

12 December 2020

Communiqué
By the Verification and Dispute Committee of the Conference of INGOs
of the Council of Europe

Considering the erroneous information and the unfounded accusations aimed at the Verification and Dispute Committee which has been circulated to the members of the Conference of INGOs by Mr Claude-Laurent Genty in an open letter of December 10, 2020, under the signature of "President-Founder of the Conference", the Committee wishes to make the following corrections and denials.

1. Legitimacy of the Verification and Dispute Committee

In his open letter, the signatory claims that, while the Presidents and Vice-Presidents of the Conference and the Committees are all elected by the Conference, *"this is not the case for the members of this Committee (of Verification and Dispute) which, in my eyes, disqualifies it from future arbitrations"*.

The Committee refers to art. 6.1 of the Rules of Procedure which says that the members of the Verification and Dispute Committee are ***appointed by the Conference of INGOs on a proposal from the President***.

The current members of the Committee have been appointed regularly by approval of the Conference in plenary meeting. Any voting member of the Conference could object to any nomination. There was no opposition, including from the author of the open letter.

Also, the questioning of the legitimacy of the Verification and Dispute Committee by the signatory of the afore-mentioned open letter has no legal basis and the alleged disqualification of the Committee from future arbitrations pronounced by the said signatory "disqualifies" itself. The Committee deplores the fact that a former Chairman of the *INGO Liaison Committee* (which predates the current Conference of INGOs) is thus trying to discredit with the INGOs a body legally established by the Conference.

2. Alleged "threat of sanction" by the Verification and Dispute Committee

According to the signatory of the open letter, the Committee would have sent a *"letter threatening sanction, even exclusions, to a Vice-President of the Conference and four Committee Presidents and Vice-Presidents"*.

The Committee denies this allegation, drawing the attention of the INGOs recipients of the afore-mentioned open letter to the exact terms of its communiqué of 3 December 2020 which refers to the legally binding instruments adopted by the Conference and recalls the elementary rules of democracy in these terms:

“The Committee wishes to observe that when certain members of a body disagree with the decisions regularly voted by it by the required majority, they cannot continually call into question the vote: either they democratically accept decisions, or the possibility of resigning is open to them.”

3. Subsidiarily, the Verification and Litigation Committee points out that according to Article 1.3.7 of the Rules of Procedure, only the title of Honorary President can be attributed by the Conference to one of its former Presidents. The title of "Founding President of the Conference of INGOs" used by the author at the top of the afore-mentioned open letter does not correspond to any reference, either in the texts or in the practices of the Conference.

The Verification and Dispute Committee,

Salomon Levy, President
François Debrowolska
Philippe Grolleau
Jack Hanning
Jean-Bernard Marie