



CONFERENCE OF INGOs CONF/PLE(2020)SYN4

MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF INGOs Second part of the Autumn Session Wednesday 16 December 2020 9.30-13.00 Online meeting (Kudo) Report

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

In her opening words the President recalled the procedures to vote. She also expressed her gratitude to the participants who joined the session.

2. Appointment of the Rapporteur of the meeting

Richard PIROLT was appointed Rapporteur of the meeting

3. Draft agenda - for adoption

The agenda was adopted. 141 delegated registered to vote: 96 voted: 83 in favour, 8 against, 5 abstentions.

4. Presentation of the draft Rules of Procedure as amended on 15 December

The results of the vote on the amendments was recalled. The President presented the content of the amendments that had been approved by the General Assembly the day before and had been integrated into the draft Rules of Procedure.

5. Information on the voting process on the draft Rules of Procedure. Opening of the vote

The president informed the audience that the voting procedure would be open for 30 minutes and that a majority of 2/3 of the votes expressed was required to approve the draft.

6. Presentation of the result of the vote on the draft Rules of Procedure

The results were as follow: 141 delegates registered to vote: 104 votes expressed: 76 in favour, 24 against, 4 abstentions

The Rules of Procedure were approved by more than 2/3 of qualified majority expressed.

7. Exchange with participants

Ms Claudia Luciani, Director of Human Dignity, Equality and Governance, congratulated the INGO Conference for having seen democracy at work and for respecting the rules for working during the pandemic in line with the SG's guidelines. She also stated that the Secretariat wanted to serve the whole process with the best advice from the Council of Europe.

In the exchange that followed several speakers from the audience expressed their gratitude to the drafting group on the revision of the Rules of Procedures, to the President of the INGO Conference and to the Division for Democratic Innovation for all their efforts to establish the new Rules of Procedure that will make the Conference fit for the future. Speakers also expressed their respect for the democratic process and their hope that the Conference may deal with priority topics such as environment, climate change and human rights or equality in a more dynamic way. Furthermore, speakers expressed their hope that this new instrument would help to improve the recognition of the INGO Conference and its status within the Council of Europe, in order to be better heard in other bodies.

The digital Session made for better outreach to member INGOs that otherwise would not have the opportunity to participate in physical meetings. This is important indication regarding the working methods to use in the future.

8. Draft Declaration of the Conference of INGOs on the role of civil society in safeguarding human rights, democracy and the rule of law, presented by Anna Rurka

Ms Rurka explained the background and reasons for the Declaration – changes in the civil society sector and the needs to meet the challenges posed by the decline of democracy and the rule of law. Through this Declaration, the Conference wishes to remind the Committee of Ministers that the democratic environment for civil society must remain on the political agenda of the Council of Europe

The declaration was adopted (82 votes expressed: 78 in favour, one against, three abstentions).

9. Draft Recommendation - COVID Pandemic 19: Call for ethical and human rights respectful management – Democracy, Social Cohesion and Global Challenges Committee

Ms Chavanon presented the text and its background. There were concerns on the erratic management of the pandemic and the neglect of human rights touching the most vulnerable groups (e.g. persons with disabilities or elderly people). The recommendation recalls the need to support medical staff in line with Committee of Ministers recommendations especially with regard to elderly people.

The recommendation was adopted (74 votes expressed: 71 in favour, 3 abstentions).

10. Draft Resolution: The cultural and creative sectors and COVID-19 - Education and Culture Committee

Ms Claude Vivier Le Got presented the text and its background. Art and culture play a major role in society though this is being put into question in times of pandemic. The shutdown of the cultural sector causes huge unemployment, access to culture is important also in hospitals or in prison. The culture sector is strategic to making life better so the resolution calls upon member States to support this sector.

The resolution was adopted (62 votes expressed: 61 in favour, one abstention).

11. Dates of the next session: 26-29 April 2021 and 27 September – 1 October 2021