



Resolution 998 (1993)¹

Council of Europe's North-South Centre: role and achievements

Parliamentary Assembly

1. Acting on the Assembly's [Recommendation 1095 \(1989\)](#) on the European Public Campaign on North-South Interdependence and Solidarity, in 1989 the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe created, in the form of a partial agreement, the European Centre for Global Interdependence and Solidarity, generally known as the North-South Centre.
2. The purpose of the centre is, in the words of its statute, to "provide a framework for European cooperation for the purpose of increasing public awareness of global interdependence issues, and to promote policies of solidarity in conformity with the aims and principles of the Council of Europe", notably human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The statute also declares that "the centre shall be set up as a pilot project for an initial period of three years, at the end of which the Committee of Ministers shall be presented with a report on its achievements and its specific contribution. On the basis of this report, the Committee of Ministers shall review the mandate of the centre, and decide on its future".
3. The Assembly - in its capacity as a partner in the centre's quadripartite decision-making structure of parliaments, governments, non-governmental organisations and local and regional authorities - has participated in the evaluation of the centre's first three years of existence, and has reached the conclusions given below.
4. To a large extent, the North-South Centre has realised the tasks given to it, particularly in the fields of public information and media relations, education and training for global interdependence, and dialogue for global partnership. For this reason the North-South Centre merits continued existence. Indeed, it may be considered even more necessary now than at its creation, considering Europe's current rise in xenophobia and other tensions. In spite of initial difficulties and shortcomings, also referred to in Assembly [Resolution 982 \(1992\)](#) on the follow-up to the 1988 European Public Campaign on North-South Interdependence and Solidarity, it has made and continues to make a positive contribution to North-South understanding in Europe.
5. This notwithstanding, the centre should pay continued attention to the proposals contained in [Resolution 982](#). In particular, it should heed the resolution's call for it to "focus on its central and unique mission of promoting public awareness in Europe of North-South issues and of counteracting "Euro-egoism" ... [and to] build on human rights and democracy, the pillars of the Council of Europe - strengthening the trend toward democracy in the developing world and working toward greater tolerance in Europe". Furthermore, it should strengthen the participation of the South in the centre's life, and ensure that its national committees reach a satisfactory level of activity.
6. The Assembly welcomes the fact that fifteen member states of the Council of Europe, as well as the European Community, have so far joined the centre: Cyprus, France, Finland, Italy, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, San Marino, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and Turkey. Furthermore, several Council of Europe member states provide voluntary contributions. The Assembly expresses the strong wish that all remaining Council of Europe member states will soon join the centre.

1. Assembly debate on 12 May 1993 (34th Sitting) (see [Doc. 6812](#), report of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development, Rapporteur: Mr Hellström). Text adopted by the Assembly on 12 May 1993 (34th Sitting).



7. The centre's decision-making structure is in need of revision. In particular, the Consultative Committee should be restructured with a view to its becoming more efficient, and perhaps transformed into a consultative assembly. Furthermore the composition, frequency of meetings and working methods of the Executive Council should be adjusted, and its size reduced, in the interest of working efficiency.
8. Although the centre's quadripartite structure deserves to be maintained, ways should be sought to improve its functioning. Care should be taken not to have meetings of the centre's organs take place so often as to overburden the centre's staff and keep it from concentrating on operational activities.
9. The Assembly welcomes the centre's current and planned activities and recommends that those on trans-Mediterranean co-operation and xenophobia be considered as priority areas.
10. The Assembly resolves to devote a debate to the activities of the centre on a regular basis, for example every third year.