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Granting of participatory status to the international non-governmental organisation ANDANTE

Opinion[1]
Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men
Rapporteur: Ms Sahiba GAFAROVA, Azerbaijan

A. Conclusions of the committee

1. The Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men shares the conclusion of the Committee on Culture, Science and Education that the Committee of Ministers should grant participatory status to the European Alliance of Catholic Women's Organisations, ANDANTE.

2. It also shares the view that the ANDANTE Association meets the conditions to be granted participatory status since it advocates Council of Europe values, has participated as an observer in a series of Council of Europe meetings and has contributed to the promotion of Council of Europe activities.

3. The committee wishes to stress the importance of having women's organisations represented and participating in deliberations and activities of the Council of Europe. Closer co-operation with non-governmental organisations working on enhancing the status of women in society should be sought and developed. The committee therefore encourages other non-governmental organisations working on the promotion of women's rights and gender equality to seek participatory status with the Council of Europe.

B. Proposed amendment to the draft recommendation

Amendment A (to the draft recommendation)

In the draft recommendation, replace paragraph 6.2 with the following sub-paragraph:

> *"is well represented at the European level, given that it has 22 member organisations in 13 member states of the Council of Europe;".*

C. Explanatory memorandum by Ms Gafarova, rapporteur for opinion

1. Aims of the European Alliance of Catholic Women's Organisations, ANDANTE

1. From a general point of view, the aims of the ANDANTE Association are in line with the values and principles upheld by the Council of Europe. The association promotes the presence, participation and co-responsibility of Catholic women in European society, and works for the "common good" from a female perspective and the "just participation of women in society".[2]

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1. Reference to committee: Reference 3749 of 11 March 2011. Reporting committee: Committee on Culture, Science and Education. See Doc. 12780. Opinion approved by the committee on 5 October 2011.

2. Representing 22 organisations and about 1.2 million women in 13 member states of the Council of Europe, ANDANTE represents an important outreach vector.

3. The ANDANTE Association can contribute to the promotion of the Council of Europe's activities related to gender equality when informing its members of the latest developments.

2. Main activities of ANDANTE in the field of gender equality

4. The ANDANTE Association presents itself as a "platform for Catholic women to express their ideas" and has reported on its activities linked to the Council of Europe on its website and in its newsletters. The association has been active in several fields of activity of interest for the Council of Europe, such as women and democracy, women's participation in political life, and intercultural dialogue.

5. The Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men found of particular interest the work carried out by ANDANTE to encourage women to re-enter the labour market.

6. Information sharing among members of the alliance is another key activity of the ANDANTE Association. In its newsletter, available on its website, the association includes information about the latest developments at European Union level and the activities of the Council of Europe, as well as links to the websites of both institutions.[3]

7. In October 2010, ANDANTE participated in the Oslo Forum on the Universality of Human Rights, hosted by the Conference of International Non-governmental Organisations (INGOs) of the Council of Europe in collaboration with the European Wergeland Centre for education in human rights. ANDANTE also took part in the meeting of the Conference of INGOs at the Council of Europe in January 2011. Reports on both events are available on the association's website.

8. Considering the wide access of the ANDANTE Association to local organisations working on promoting and protecting women's rights, the committee considers that ANDANTE could contribute to the promotion of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women including Domestic Violence (CETS No. 210), by sharing information about the convention with all its members.

3. Conclusions of the rapporteur

9. The ANDANTE Association has met the key requirements for obtaining participatory status, namely "mak[ing] known the work of the Council of Europe among European citizens" and being "represented at the European level", since it has a significant number of members throughout greater Europe.[4] The committee therefore agrees with the Committee on Culture, Science and Education that the decision to refuse participatory status to the ANDANTE Association should be overturned.

2. ANDANTE Statutes, www.andante-europa.net/en/images/dokuments/statutes2010e.doc.
3. www.andante-europa.net/en/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=79&Itemid=58.
4. Committee of Ministers Resolution Res(2003)8.