



Recommendation 1893 (2009)¹

Final version

The future of the European Centre for Global Interdependence and Solidarity (North-South Centre)

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Parliamentary Assembly recalls that, on its recommendation, the European Centre for Global Interdependence and Solidarity (the North-South Centre) was set up by the Committee of Ministers in 1989, with the dual task of raising public awareness of global interdependence issues and of promoting policies of solidarity in accordance with the fundamental values of the Council of Europe. The North-South Centre was established in Lisbon in 1990.
2. The innovative and visionary character of the North-South Centre was based on the idea that the fate of Europe is intimately linked with that of the South and that the nations and peoples of the world depend on each other in a complex web of economic, social, cultural and ecological relations, demanding wide-ranging international co-operation and mutual understanding.
3. Since the fall of the Berlin Wall, the fundamental challenges of world stability lie increasingly in the South and, since the tragic events of 11 September 2001, the North-South Centre's mission of fostering dialogue between the North and the South, in a spirit of respect for human rights and democracy, has become ever more important.
4. The Assembly recalls the originality of the North-South Centre's management framework, bringing together governments, parliamentarians, local and regional authorities and civil society in a unique decision-making structure.
5. The Assembly notes that the 3rd Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe (Warsaw, 2005) recognised the importance of the North-South Centre in promoting intercultural dialogue with the neighbouring regions of Europe and that the Committee of Ministers White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue (May 2008) underlined its significance in adding an important dimension to the international efforts aimed at the promotion of intercultural learning, understanding and political dialogue within and between the different continents.
6. The Assembly welcomes the new strategy of the North-South Centre, approved by its decision-making bodies in spring 2008, setting out a new road map for its future role and activities in line with the Council of Europe's political priorities and concentrating its work on three main lines of action: education and youth, intercultural dialogue and human rights and democracy, thus increasing its effectiveness.
7. The Assembly also welcomes the fact that the North-South Centre has established new co-operation agreements with the European Commission and a number of international bodies, notably the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations.
8. The Assembly recalls its [Resolution 1506 \(2006\)](#), on the external relations of the Council of Europe, its [Resolution 1598 \(2008\)](#) and [Recommendation 1825 \(2008\)](#) on the strengthening of co-operation with the Maghreb countries, which underline the role of the North-South Centre in promoting the values of the Council

1. *Text adopted by the Standing Committee*, acting on behalf of the Assembly, on 20 November 2009 (see [Doc. 12069](#), report of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development, rapporteur: Mr Sasi; and [Doc. 12070](#), opinion of the Committee on Culture, Science and Education, rapporteur: Mrs de Melo).



of Europe outside its borders and invite the Maghreb countries to strengthen their relations and co-operation with the centre, as well as its [Resolution 1680 \(2009\)](#) on the establishment of a “partner for democracy” status with the Parliamentary Assembly, which encourages “the competent authorities of the country to become party to the relevant Council of Europe conventions and partial agreements which are open for signature and ratification ...”.

9. In this connection, the Assembly welcomes the accession of Morocco, as the first non-European country to become a member of the North-South Centre on 1 July 2009, and it encourages the other Maghreb countries to follow this example. It also welcomes the recent accession of Montenegro and Serbia, as well as Italy’s return to the institution and the official request for accession by Cape Verde.

10. Nevertheless, the Assembly regrets that hitherto only 19 Council of Europe member states have become members of the North-South Centre, together with the Holy See and Morocco.

11. Given the fact that the North-South Centre has developed into an important forum for dialogue between cultures and a bridge between Europe and its neighbouring regions, it would only be fitting that all Council of Europe member states should join and share its financing more equitably.

12. On the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the North-South Centre, the Assembly expresses the strong wish that the centre should be considerably strengthened and enlarged so as to improve its capacity to assume the role assigned to it by the Warsaw Summit and implement its new strategy.

13. Accordingly, the Assembly recommends that the Committee of Ministers:

13.1. invite all Council of Europe member states which have not yet done so to join the North-South Centre without delay;

13.2. consider transforming the North-South Centre’s present status as an enlarged partial agreement into an enlarged agreement, thus bringing in all member states and guaranteeing in this way stability and secure funding, while keeping the door open for non-member states of the Council of Europe to join;

13.3. amend, for this purpose and in order to adapt this text to new realities, Statutory Resolution (93) 51 along the lines set out in the appendix to this recommendation and following a comprehensive consultative process which should involve notably the Parliamentary Assembly, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, the Conference of International Non-governmental Organisations of the Council of Europe and the European Union institutions concerned.

Appendix

Proposals for a new resolution on the European Centre for Global Interdependence and Solidarity (North-South Centre)

The Committee of Ministers,

Having regard to the Statute of the Council of Europe adopted on 5 May 1949;

Recalling Resolution (89) 14 establishing a European Centre for Global Interdependence and Solidarity, adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 16 November 1989 at its 85th Session;

Recalling Resolution (93) 51 confirming the continuation of the European Centre for Global Interdependence and Solidarity, adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 21 October 1993, at the 500th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies;

Having regard to Statutory Resolution (93) 28 on partial and enlarged agreements, adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 14 May 1993, at its 92nd session;

Having regard to [Recommendation 1893 \(2009\)](#) on the future of the European Centre for Global Interdependence and Solidarity (North-South Centre), adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly on 20 November 2009, reaffirming the added value of the work of the North-South Centre and calling for its enlargement to all Council of Europe member states;

Having regard to the positive opinions expressed by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe and by the Conference of International Non-governmental Organisations of the Council of Europe, as well as the consultations held with the European Union institutions concerned;

Recognising the efforts of the North-South Centre to reflect adequately and consistently the Council of Europe's political priorities as established at the 3rd Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe in Warsaw (16-17 May 2005);

Acknowledging the important work of the North-South Centre in implementing the Council of Europe Strategy for the Development of Intercultural Dialogue, adopted in Faro (Portugal) in October 2005, and the recommendations of the White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue (2008);

Welcoming the growing and positive collaboration between the North-South Centre and regional and international organisations such as the European Union (in the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Council of Europe and the European Union, signed in May 2007) and the United Nations;

Considering the relevance of the North-South Centre in an increasingly complex international environment and its unique mission of providing a framework for North-South co-operation to increase public awareness of global interdependence issues, promoting policies of solidarity in conformity with the aims and principles of the Council of Europe and strengthening global commitments to universally shared values;

Welcoming the strong and indefectible support from the Government of Portugal since the establishment of the North-South Centre,

Reaffirms the importance and relevance of the North-South Centre, which shall henceforth function as an enlarged agreement to be managed autonomously as an institution set up by the Council of Europe and subject to the provisions contained in the appended revised statute, which shall enter into force upon adoption of the present resolution.

Proposals for a revised statute of the European Centre for Global Interdependence and Solidarity

Article 1 – Aims and functions

1.1. The aims of the European Centre for Global Interdependence and Solidarity (the Centre) are:

- to provide a framework for European co-operation for the purpose of increasing public awareness of global interdependence issues;
- to promote policies of solidarity in conformity with the aims and principles of the Council of Europe; and

- to promote universally shared values by fostering dialogue and co-operation between Europe, its neighbouring regions and the rest of the world.

1.2. The Centre will thus serve to:

- a. maintain and further enhance a process of quadripartite communication and co-operation between parliamentarians, governments, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and local and regional authorities;
- b. provide a framework, a sounding board and a launching platform for, and give a European dimension to, initiatives by member governments and other actors in the area of multilateral co-operation for sustainable development;
- c. improve education and information on the fundamental issues of global interdependence and solidarity, and promote liaison between the competent government ministries and services of the member states as regards their public-awareness work on these issues, both directly and in their support of NGOs;
- d. provide a framework for dialogue and co-operation between the Council of Europe and non-European countries or regions, in particular through education, youth co-operation and intercultural dialogue;
- e. strengthen co-operation and contacts between NGOs from the North and South, active in promoting a better understanding of the reality of interdependence and in pursuing solidarity in their various dimensions;
- f. encourage and promote similar contacts at the level of parliaments and local and regional authorities, building on its quadrilogue network;
- g. create an interface between Europe and the South to generate new ideas and proposals for constructive relations and to act as a think tank on interdependence issues;
- h. develop working relations with the United Nations system, the European Union prior to its accession as provided for under Article 3.4 below, and other regional and international institutions and organisations active in relation to global interdependence.

Article 2 – Location of the Centre

The Centre's premises are located in Lisbon by courtesy of the Government of Portugal.

Article 3 – Membership of the Centre

3.1. All member states of the Council of Europe shall be members of the Centre. [or]

3.1. All member states of the Council of Europe are entitled to become members of the Centre.

3.2. Any other Contracting Party to the European Cultural Convention may join the Centre at any time by notification addressed to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe.

3.3. Other states may be invited to accede to the Centre by a decision of the Committee of Ministers taken by the majority provided for in Article 20.d of the Statute of the Council of Europe.

3.4. The European Union is invited to join the Centre.

Article 4 – Organs of the Centre

The organs of the Centre are:

- a. The Executive Council and the Bureau;
- b. The Committee of Representatives of Members of the Centre.

Article 5 – Executive Council

5.1. The members of the Executive Council shall be designated for a period of three years on the following basis:

- a. twelve representatives of governments of members of the Enlarged Agreement setting up the Centre, as designated by the Committee of Representatives of Members. These should include appropriate representation from the South;

- b. four parliamentarians, of whom two shall be designated by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, and two by the European Parliament;
- c. four members representing local or regional authorities, of whom two shall be designated by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe and two by the Committee of the Regions of the European Union;
- d. six members, of whom two shall be designated by the Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe, and four by the Executive Council following proposals by the Bureau, selected from international non-governmental organisations active in the fields of development, environment and human rights education, intercultural dialogue and youth;
- e. the Secretary General of the Council of Europe or his/her representative;
- f. a representative of the European Commission;
- g. a representative of the Secretary General of the United Nations.

5.2. The Executive Council shall, within the limits of its financial resources made available for that purpose, decide on the programme of activities of the Centre on the basis of proposals made by the Centre's Executive Director and taking into account programme recommendations made by the Committee of Representatives of Members of the Centre.

5.3. The programme and budget of the Centre shall be adopted by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast and a majority of the members of the Executive Council.

5.4. The Executive Council shall meet twice a year in Lisbon or in Strasbourg.

Article 6 – Bureau

6.1. The Executive Council shall elect from among its members a Bureau composed of eight members ensuring that three of them are governmental representatives (including one from the South) and that parliamentarians, NGOs and local and regional authorities are each represented on the Bureau as well as the European Commission and the Secretary General of the Council of Europe. Among these members, it shall elect a chairperson and three vice-chairpersons representing the different dimensions of the quadrilogue.

6.2. The Bureau shall monitor the preparation and execution of programmes and prepare the meetings of the Executive Council, with the assistance of the Centre's secretariat.

Article 7 – Committee of Representatives of Members of the Centre

7.1. Meetings of the Committee of Representatives of Members of the Centre shall be convened in Strasbourg twice a year for the purpose of establishing the financial resources available for the Centre's regular programmes and to determine the contributions to the operational expenditure of the Centre, on the basis of indications from the Executive Council regarding the programmes and envisaged activities.

7.2. During these meetings, the representatives may also pledge voluntary contributions for specific programmes to be carried out by the Centre;

7.3. The representatives shall examine and agree on proposed contributions and grants from other donors to support the Centre and its activities.

Article 8 – Secretariat of the Centre

8.1. The secretariat of the Centre shall be headed by an Executive Director. The number of staff shall be determined by the Executive Council in the light of the tasks and the agreed programmes of the Centre, and subject to approval by the Committee of Representatives of Members of the Centre.

8.2. The secretariat shall in particular:

- a. prepare programmes for the implementation of the aims and functions listed under Article 1;
- b. serve as a liaison centre and platform for information on activities concerning global interdependence;
- c. constitute basic documentation on interdependence issues, in contact with universities and appropriate centres in Portugal and elsewhere;

- d. maintain working relations with the United Nations system, the European Union and other regional and international institutions and organisations, as may be relevant to the programmes of the Centre;
- e. provide meeting facilities for the organs of the Centre and for activities in pursuance of its aims.

Article 9 – Financial Arrangements

9.1. Expenditure relating to the implementation of common secretariat expenditure and an allocation to the programme account shall be covered by the regular budget of the Enlarged Agreement establishing the Centre, within the limits agreed by the Committee of Representatives of Members of the Centre and governed by the financial rules as foreseen for Enlarged Agreement budgets of the Council of Europe;

9.2. Additional expenditure relating to programmes, consultants and temporary staff recruited on the basis of specific needs arising from such programmes shall be covered through a special account provided by voluntary contributions made available by members of the Centre, the European Union and/or other donors to fund these programmes.

9.3. The travel and subsistence expenses of persons attending meetings of the Executive Council shall be paid by the member state or the organisation concerned, unless otherwise decided by the Executive Council on the basis of special purpose allocations specified in the budget of the Centre.

9.4. The travel and subsistence expenses of persons attending meetings of the Committee of Representatives of Members of the Centre shall be paid by their respective governments or institutions.

9.5. Additional expenditure arising from the organisation of statutory meetings elsewhere than at the seat of the Council of Europe or the premises of the Centre shall be borne by the host country.