



## **CONFERENCE OF INGOs CONF/AG(2023)SYN2**

### **MEETING OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**Draft Report  
9-11 October 2023  
Hybrid meeting**

**Monday 9 October 2023**

**09:00-10:00 Standing Committee Meeting**

**10:00-12:30 [Round Table organised by Committee “NGOs as advocates for gender equality and women’s rights” on better implantation of equality issues into the general work of the Conference and as a transversal theme in all committees](#)**

**14:00-16:30 First Session – open to CINGO members only**

*English/French interpretation provided.*

#### **1. Opening of the meeting by Gerhard Ermischer, President of the Conference**

- Gerhard Ermischer, CINGO President, opens the session at 14:05.
- Hybrid arrangements for engagement with members attending online are explained.
- Reminder that the [CINGO Code of Conduct](#) applies in all proceedings.
- Explanation that voting will take place “upon honour” – only one person per INGO with participatory status is allowed to cast a vote. As it is not possible to verify the eligibility, this is done on honesty and trust basis. It is confirmed that an eligibility-enabled secure voting system will be put in place for the Spring 2024 General Assembly.

#### **2. Nomination of the Rapporteurs of the meeting**

- Piotr Sadowski and Simon Matthijssen, from the CINGO Standing Committee, volunteer and are appointed as rapporteurs.

### **3. Draft agenda – for adoption**

- The following changes to the agenda are announced:
  - Tuesday 10 October 2023, unveiling of a plaque by the Irish Ambassador, honouring the relentless fight against poverty, will be unveiled between 10:00 and 10:30, with translation of the proceedings provided; the INGO networking session will begin at 10:30.
  - An item concerning the developments in Nagorno-Karabakh is added to the agenda.
- INGOS are invited to check the updated documents, following which the agenda is unanimously approved.

### **4. Report of the meeting of 24-26 April 2023– for adoption (CONF/AG(2023) SYN1)**

- Ms Anne Kraus asked to have her name and remarks removed from page 1, explaining that the FR translation arrived shortly before this session started and there was not enough time to read through the document. She requests that, in the future, meeting reports are much shorter, making it easier and quicker for members to read.

### **6. Follow-up to Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe, Reykjavik, 16-17 May 2023**

- Report from the Civil Society dialogue organised by the Latvian Presidency, Riga, 12-13 September 2023, is presented.
- Report from the Council of Europe SG Exchange with Civil Society, Strasbourg, 15 September 2023, is presented.
- Interventions take place as following:
  - Mr Eduards Dzenītis, Deputy to the Permanent Representative of Latvia to the Council of Europe:
    - The Summit in Reykjavik was very important, not to say monumental. A plan for implementation of the agreements was adopted by the CoM and is now being worked on in a Rapporteur Group. There do not seem to be any clinches. The Summit meeting was closely aligned with Latvia's priorities, including better implementation of European Court of Human Rights rulings. To this end, Latvia has organized a conference with representatives from 32 APEX Courts.
    - A campaign was launched to emphasise the safety of journalists as necessary for freedom of expression.
    - Justice has been instrumentalised by having a registry created: recording the destruction and damage caused by the Russian Federation in Ukraine.
    - Latvia is in principle in favour of greater transparency of the CoM.

- Mr Domenik Wanger, Permanent Representative of Liechtenstein to the Council of Europe
  - CoE is not yet sufficiently known in his country: he is still congratulated for his work in Brussels (instead of Strasbourg).
  - The CoM is compared to a huge oil tanker; you may be captain for six months, but major course changes are virtually impossible to achieve in that period.
  - In May 2024, the actual foreign ministers (not their deputies, the ambassadors) will attend the 75th anniversary of the Council of Europe (15 May 2024). Liechtenstein will do its part by organising an expert meeting in order to make the Council of Europe better known in the principality itself. Cooperation with youth and social organizations will be expressly sought.
  - The CINGO President adds that the cooperation between civil society and governments should be improved.
  
- Mr Daniel Popescu, Head of Democracy and Governance
  - There is major restructuring on its way in the CoE; increasing cooperation between civil society and the CoE is very important, with a particular focus on the space given to civil society in the various member states.
  
- **Q&A follow**
  - Representative of International Movement of Apostolate in Middle and Upper Classes (MIAMSI) asks if he can work with the Ambassador of Liechtenstein and offers analysis; the latter agrees.
  - Representative of International Federation for Housing and Planning (IFHP) questions whether the same observers will be allowed on future committees; Mr. Popescu replies that this is nuanced: in the CD-Dem it will most likely be so, for the Environment, it remains to be seen.
  - Mr Dzenītis notes that he would like to cooperate, however differences exist and must be respected; he acknowledges the role of civil society in the educational field is very important in the country.
  - Representative of Initiatives of Change-International (IofC) suggests arranging a follow-up meeting (like the one that went to Reykjavik) with Latvia.
  - Mr. Popescu informs there was already cooperation with the various migration committees; education and social resilience are inseparable as far as the existing cooperation with the CD-Dem is concerned, which seems to be continuing; it appears that the environmental and social rights committee will be cooperating.

***Break is announced at 15:30.***

## 5. Informal report on activities by the CINGO President

- Proceedings are resumed at 15:43.
- The President reports as following:
  - Management of expectations following the Summit in Reykjavik is required, as the event took place two weeks after the spring CINGO GA.
  - All Heads of State were present, except for Serbia because of the dispute with Kosovo. Also present as observers were the United States and Canada in connection with the register of damage caused by the Russian Federation in Ukraine. Mexico and Israel because of artificial intelligence and human rights, the European Union and the United Nations, and civil society was represented only by CINGO.
  - The results were hopeful, but further elaboration will show to what extent the states were acting in earnest.
  - Furthermore, the President mentions the restructuring of the CoE, where the environmental aspect based on the old Bern convention and the European landscape convention will go to Directorate I (human Rights).
  - The President stresses that CINGO should put pressure to get more involved in decision making. For example, it has had influence in the CDDG, but it was very dependent on benevolence of member states. On the other hand, the CoM always meets behind closed doors.
  - It is the President's proposal to convene an expert group from both the CoM and CINGO which mutual expectations can be explained. The Dutch ambassador has agreed to help in this dialogue. Latvia inaugurated a consultation on cooperation with civil society.
  - It is the President's aim to develop an overall cooperation strategy for CINGO, the rest of civil society and the CoE; as CINGO, we need to be more proactive, communicate more and not be consulted by invitation only.
  - It must also finally become clear within the other pillars within the CoE that civil society is an important source of information, for example, for the implementation of court rulings (Article 9.2 procedure at the Committee of Ministers), the Social Charter and monitoring, in areas such as OPCAT (Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment); we need to move toward a stable working relationship, where it is mutually clear what roles are expected.
- **Q&A follow**
  - Representative of European Council of Spatial Planners (ECTP-CEU) advocates for CINGO's robust input into the Committee on the Environment. The President agrees. Representative of IofC argues that we need to do more and better networking.
  - Representative of EU-Russia Civil Society Forum (EU-Russia CSF) wants a general analysis of how we work with the various steering committees. The flowchart presented on 15 September 2023 (consultation organised by the Secretary General, with again, unfortunately, very little input from CINGO) seems fine in general but is very unclear in detail. Moreover, the document is something that was presented at the beginning of the consultation while you would expect

something like this to come at the end. He argues that there should be a review of the added value of CINGO. This should not be done by the Secretariat but by an independent outsider (as is common in other international organisations such as, for example, the United Nations).

- The President agrees with the last speaker and points out the paradox that the consultation initiated by the Secretary General on 15 September 2023 should have been the final one of the Helsinki Process (aimed at cooperation with civil society) in which again we were not consulted.
- Representative of International League Against Racism and Antisemitism (LICRA) notes that those in the CINGO Steering Committee need to convince at least one member state of our relevance because otherwise we will not achieve results. He points out that CINGO we can often give our own opinion in appendices. He suggests organising a meeting with people who attend steering committees, or perform other tasks for CINGO, so that we can learn from each other's experiences. The President embraces the idea.
- Representative of University Women of Europe (UWE) asks for the right to send shadow reports. The President reports that, in general, he had suggested in the CoM that cooperation with the various sections of the CoE should be less ad hoc and more streamlined, but there has not yet been a substantive response to this.
- Representative of IFHP notes that it has become increasingly difficult to get documents from PACE, including the agendas. She feels there needs to be more trust-building.
- The President explains that after the so-called Caviar-Gate (wherein Azerbaijan bribed other parties), PACE has become extremely suspicious; even though this has nothing to do with the CINGO, we are still hardly welcome in the various committees.
- Representative of European Buddhist Union (EBU) asks if any improvement in our budget or support is foreseen. She further notices that CINGO still does not appear in information materials from the CoE. The President reports that all these issues are still being handled in a very minimalist way by the CoE; we are meagrely supported, have virtually no budget, and we are not included in propaganda.

***The President closes the session at 16:39.***

**Tuesday 10 October 2023**

**[10:00 Unveiling ceremony of the info board in English of the message of the Human Rights Stone against Poverty to mark the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty \(17 October\) – Palais de l'Europe, lower forecourt](#)**

**10:30-13:00 Networking Event for the members of the Conference of INGOs - in the Hall in front of room G.03**

## 14:00-17:00 Second Session of the General Assembly open to member States

- Genevieve Laloy Vice President takes the chair for this session
- Ruth Allen is appointed as rapporteur

### 7. Presentation of the [fact-finding report](#) of the country visit to Bosnia and Herzegovina by Najra Isakovic, Programme Officer, Civil Rights Defenders ([powerpoint presentation](#))

- The visit in September 2022 included 28 civil society organisations across 3 cities.
- Regarding legal framework for NGOs and their participation - a concerning new law is proposed that would bring 'foreign agent' labelling to some NGOs. There is a NGO consultation website as part of EU accession to demonstrate NGO consultation – but there is insufficient evidence of civil society participation in EU accession processes.
- There is an evidence of repressions/fettering of freedom of association in legal actions e.g. repression of the BH Pride (LGBTQi) march this year.
- There is a lack of transparency regarding public funding for NGOs. Accession to European Union process gives only limited means to actively protect democracy.
- **Feedback from NGOs included concerns about:**
  - Ethnic and political divisions
  - Problems of funding
  - Corruption
  - Challenge of NGOs working on politically unpopular topics eg war crimes, women's rights
- **Special topics requiring special attention e.g.**
  - Judiciary – slow, with poor implementation of rulings and evidence of corruption
  - Interventions of the ombudsman institute – unable to make decisions because there are three ombudsmen of different ethnicities that cannot agree on issues
  - Freedom of expression, media and journalism safety
  - Anti-discrimination – in particular repression of LGBTQi rights
  - Roma: there is action plan for social inclusion of Roma 2022 but too early to judge implementation. Includes healthcare, housing, work
  - Living with disability – lack of access to sufficient support and rights protection
- **Conclusions**
  - Dayton Agreement's evident deficits now raise challenges for effective democracy, integration and coexistence across communities
  - Lack of embedding international standards in laws
  - Lack of transparency in NGO funding
  - Limited international influence on laws and policies
  - Comprehensive change plan needed
- **Recommendations**
  - Withdrawal of Republic of Srpska law

- Increased cooperation between civil society organisations
- Improve information and harmonize laws on peaceful assembly
- Public financing of NGOs needs transparency
- Address action on intimidation and hate speech
- Justice for war survivors, Roma and other minorities
- 
- **Goran Miletic (CINGO Standing Committee) presentation**
- The good news:
  - Strong presence of international community since the war, EU, UN, CoE etc. This is very important for civil society as allies for hostile environment
  - There is a lot of capacity and capability in civil society
  - BH is full member of CoE and use European Court of Human Rights (EctHR)
- The long term problems
  - It is a post-conflict society without proper access to justice. Only a few cases come before Bosnian court, many people are still missing, people living alongside perpetrators – many ongoing injustices.
  - Corruption and disillusion leads to people leaving BH and leaving civil society organisations. Even top-level cases in EctHR are not implemented in the field.
  - NGOs can open in BH, but many barriers and progressive causes are obstructed.
  - Parallel worlds of government and civil society. The ombudsman cannot take decisions or implement anything.
  - BH is a 'frozen conflict'. Always at risk of exploding again as in other countries.
  - Segregation in education by three major ethnic groups is key problem. History is told through each perspective, and associating out of school is difficult. Number of children is decreasing. This segregation is baked into the Dayton Agreement. Teaching jobs are given by ethnicity so this drives compliance with the segregation.

## Q&A

- Q. Are there any NGOs working on peace between communities?
  - Goran M – yes and this is a priority of the international community. But we still need facts and apply these to gain justice in the courts. NGOs are not enough.
  - Naraj – there is initiative among NGOs especially young people to work together on peace building. But very complicated especially in small communities that are so divided.
- Q. What is the role of religious organisations in peacebuilding or separation?
  - Naraj – religious leaders are aligned with the ethnic groups: Serbian orthodoxy; Croats own church and Croatia; Bosnian align with mosques and countries such as Turkey. The religious institutions stoke the divisions overall.
- Q. How do we use mass comms tools to share information on situation in BH (and elsewhere) more effectively?

- Q. What is the role of the diaspora communities in relation to BH?
- Naraj – a huge diaspora is funding the country and keeping it going. But this community can be the most divisive as they have least interest in developing integration in BH and they live abroad in segregated communities. Not clear how this can change or become more a force for good in integration.
- Q. What initiatives could ameliorate the situation and what can CoE do to assist?
- Gerhard Ermischer–international organisations are still present but not doing enough e.g. CoE should restart education programmes cut for financial reasons.
  - Goran – strongest factor in BH is international community although they are limited by their mandate. But civil society can do a lot at local/small level, showing that change is possible and acting in solidarity against e.g. hate crime (eg against LGBTQi).
  - Higher Education is key a mechanism within BH supported by CoE to bring young people together across communities.
  - Comment from the floor: Youth delegate from Georgia highlights similarities with Georgia. Youth and civil society resistance has helped to push back e.g. on proposed foreign agent law and promote democracy through work in schools.
  - Naraj – it is hard to get people to protest. People are afraid. Politicians own the public space and they quote laws in other countries as justification e.g. brought in defamation law. Mobilisation is very difficult at the moment.

Gerhard Ermischer thanks the speakers and those providing testimony.

#### **8. *Ad hoc* communiqué on the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh by the**

- [Committee on the Rights of Persons in Migration](#)
  - [Committee on Human Rights and Artificial Intelligence](#)
- Daniel Guery from Migration Committee brings a statement on the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh (N-K) and the refugee crisis. On behalf of the Rights of Migrant People committee, he presents the context of a press release which was put online yesterday on the Migration Committee web page.
  - 100,000 people have been displaced following the military action by Azerbaijan in N-K. They have sought refuge in Armenia in the border regions. There is insufficient food, housing, services and financial support. The situation is being discussed in the PACE this week because of the scale of the situation and the human rights and humanitarian challenges.
  - Gerhard Ermischer – recognises the importance of this report and the situation in NK – which is happening between two member states of the CoE signed up to the convention of human rights. Thanks the committee for their work in this field including visiting Armenia. Fully support the statement going to PACE through the involvement of our committee. The text should be finished at the end of this week and hope for CINGO to support formally.

**Q&A**



Q. How can CoE resolve conflict between member states. There is no clear approach to this by CoE/CoM. CoE should use its rules with member states in these situations. Can text be sent to the heads of bodies in CoE to encourage use of powers on intercountry conflict?

- Discussion ensued about the importance of CoE using the tools available to it when there is conflict and emergencies within and between CoE members. Comments on CINGO mobilising humanitarian aid and whether we should have a budget for such actions.
- A statement from social workers in Armenia was read out from the floor. They are supporting 100,000 refugees, acting in a voluntary capacity. They want to know how their rights as workers can be better protected and reinforced.

**8. Presentation of the theme of modern slavery, led by Olga Sadovskaya and Simon Matthijssen with Presentation from Ms Katharine Bryant and Ms Abigail Munroe, Walk Free ([powerpoint presentation](#))**



Modern slavery is widespread across CoE countries. There are evolving techniques and ways of hiding the victims. It is a key issue for human rights in civil society. Walk Free is an international human rights and advocacy organisation based in Australia and London. Walk Free produces flagship evidence reports - published last in 2023 – the *Global Slavery Index*.

- **Forced Labour, Human Trafficking, Modern Slavery**

- Walk Free joined with International Labour Organisation and found 27.6M in forced labour and 22m in forced marriage. This is has been a 10m increase in 10 years.
- 1:4 are children, women and girls are 54% and migrants much more at risk
- Global slavery index gathers data and examines what nations are acting against it and the evidence for success.
- Includes how commercial products of slavery are imported to G20 nations.
- Global findings: 50m in modern slavery all over the world with diverse prevalence. Very intertwined with women and children's rights, other characteristics re race, class, gender identity etc. Importing slavery products very high in many developed countries including US, Germany, UK, Canada. Government action has reversed in some countries – UK still a leader but now going in reverse e.g. with the illegal migration bill.

- **Presentation of recommendations throughout the report.**

- Modern slavery response essential in all countries
- Focus on prevention and vulnerable people
- Criminal and civil law remedies

- Combat forced labour
- Focus on human rights

*Reference: [Beyondcompliance.wikirate.org/dashboard/all-sectors](https://beyondcompliance.wikirate.org/dashboard/all-sectors)*

- **The Way Ahead**

- Intention without action is meaningless
- Lack of action has real consequences
- We know a great deal about how to respond effectively
- We are calling on governments and businesses to take immediate and effective action to end all forms of modern slavery
- Need to see action in relation to the UN Sustainable Development Goals

Walk Free is interested to set up/support a committee on Modern Slavery within CINGO

**CINGO members interested in finding out about/establishing a Modern Slavery committee should contact Olga on [sadovskaya@gmail.com](mailto:sadovskaya@gmail.com)**

- **Discussion**

- Issue of surrogacy without consent raised as possible form of modern slavery and trafficking. Asked that a report on practices of forced surrogacy in India be circulated. Proposed writing a statement against surrogacy for CINGO to adopt. Other comment made that surrogacy is governed differently and is considered very positive in many countries and so is not something CINGO should object to in principle.
- Other areas of exploitation noted including agriculture and fishing, in sporting events (e.g. Qatar football world cup), prostitution, forced marriage.
- Comments on support for a committee being created and interest from other INGOs including young bar association
- Note that compulsory education up to secondary school level is key protective policy against forced labour and exploitation

- **Responses from Walk Free**

- Definition of modern slavery includes forced commercial sexual exploitation. Forced marriage is all marriage under 18 in data collection although difficulty in getting data. Distinction is made between different forms of surrogacy.

Gerhard Ermischer – thanks and encourages the proposal for a committee. Also reminds CINGO that today is the day against the death penalty.

- **Any other business**

- New CoE Steering Committee on quality of environment established and CINGO will be represented. Focus on affordability and social value creation. Based on Venice road-map, working with private and public interests, as all have stake in high quality environment issues and matters such as climate change. First

meetings soon and will organise a large alliance big meeting next spring. This will be reported back to CINGO.

- Gerhard Ermischer closes the meeting and thanks for all the contributions and participation. Welcomes proposals for new committees. Thanks to the interpreters. Also announced a meeting after the Assembly for those interested in sports and human rights committee in development.

#### **4.30pm Meeting close**

**Wednesday 11 October 2023**

**9:30-12:00 Third Session of the General Assembly open to CINGO members only**

#### **10. Report from Jeremy McBride, President of the Expert Council on NGO Law (online)**

- A request was made to improve the protection of NGOs within the CDE
- Improve the involvement of the CINGO within the CDE
- Register of INGOs. Participation in the institutions
- Questionnaire sent by a member of parliament. We must resist.
- Still concerned about Belarus' role in supporting Russia. WFD will be a good time
- Study on adverse effects on INGOs. Very few responses on member states. Efforts to be made. Much appreciated.
- Review and management of the development of the INGO cause. Work to be completed in principle by the end of next year.
- Project to carry out a study on another problem faced by INGOs: opening bank accounts. The banks use the fear of money laundering as an excuse.
- The idea would be not to treat all INGOs as being at risk.
- No opinion adopted. But the new law has been passed and we shall see how it is applied.
- **Questions/Answers/Comments**
  - Request for a text with the points that the Committee of Experts would like to address in the coming months so that INGOs can take note of them.
  - The Committee of Experts was congratulated on all its work.

#### **11. Vote on draft Recommendations submitted**

##### **11.1 [Draft recommendation on the impact of artificial intelligence \(AI\) on the education sector](#) - for adoption**

- Presentation of the recommendation by Claude Vivier Le Got
- Brief reminder
  - the role of FEDE in working alongside the Steering Committee on Education
  - CVL congratulates the work of the CDEDU and in particular Ahmet-Murat Kilic, Directorate General of Democracy and Human Dignity
  - Organisation of a Webinar. Collaboration with the Artificial Intelligence Committee
- Cfr online draft recommendation drawn up with the AI Committee.

- This recommendation would support the work of the CDEDU. Draft also approved by the Committee of Ministers.
- What was approved to the Committee of Ministers?
  - Civic education
  - Improving the educational response to crises, natural disasters & pandemic
  - Improving Education for Digital Citizenship
- 2025 will be the year of digital citizenship education
- **Questions/Answers/Comments**
  - INGO representative: Question of children and age appropriateness
  - Representative INGO schools Poland / Dominant values conveyed by AI
  - Eurodoc: suggests a short addition to make it more inclusive, which is accepted
  - Licra: specify in the legal instruments how AI is already used. Whenever this technology is to be used, in which direction should it go? Important role of civil society.
  - Importance of parent training
  - Danger of online sexual abuse.
  - Focus on students for whom AI
  - Adjustment approved. Cfr email
  - CVL underlines the presence and support of Ahmed & Vilano
  - Recommendation adopted (4 abstention; 0 against)

## **12.Wrap up of the networking session and formal reports of Committees where necessary by Gerhard Ermischer and Ruth Allen**

- Lots of people present at the networking
- Desire for more networking and synergies between committees
- Progress in working with the CDE and having a common voice from the CINGO
- Ideas for new committees
  - Committee on Sport
  - Committee on modern slavery and perhaps the same or around trafficking
  - Environment & human rights committee.
  - Proposals for new versions of existing committees
- Ensure that members who are active in different areas join together in committees to give the CINGO a greater voice.
- We also want to make sure that the places and times for meetings are made easier.
- To avoid everyone working in small boxes.
- **Questions/Answers/Comments**
  - Well done for this networking opportunity
  - End of a first round of committees in this form (after reform). Each committee should take stock of how things are working, the positive aspects and the difficulties, and why not hold a meeting of committee chairmen once or twice a year to encourage communication and synergies between committees.
  - How to integrate the CDE bodies more closely. Need help from the SC. EG response: to have a platform where everyone can clearly find their way around.

- The question of observer status on CDE steering committees? Some are not members of CINGO. This should be the case. GE reminded participants of the rules governing participatory status in the CINGO
- Can we not have clearer recognition / synergies with the EU?
- Problem: we have a committee, a series of tools and a website. A lot of work and now we have to change the name.
- What would be possible regarding the integration of certain INGOs that do not have participatory status?
- If we look at the CINGO website and the presentation of the Committees, we see them as Silos. Find a cross-cutting communication system to provide news from the various committees. Why a newsletter with news from the various committees?
- Status of observers: discuss this with all the committee chairmen. We would all benefit from strengthening the INGO structure and their role as observers.
- We can have observer status on several steering committees. Work & trust + sustainability. Know how to rely on long-term, stable representatives.
- Badge issues. Complicated to have to redo the process every time. It would be easier to have a smoother entry process and badges with photos.

**12.1 (10") [Final Report of the Committee “NGOs as advocates for gender equality and women’s rights”](#) and request for prolongation for half a year- Bettina Hahne and Anita Schnetzer-Spranger**

- Cfr Committee report presented by Anita Schnetzer-Spranger

**13. Votes on committees for prolongation and elections where needed:**

**13.1 Vote on the extension for half a year of the Committee “NGOs as advocates for gender equality and women’s rights”**

- Indoor: 37 yes & Online: 16 yes + 1 abstention

**13.2 Vote of a new Chair of the Civil Society Committee on the Rights of the Child for the period January-April 2024.**

- Michel Grangeat (MG) is due to step down as Chairman at the end of December.
- Proposed replacement: Hugo Roca
- MG underlines two points
- Webinar organized
- Participation in a recommendation project
- Organisation of events on topics of interest to the committee
- Group of experts who very much appreciate the work of the INGOs
- Hugo Roca: presentation on child protection work in Paris.
- Vote: 41 in favour
- Online: 16 & 1 abstention

### **13.3 Appointment of Mr Harry Rogge as a delegate to replace Aycke Smook (deceased) at the Appellate Committee**

- A few words from Harry Rogge.
- Vote - 35 in favour
- Online: 15 yes & 2 abstentions

### **14. Preparation of elections/votes to take place at the General Assembly in April 2024**

#### **14.1 Explanation by Anne Kraus, Verification and Dispute Committee, of the [rules and procedure](#) and the [time plan for candidacy for elections](#)**

- Presentation of the rules.
- The committee is responsible for checking the eligibility of candidates.
- Link to all the documents, in particular via the adhoc item on the agenda for this session.
- The most important thing is to check that the data is correct in the database.
- Information in the statutes from point 89.
- Reminder of timetable, procedures and stages.

#### **14.2 Explanation by Ruth Allen, Standing Committee, of the rules and procedures and the time plan for setting up new committees**

- Cfr rules of procedure (61 to 71) links, information on setting up a new committee
- Nominations must be sent to the Secretariat 6 weeks before the General Meeting.
- The SC can assist those who need it.
- The committee application form will be more or less the same, but with a few changes. It will be available shortly.

### **15. Reminder by the Secretariat on the upcoming four-yearly evaluation of INGOs with participatory status**

- Every 4 years, INGOs must report on what they have done with their participatory status.
- On-line document.
- The report is a key element. If it is not done, the INGO loses its participatory status.
- Clear deadlines

### **16. [World Forum of Democracy](#) – short information on the upcoming event**

- Theme: Democracy = Peace?
- Invitation to all. Register now. The WFD will take place in the hemicycle of the European Union.
- Deadline for registration: 21 October 2023
- CINGO is one of the partners and will supervise a Lab on 7 November.

**17. Dates of the next Session**

8-10 April 2024

**18. Any other business**

- Press release on GPA. It will be sent to everyone after the meeting.