

## **Ciaran King, the AIRE Centre**

The AIRE Centre has been committed to protecting the fundamental rights of vulnerable and marginalised people in society for 30 years. We have worked with the Council of Europe, the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR), and civil society to ensure that individuals and families benefit from rights under European law and that States are held accountable for actions or inactions leading to interferences with fundamental rights. We take cases to the ECtHR, either as applicants' representatives or as third-party interveners; offer free advice to lawyers or individuals directly; and offer legal training to other organisations. Our Western Balkans programme works to promote the proper implementation of international human rights instruments, assist the process of European integration by strengthening the rule of law, and encourage cooperation amongst judges and legal professionals across the region.

I have been the Europe litigation officer at AIRE for three years and during this time, I have demonstrated my personal commitment to protecting the rights of vulnerable individuals and the values of the Conference of INGOs, including supporting a strategy which promotes human rights, democracy, and the rule of law. I work in close partnership with other INGOs, many of whom are members of the Conference on INGOs, to advance these values, and I have been personally involved in over 60 third-party interventions to the ECtHR, including *Fedotova v Russia* [GC]; *Deltuva v Lithuania*; and *A.D. v Malta*.

I want to take this opportunity to devote more energy to the Conference of INGOs and to support the leadership of the Standing Committee to facilitate the participation of an organised and productive civil society. I recognise the transformative potential of INGOs and the vital role they play in the Council of Europe. I believe it is crucial to create space for constructive dialogue among INGOs and to ensure that people are heard and, importantly, felt to be heard. Cultivating such an environment is also crucial to achieve the highest possible standards for the Standing Committee and ultimately a better human rights framework for vulnerable individuals.

I have taken a leading role in implementing and coordinating AIRE's litigation strategy, including building and maintaining relationships with our litigation partners and advocating for the better implementation of ECtHR judgments before the Committee of Ministers. This reflects my and the AIRE Centre's, short, medium, and long-term strategic approach and commitment to the values of the Conference of INGOs.

I have represented the Centre at expert meetings on children's rights; the implementation of judgments; and strategic litigation. This includes the 2023 NGO litigators meeting with the ECtHR in Strasbourg. I am also experienced chairing meetings and actively participate in committees and working groups, including the Equal Justice for Migrant Children advisory group.

I am putting myself forward for election to the Standing Committee as I believe I have the skills, expertise, and character to support the leadership of the Committee and ensure that the voices of other INGOs are accurately reflected at this level.