

Standing Committee meeting
Minutes
06.07.2023
09:00-11:00
Online meeting

1. Opening of the meeting by Gerhard Ermischer, Chair of the SC at 9:05.
Present:
Standing Committee (SC): Christoph Spreng, Geneviève Laloy, Goran Miletic, Olga Sadovskaya, Piotr Sadowski, Ruth Allen and Simon Matthijssen.
INGO Service: Annelise Oeschger,
Secretariat: Anu Juvonen, Bénédicte Kern.
2. Rapporteur - Simon Matthijssen
3. Draft agenda – adopted
4. Draft minutes of the last meeting – adopted
5. After the Summit in Reykjavik

- discussing the Implementation strategy of the Reykjavik declaration.

Agreed: a troika consisting of Gerhard, Christophe and Ruth will guide various working groups asking the members to come up with highly visible concrete proposals to implement the Reykjavik declaration. The following working groups are envisaged:

- 1) social rights, Piotr, Anna Rurka and Jean Bernard Marie
- 2) environment and human rights; Amy Jacobsen (GreenPeace)
- 3) artificial intelligence; Francesca Fanucci
- 4) participatory democracy; Simon
- 5) war of aggression on Ukraine; Anna Sevortian, Olga, maybe Goran

In particular, the troika will promote to align the proposals to our own strategy and the results obtained by the already existing committees.

Agreed: Gerhard will, after 12 July (when the Committee of Ministers will take a decision), Initiate a plan and timeline for the development of our strategy.

- Preparation for meeting with CoM on improving transparency and integration of CINGO and other civil society organizations (SCOs) into the work of the CoE

Feedback from the consultation of the the chair of the CM with Civil Society: looking for ways to follow up on the Reykjavik declaration but NOT any expansion of it. We have already sent our first reaction. In response to the latter, some ambassadors want to have a dialogue with us. Gerhard suggests that one of the topics of discussion could be the various aspects and arrangements that hinder fruitful participation, such as the conditions for obtaining participatory status (which suffers too much from free interpretation on concepts of working in five countries, having a working relationship with the CoE which does not really include CINGO and the position of observers).

Agreed: Gerhard will make an inventory of the problems hampering our participation and discuss it with Simon on 18 July at 10:00 am.

This will then be the basis for a meeting with Christoph and Piotr at the end of August. An agenda proposal for this final meeting will be sent to all four asap (by Gerhard).

6. Youth sector

Sadly Rares is no longer able to continue his work.

To fill the gap, we have temporarily found Iorgos, Ece and Georgy who are willing to propagate youth interests.

Agreed: We decide to prolong the temporary mandate of these substitute Youth delegates.

Agreed: Gerhard will contact Anne Kraus, who has a lot of knowledge on this subject and may be able to help.

Agreed: Gerhard will soon send out a letter to all INGOs telling them that there will be another general assembly in October, urging that the delegations will try to interest youth members.

7. Dialogue of SG with organised CS

On 15 September – on initiative of the SG - 100 CSOs will be questioned on how they want and can cooperate with the Council of Europe. Upon questions, Anu assures that this will be an open discussion.

Some of our members will attend, as well as people from the expert committee on NGO Law and from our standing committee (Gerhard, Christophe and Ruth).

8. Letter on CAI and demands of participating NGOs + CINGO

Gerhard gives a brief exposé on the drafting of the letter and our comments that we made following the Reykjavik declaration. We await the response from member states.

Agreed: Gerhard will ask member NGOs to co-sign our position on artificial intelligence.

9. Stocktaking modern slavery

A brief introduction of this topic by Simon was followed by some initial reactions; Olga noted that more depth could be achieved by adding some analysis of the case law of the European Court of Human Rights. Further she notes that this topic seems to have been seriously aggravated by the war in Ukraine which

has led to many more refugees. Gerhard was surprised at the low number of "modern slaves" counted in some countries.

Agreed: in next general meeting in October, space will be allocated to discuss this issue.

Olga and Simon will contact "Walk Free" which is the organization that has put this issue on the map. We will ask if they can send a delegate to give an introduction of the topic at the general meeting.

We are not aiming to set up a new committee, more to encourage discussion between the existing committees. We are thinking in particular of the committees on migration, social rights, children's rights and, for example, the NGOs dealing with sex workers' rights.

10. Members co-operation (ASSEDEL and others)

Gerhard has been asked by the NGO ASSEDEL to coach a young activist and the other members of the standing committee are being asked if they are also willing to do so (please inform Gerhard)

The Centre for International Environmental Law organizes a workshop on 25 to 27 September and is asking for a contribution from us. Gerhard is unable to attend. Members of the CS wishing to contribute, are requested to contact Gerhard

11. Business carried forward

- We decide that the April 2024 general assembly will take place in calendar week 15: 8 to 10 April.
- We decide that in the last week of August or first week of September we will have a meeting to discuss the strategy for the coming year (Gerhard organizes).
- The previous minutes are not all in order yet, Geneviève will send an overview with a request to actively and quickly respond to them so that we can put our minutes on the website as soon as possible.
- The report following the country visit to Bosnia and Herzegovina; Gerhard, Goran and Simon decide to make arrangements for final editing after the meeting.

12. Nothing more on the agenda, the chairman concluded the meeting at exactly 11:00.