

COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONFERENCE OF INGOS

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Education and Culture Committee

Chair Sabine Rohmann (The Robert Schuman Institute for Europe – RSIE)

I – General information

- *Strong reaction* further to the destruction of monuments and works of art by Daesh. Reminder: 2018 will be the “European HeritageYear”.

- *The Committee of Ministers*, among which are 30 experts, adopted a Declaration on the balance drawn by the World Summit of Information Society (WSIS). Internet governance and moreover information society governance works to ensure that the internet remains open and accessible, guaranteeing the exercise of fundamental rights: right of freedom of expression, right of freedom of meeting and organisation, right to the respect of private and family life.

- *The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities*, which has long been committed to promoting the active participation of young people in civic life as a means of securing social cohesion, considered several reports on the prevention of radicalisation, youth participation and combating poverty.

The Congress developed plans of co-operation with Lampedusa and Calais Authorities relative to migrants. And our Committee: How can we work with the local authorities?

- *Council of Europe Programme for Romas* is seeking NGOs and Experts dealing with the 4 areas and using examples of good practice:

- combating negative stereotypes; to recognize and to deal with the “anti-Gypsyism” of our societies;

- acting on the improvement of the condition of women and children;

- improving education: training the teachers.

- *Plan for an “inclusive Europe”* In a globalised world, the cohabitation of convictions, development of thoughts and religious “truths” may lead to conflict. How to move from “pluri-convictional” to “inter-convictional” so as to ensure social cohesion?

A training seminar is open to heads of NGOs, those who are in charge of education and local authorities, in 6 seminars over 3 years, taking place in 5 different states: the next one will be in Strasbourg from 8-11 October 2015:

- To build attitudes and skills for dialogue and inter-convictional practice through:
 - empathetic communication
 - testing inter-convictional approaches
- To analyse and manage complex convictional situations
- To live inter-convictional experiences in the framework of training and to share one another’s analysis
- To learn to create spaces for the meeting of people of all conditions

II – Statement of Jean-Philippe RESTOUEIX Council of Europe – Directorate of Democratic Citizenship and Participation. His sphere of activities:

- democratic governance
- human dignity and equality

The education of youth and cultures are integral parts of the Council of Europe's targets: the aim of the European Cultural Convention, open to non-member States, is to develop mutual comprehension between people.

- *Education*: what can the educational system transmit? Democratic citizenship, language training, history, intercultural democratic competences.
- *Youth*: a joint management of youth programmes approved by the European Youth Foundation (EYF) with the EU partnership: 2 European Youth Centres, Strasbourg and Budapest, but how to integrate young migrants?
- *Challenges*: how to guarantee a coherent view in these areas of activities, synergies necessary to keep up benefits?

In 2015: 3 priorities: education, training, teaching from an ethical view point of European citizenship. One is always in a learning situation through various ways, both formal or informal.

- *Consequences*: to de-compartmentalize and open up the 'royal prerogative' school systems, heir to the 19th century. To accept pedagogical exchanges.
- *Good digital use*: it is a tool: how does digital technology train?
- *Working of the hate speech*: "No hate speech"!
- *Living together in equal dignity*: peace is never acquired.
- *Common responsibility*: the intergovernmental limits: the NGOs allow the aims to be reached. To talk about things which make one angry.

The priorities 2016-2017

To combat violent extremism and radicalisation leading to terrorism and to build "inclusive" societies.

Education through democratic citizenship

To build "inclusive" societies through discussion, attention, research, knowledge and shared experiences, and freedom for everyone to transmit the acquired knowledge while respecting the questioning and the legal responsibility.

The teaching of religious matters = a neutral approach to religious matters and culture. Responsibility of the media with the challenge of reception of the information. The knowledge society is not the society of information: who has the information, what is being done with it, who is deciding? Today's language: the image and sound combined with a text.

III – Presentation of the 3 working groups

They are tools of investigation to collect data in 47 countries - the intercultural minorities.

- research of successful experiences of living together*
 - targets: to elaborate innovative proposals from:*
 - analysing formal and non-formal education in the cities, the training institutions
 - analysing the difficulties for an inclusive society, the cultural minorities
- *Intercultural dialogue* – to live together in Europe, Roseline Moreau (GERFEC = European Group for Research and Training holding Christian and other faiths and other convictions)
 - *Education of digital media* – a challenge for formal and non-formal education, Didier SCHRETTER (AEEMA = European Association for Education in Audiovisual Media)
 - *The teaching of history* – an education for democratic citizenship, Jérôme GROSNON (MIIC = International Movement of Intellectual Catholics)
 - *Evolution of the teacher in interaction with this environment*; a shared responsibility, Brigitte BESSON (EUNET = European Network for Education and Training)

IV – Statement by Lilia Ben Sedrine Thabet lawyer and specialist in Islamic law (G3I = Intercultural Group, International, Interconvictional)

She defines herself as Tunisian, French, Muslim, with affiliation to the Mediterranean, both from the East and West.

Need to learn how to live with numerous affiliations and not to be reduced to only one exclusive and excluding affiliation. In a world of great political and economic change, in transformation, we are obliged to live together with our convictions and our different religions.

Challenges: to be frightened by others is dangerous; it produces withdrawal into oneself, the risk of rejecting the strange, and not to see the abundance in diversity.

V – Conclusion Didier Schretter, Vice-chair of the committee

Need for better communication:

Aims:

- to encourage effective internal communication
- to improve consistency and the sharing of ideas
- to ensure maximum visibility

Social networks:

- email remained a popular means of communication between INGOs
- Facebook would be used to communicate with the wider community
- Twitter for communication with policymakers
- LinkedIn for communication between the working groups
- The committee's documents would be accessible via Google Drive
- Videos would be available on You Tube.

Human Rights Committee

Chair Michel Aguilar (EBU: European Buddhist Union)

I – Information

- *Presentation of the action plan of the Committee* specifying the focus of its work on discriminations

- *Report on the meeting of the different persons in charge of the working groups:* to better know the contents of the WG and to create relationships between each other: he recalled how important it is to regularly keep up to date the database on the website (expertise and areas of NGO competences)

- *sent questionnaires* to which a few NGOs replied: ECICW replied. The aim of this questionnaire: to give substantial information on the working methods. **Important to specify on the NGO website** that they are members of the Human Rights Committee. Within a few months, the next questionnaire will arrive on how relevant is the work of the NGO with participative status **and to keep this status.**

- *participation in the Council of Europe Bioethics Committee* on the project of the additional protocol to the Convention of Human Rights and biomedicine, relative to the protection of human rights and the dignity of persons with mental problems with regard to involuntary admissions and treatments. Working document (DH-BIO/INF (2015)7

- *No Hate Web, No Hate Speech - combating hate speeches*

28-30 May 2015 (Strasbourg) the Hate Speech symposium, organised by LICRA (League Against Racism and Anti-Semitism) with the Council of Europe aimed at pupils of junior and high schools, high-level experts, academics and members of the educative community, digital specialists, INGOs.

II – Pinpointing “discreet elements” of discrimination Anne Nègre, Gender Equality Expert

Democracy is based on equality which sets one rule for everyone. Article 119 of the Treaty of Rome specifies the equality of salaries. But, for example, in Europe there is still a difference of 16% between the salary of a man and a woman, unfair situations. Democracy repairs the equality. The injured employee has to get compensation, but all inequalities are not discrimination except if it is illegitimate, Article 1 of the Human Rights Declaration.

- Positive discrimination is wanted by the lawmaker to correct an unfavourable situation, in favour of black students for example, so that they are able to go to university.

- Illicit discrimination is one that the law prohibits and punishes. Implementation of this discrimination can evolve until it becomes a key principle of the law. First, by the action of the civil society: the women's organisations fought for these items and usually the first important decisions followed their initiative, then came the international treaties, CEDAW Convention, on the elimination of discrimination against women.

The European Union has created a framework with criteria for professional life, recruitment or training. The unjust situations lead to corrections and sanctions but always with proof.

III - The work of the Steering Committee for Human Rights (CDDH)

Jean-Bernard Marie (Pax Christi), representative of the INGO Conference on the Steering Committee for Human Rights (CDDH)

- *Long term reforms of the Court*: following the Brighton Declaration (2012), drafting continues. The future fate of the European Convention of Human Rights depends on this report. The Conference in Brussels – 26 and 27 March 2015 - called into question The European Convention of Human Rights; this “Declaration of Brussels” (on the Council of Europe website) is very important.

- *Business Enterprises and Human Rights*: progress of the drafting of the guiding principles in addition to those of the “Declaration of the Committee of Ministers on the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights”.

The working group “Human rights, co-development and migrations” is working on the draft of the Recommendation of the **Committee of Ministers** which has to be approved in the next 2016 semester. This recommendation is not restrictive but the NGOs can request their countries to make it respected and the Social Charter allows recourse. The group is preparing a side-event, probably in June 2016, with the theme “the issue: Migrations, Development and Human Rights”.

- *Human Rights and multi-cultural societies* Council of Europe project compiling the existing standards relative to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

- *“Impact study of the crisis and economic austerity measures on Human Rights in Europe”* Preparation of a non restrictive tool, a compilation of national good practices of economic and social rights to make the European policies progress. The adoption of the study is expected in December 2015. There is very strong political opposition from the government delegations of member States. If it is ratified, this feasibility study will lead on to some work in the framework of a working group which would be made by an observer on the effects of the crisis relative to Human Rights.

IV – Recommendation “The violation of economic, social and cultural rights by austerity measures: a serious threat to democracy.

Presented by the Marangopoulos Foundation (Theodora Christofori) and unanimously adopted

The following are some of the rights seriously affected:

- *The right to work*: the sector the most impacted according to Eurostat

- *The right to health* “Médecins du Monde” said that the main obstacles to access to healthcare are financial problems (25%).
- *The right to education* a negative impact on the quality and accessibility of education
- *The right to housing, food and water* In addition to these substantial budget restrictions, low incomes and high taxes and programmes for privatisation pose a constant threat to the right of access to water and electricity.
- *The rise in political extremism is a threat to European democracy:* Impoverishment and the risk of social exclusion contribute to the rise in political extremism in Europe, xenophobic, anti-Semitic and racist acts and other acts of violence based on hatred of those who are different.

Therefore PACE is invited to follow up its Resolution 1884 (2012) “Austerity measures – a danger for democracy and social rights” and to adopt a new resolution so as to encourage member States to:

- Give particular attention to the rights of people who belong to the most vulnerable groups: children, people with disabilities, women, the elderly, the unemployed, the homeless and immigrants.
- Review their austerity policies with better sharing
- Adopt an approach based on the European Human Rights Convention and the (revised) European Social Charter and EU law - in the case of states who are also EU member countries.

V – Adoption of the Recommendation on Disability

Marie José Schmitt (European Action of the Disabled)

The working group is drafting a recommendation to the Committee of Ministers. A Conference will be held in St Petersburg at the end of 2015 on the implementation of the strategy to ensure the Action Plan for disabled people.

VI – Report of the Symposium “No hate Web, no hate speech” Gilles Bloch from the League Anti Racism and Semitism (LICRA)

This symposium organised by LICRA with the Human Rights Committee on 28-29 May 2015, brought together college and high school students on the theme “No hate Web, no hate speech”

V – Progress of the working groups

1) Extreme poverty and human rights Maritchu Rall (AIC) and Jean-Gabriel Prieur (ATD-Fourth World)

- Preparation of the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty 17 October , this year on 16 October, on the theme: “Children living in poverty and exclusion”
- The follow-up of the guiding principles on extreme poverty and human rights and their implementation by the States and NGOs.
- The targets of sustainable development regarding the poorest people
- The follow-up of the Turin Process: working out an excerpt of texts, a tool to be disseminated: - Effective access to law and justice for people living in extreme poverty
 - Improvement of access to social rights
 - Improvement of the situation of low-income workers and autonomy of people confronted by extreme poverty
 - Combating social exclusion: towards minimum guaranteed resources
 - Investing in family cohesion.

2) *Human rights, co-development and migration* Hugo CASTELLI (Réseau Européen Eglise et Libertés) and Marie-Christine DAVY (AIC)

- Working on a recommendation for the States to force the multinational companies, where they are established, to respect the interests of those countries and populations.
- Preparation of a side-event in June 2016 on this theme

3) *Violence against the elderly* Jean-Michel CAUDRON (International Federation of the Elderly)
At the request of the French Minister in charge of the elderly and autonomy, presentation of a UN draft of an International Convention on the Rights of the Elderly; 54 States are supporting this request but none has subscribed to it.

4) *Day of those who have been left out of holidays* Léon DUJARDIN (European Social Action Network = ESAN),

An event on 19 August 2015, with 70.000 children and their families from Africa, Asia (Nepal Children), America and Europe to show that living together is possible in a climate of solidarity.

5) “*Mediterranean Sea, a road in the sea*” Daniel Guéry (MIAMSI= Mouvement International d’Apostolat des Milieux Sociaux) – A seminar promoted by the Council of Europe Secretary General at Pozzallo, in south Sicily where the migrants arrive, on the theme: “Migration of peoples, cultures and religions”.

6) *Training session* 22 September in Brussels, on the process of the collective complaints by the Social Charter Secretariat and the INGO Conference.

VIII – Address by Mr. Régis Brillat Head of Department, European Social Charter, Executive Secretary of the European Committee of Social Rights – Head of Division, Collective Complaints and the Turin Process

“How can the INGOs continue to strengthen the Turin process?”

Mr. Brillat specified 4 major items:

1) When the Council of Europe was founded, the ambition was that all the fundamental rights had to appear in the European Convention of Human Rights and that the European Court of Justice would be competent for all the rights. However the social rights have always been treated in a lesser way to the civil and political rights despite the declarations of indivisibility and interdependency between the different classes of rights.

2) The Social Charter declares the essential rights in daily life (housing, health, social welfare), with a control mechanism on the basis of a system of reports to which the INGOs contribute in practice. The Council of Europe created the process of collective complaint which allows groups of citizens, through their NGO, to express themselves on the fact of the non respect of the charter in a country or the request to replace “Droits de l’Homme” by “Droits humains”; France has accepted it.

3) The Turin Process to implement social and economic rights in the heart of the Council of Europe values and contributes to the reform of the Social Charter.

The working group had prepared an excerpt of the texts on poverty in Europe adopted by the Committee of Ministers, the Parliamentary Assembly, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities and the Conference of INGOs. This collection of texts is a tool that would be disseminated among non-governmental organisations, associations of public authorities and the persons directly concerned by poverty:

- Effective access to law and justice by people in extreme poverty

- Improvement of the access to social rights
- Improvement of the situation of low-income workers and autonomisation of people living extreme poverty
- Combating social exclusion: towards guaranteed minimum supplies.
- Investing in family cohesion

The governments have to take action concerning these texts.

Democracy, Social Cohesion and Global Challenges Committee

Chairman Anne-Marie CHAVANON

I – InterFaith Tour

Founded in 2009 by Samuel Grzybowski, the organisation Coexister with its motto “Diverse in faith, united in action”, promotes the inter-faith dialogue by numerous initiatives in France in Europe and in the world.

Before going round the world which will take them to 48 countries, the 4 young people (Christian, Muslim, agnostic and atheist) came to present their project to the INGO Conference.

To go and meet others, to discover and initiate interfaith dialogues, such is the purpose pursued by these young people who wish to prove that by listening to the other one, even different, is a source of active co-existence of people in all countries.

II – Climate Change and Migration

The Committee has already been working on the climate in accordance with human rights for 3 years, and has widely contributed to the preparation of the 21st UN Conference on climate change to be held in Paris from 30 November-11 December 2015.

This dimension, exclusive to the Council of Europe, which puts the climate at the level of human rights, is today shared by many Heads of States, by the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and by Pope Francis in his encyclical “Laudato si”.

The climate changes have always existed but nowadays they are faster and more harmful: the climate warming that the South Pacific islands suffer will cause the migration of more one million refugees who will become without a homeland!

These forced migrations (no land, no water, starvation...) will drive towards Europe more than one million refugees. In 2015, more than 100 000 migrants went across the Mediterranean Sea mainly coming from Syria and Eretria. Shall we be reduced to protecting ourselves with barriers as in Hungary, Greece or Bulgaria? Definitely not, we have to make our public opinion, sometimes frightened by the migration problems, to evolve towards living together, and in intercultural societies. We have to create inclusive and interdependent societies.

The health stakes linked to these great migrations have also been brought up because they have not sufficiently been taken into account. In collaboration with the Parliamentary Assembly and the Council of Europe Pharmacopoeia, new rules, new standards and appropriate planning have to be set up.

IFHP (International Federation for Housing and Planning) campaigns for the universal ratification of the Convention on the Protection of Migrant Workers and their Families (ratified so far by 45 States).

III – European Local Democracy Week Council of Europe – November 2015

“Living together in multicultural societies: mutual respect, dialogue, interaction” will be the theme of the 2015 session of the European Local Democracy Week, as it has been adopted by the Congress Office at its meeting in Strasbourg on 23 March 2015 – on the eve of the 28th Session of the Congress. “This topic recalls the current events, specially the terrorist attacks in January 2015 in Paris and also in several other European cities and neighbouring countries, and the threats that

these attacks represent for the common European values”, declared Gaye Doganoglu (PPE/CCE, Turkey), Vice-President of the Congress, and political SDLE coordinator.

IV – World Forum for Democracy 2015 – Council of Europe – November 2015

Exchange of views with Eladio FERNANDEZ-GALLIANO, Head of the Democratic Initiatives Department and responsible for the event.

The World Forum for Democracy is an annual meeting organised in Strasbourg during which leaders, opinion makers, activists of civil society and business, university, media and professional representatives are invited to exchange their points of view on essential issues relative to democracy in the world.

The theme will be “Freedom versus control: for a democratic response”. Initiatives and ideas will be grouped under four themes:

- How such control kills democracy?
- Freedom from fear in a diverse society?
- Is learning for democracy adequate today?
- Is freedom of expression and information a reality?

For the first time, the Forum will not only showcase already existing initiatives, but also innovative, untested ideas to maintain and develop democracy’s basic principles in times of increasing security threats.

V – Committee Work Programme: launch of the working groups

Pole Global Challenges: 2 working groups:

- *Climate and Human Rights* (coordinator Karl DONERT (EUROGEO))
- *Economics of Health* (Coordinator Thierry MATHIEU (AIRHH) collaboration with Pharmacopoeia, OMS and Parliamentary mission)

Pole Human and Territories Cohesion: 3 working groups

- *Europe-Mediterranean area, migrations* (coordinator Jean-Claude GONON (AEDE) – Contribution Jean-Pierre HICHERI (CITI))
- *Shared Territories*, - Coordinators Gerhard ERMISCHER (CIVILSCAPE) and Bernard AUBERT (ISOCARP)
- *Active Coexistence: from living together to doing together*, Coordinators Anne-Marie CHAVANON (IFHP) and Emmanuel MICHEL (COEXISTER)
- *Creation of a network of European Intercultural Alliances*, coordinator Helene PICHON (CEPS)

Pole Governance and Participatory Democracy

- *Code of good practice for civil participation in the decision making process* Coordinator Antonella VALMORBIDA (ALDA)
- *Gender perspectives in the political and democratic process*_Coordinator Anje WIERSINGA (IFUW)

Brigitte LE GOUIS ECICW/CECIF Representative at the Council of Europe

Claudie BOUGON-GUIBERT Alternate

Claudie CORVOL Alternate

