



Resolution 1589 (2007)¹

Co-operation between the Parliamentary Assembly and the Conference of INGOs

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Parliamentary Assembly recalls its long-standing support for civil society organisations as key players in the new international context. Such organisations, and particularly international non-governmental organisations (INGOs), play an increasingly important role in policy and decision-making processes in pluralist democracies.
2. Since 1949, the Assembly has co-operated closely with NGOs engaged in promoting European integration, defending and developing human rights and fundamental freedoms, promoting and assisting democratic transition and good governance, as well as in the Assembly's other fields of action.
3. The Assembly notes with satisfaction that co-operation with a number of INGOs has brought undeniable added value to the work of the Assembly and its committees.
4. The Assembly has always taken a keen interest in establishing fair principles and efficient rules governing the relations with INGOs and was instrumental in the granting and implementation of a new participatory status for INGOs with the Council of Europe.
5. It welcomes the fact that, in the Action Plan adopted at the 3rd Summit of the Council of Europe (Warsaw, 16 and 17 May 2005), the member states decided to "enhance the participation of NGOs in Council of Europe activities as an essential element of civil society's contribution to the transparency and accountability of democratic government".
6. The Assembly takes pride in the pioneering role of the Council of Europe in constantly developing civil society representation through a "quadrilogue", as an expression of democratic pluralism of a Europe close to its people.
7. It welcomes the active support of the Conference of INGOs in strengthening INGOs and civil society in Council of Europe member states aimed at promoting the Organisation's core principles and values.
8. The Assembly recognises and underscores the role played by INGOs as key partners in raising awareness and contributing to the signature, ratification and implementation of certain Council of Europe conventions, as well as to the development of new standard-setting instruments.
9. It notes with satisfaction that the work programme of the Conference of INGOs contains several major themes which are closely related to the priorities of the Assembly. On this basis, it is convinced that additional steps should be taken with a view to an enhanced co-operation aimed at further developing citizen participation and dialogue with civil society.
10. The Assembly intends therefore to intensify its co-operation with representative and proactive INGOs and with the Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe in particular.

1. *Text adopted by the Standing Committee, acting on behalf of the Assembly, on 23 November 2007 (see [Doc. 11441](#), report of the Political Affairs Committee, rapporteur: Mr Biberaj).*



11. Consequently, the Assembly:

11.1. invites the Bureau of the Assembly to:

11.1.1. consider setting up a platform with INGOs to exchange information, experiences and know-how on the development of certain issues, policies and co-operation, with a view to fostering dialogue between parliamentarians and INGOs;

11.1.2. consider holding an annual meeting to exchange views with the President of the Conference of INGOs and the presidents of the different thematic groups of the conference;

11.1.3. consider the possibility of inviting the President of the Conference of INGOs to address the Assembly or the Standing Committee in the framework of relevant debates;

11.2. encourages its committees to organise, in the framework of the above-mentioned platform, multidisciplinary hearings bringing together parliamentarians and INGOs on topical questions on the work programmes;

11.3. decides to explore further co-operation with specialised INGOs during election observation missions, with a view to promoting an enhanced exchange and co-ordination of information;

11.4. underlines the need to enhance the information flow between the Conference of INGOs and the Assembly and asks the Bureau to lay down guidelines to this effect.

12. The Assembly invites the Conference of INGOs, with the support of the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission), to establish a code of good practice for civil participation including internal democratic accountability.

13. The Assembly invites the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe to further enhance its co-operation with the Conference of INGOs.