

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

## **50th Anniversary of the Pompidou Group**

### **Elements for the communication by Mr Péter SZIJJÁRTÓ, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary, Chair of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe**

**(Paris, Centre Pompidou, 28 October 2021)**

#### **Draft speaking points**

On 21 May 2021, at the Council of Europe Ministerial Session in Hamburg (Germany), Hungary took over the Presidency of the Committee of Ministers for a period of six months – for the second time in the thirty years since its accession to the Organisation.

Fully committed to the Council of Europe's mission of building "a freer, more tolerant and just society based on solidarity, common values and a cultural heritage enriched by its diversity", the Hungarian Presidency pledged to focus on five themes:

- promoting effective protection of national minorities;
- strengthening interreligious dialogue;
- empowering future generations by strengthening children's rights, youth participation and Roma inclusion;
- finding common responses to challenges related to the rapid technological development such as artificial intelligence and cybercrime; and
- addressing environmental challenges.

I will say a few words about our achievements to fulfil these ambitious objectives in the second part of my speech.

As regards, the Pompidou Group, under the priority of supporting the young generation in tackling challenges of modern societies, the 50th anniversary of the Group celebrated in 2021 and its statutory revision process have received prominent attention in the Presidency Programme.

As the discussions on the revised statute were reaching their (almost) final stage, some obstacles were still to be overcome. Indeed we were convinced that a new statutory resolution would enable the Pompidou Group to shape the future of drug policy even more actively by making the promotion of human rights its statutory mission in all stages of drug policy development, extending its mandate to other forms of addiction beyond the field of illicit drugs, and creating synergies with other international organisations, relevant entities of the Council of Europe and civil society organisations.

I am happy that our efforts led finally to a great result: the adoption of the revised statute by the Committee of Ministers on 16 June 2021. As already mentioned by the Secretary General, it gives

the Group the adequate political and legal framework to make the voice of the Council of Europe heard and to stimulate its action in this field. At the time, Ambassador Harry Alex Rusz welcomed the adoption of the statute on behalf of the Hungarian Presidency, stressing that "this decision provides a strong political impetus for the Pompidou Group's present and future action, 50 years after its creation."

The second major highlight of the Hungarian Presidency as regards the Pompidou Group is of course the celebration event which brings us together today, in this magnificent setting. I would like to thank, on behalf of all of us, the President of the Pompidou Centre for his generous hospitality. Five months ago, I committed myself to be present at this important event, and I am very pleased that I am able to be here and fulfill my promise.

Over the last months the Pompidou Group has been very active, and other speakers will say more about that. Let me congratulate the Pompidou Group for its 50th Anniversary, and pay tribute to the ambitious programme which has been implemented throughout the year 2021. I would just like to add a few words about an event which also received a special attention from the Hungarian Presidency.

Police and law enforcement agencies have long been major players in organising and implementing drug prevention activities. With the trend to shift focus of drug policies from law enforcement to public health in recent years, discussions emerged on redefining the role of police in prevention, including ways on how law enforcement could contribute to preventing and reducing the risks and harms related drug use.

In this context, the Pompidou Group organised a capacity building seminar which took place at the invitation of the Hungarian authorities in Budapest on 20 and 21 October 2021. During the event future perspectives of the role and potential of police work in drug prevention were discussed and elaborated. As a follow-up a workshop meeting will be planned where law enforcement officials together with prevention experts will develop concept for implementation of innovative approaches of police prevention meeting the today's challenges in reducing drug use and addiction. This concept will be presented to the Pompidou Group member States for consideration of inclusion in the 2023-2025 work programme of the Group.

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As mentioned earlier, and on a more general note, I would like to take this opportunity to share with you my views about the achievements of the Hungarian Presidency during the last 6 months, before we pass the chairmanship to Italy in November.

Recall that one of your priorities is digital development. In this context, emphasise the importance of the draft Second Additional Protocol to the Convention on Cybercrime (Budapest Convention) on enhanced co-operation and disclosure of electronic evidence, which is a priority of the Hungarian Presidency.

The Octopus Conference on 16-18 November will offer the opportunity to cybercrime experts from public and private sectors as well as from international and non-governmental organisations to share experience and knowledge in these regards. On the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the Budapest Convention and the forthcoming 2nd additional Protocol on enhanced cooperation and disclosure of electronic evidence, a special event with high level interventions will be organized during the conference, on 16 November, and in cooperation with the Hungarian Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers.

Recall that the protection of national minorities is a key priority for the Hungarian Presidency. Highlight that on 7 September, the Minister opened a conference held at the European Youth Centre in Budapest on "The role of NGOs and research institutes in promoting Council of Europe norms and standards on national minority rights".

Underline that representatives from NGOs, experts of national minority youth expressed their views on the role and opportunities of international organisations in protecting national minorities in the context of current and new challenges.

Inform that on 19 October, the Hungarian Presidency organised a further Conference, this time based in Strasbourg on: "National minority identities in diverse societies: European Perspectives".

Also among your priorities, Hungary is strongly committed to the implementation of the Council of Europe Youth Sector Strategy 2030. Note that during the Presidency, the goal is to help young people overcome the disproportionate impact for youth of the Covid-19 pandemic. To contribute to this effort, several events are organised, among which the Seminar: "ReStart, ReNew, ReIntegrate – Opportunities for young people after coronavirus" (Budapest/hybrid, 27-29 October).

A conference organised on the 'Rights, opportunities and well-being of children and young people in the digital age' in Budapest at the beginning of October, paid special attention to the changes, dangers and opportunities that have emerged after the covid-19 pandemic, as well as the day-to-day challenges of digital education and online learning.

Ladies and gentlemen,

To conclude, I would just like to congratulate, once again, the Pompidou Group on its 50th anniversary. Its work is more important than ever and I wish it every success in its activities in the coming years.