



What's new for MIAMSI at the Council of Europe?

The Council of Europe Parliament's spring session was held in Strasbourg from 18 to 22 April 2016. Only a few of the INGO Conference working groups met, together with the Christian INGO group.

Note in particular:

At the Parliament

- ✓ **The visit from Mr. Jean Claude Juncker**, European Commission President, who spoke on the relationship between 28-member Europe and 47 countries (see attachment). He recalled the issues and stressed some particular points such as receiving migrants.

A few excerpts:

However, people who have been around in Europe for a long time know that things that are supposed to be easy do not always get you to where you want to go. There can be nothing more ambitious or difficult than seeking to bring together liberty, equality and diversity, but we believe that we have to follow that difficult path because prosperity and justice move together hand in hand. As the French philosopher Blaise Pascal so rightly said, prosperity and social justice have to go together – there is no other way.

.../...

We agree about the essential things. We all say no to racism, no to the rejection of other people and no to stupid attacks that, sadly, are occurring increasingly in Europe today.

.../...

I think we can be proud of Europe's post-war history. In our continent, where war and violence prevailed in a brutal form, Europe is now associated with peace. Following the changes in central and eastern Europe, those parts of the continent have grown into Europe. We can therefore look with reassurance, knowing on what firm foundations the European house is built.

- ✓ **Many exchanges on the situation of migrants in the Balkans and on the conditions of the EU/Turkey agreement of March 18, 2016**

With INGOs: working groups and meeting of Christian INGOs

- *Extreme Poverty and Human Rights Group:*

- ✓ The ratification of the **Revised Social Charter** in each of our countries is still on the agenda with the legal tools that go with it (Turin Process).
- ✓ Coordination work is under way between the European Union and the Council of Europe to strengthen the "**Pillar of Social Rights.**" An emergency at a time when finance comes first!
- ✓ Preparation of the 17 October day, which focuses on children and youth:
"Children and young people facing poverty in Europe. What are our INGOs doing for and with children? "

- *Human Rights, Co-development and Migration Working Group:*

- ✓ The Human Rights Steering Committee adopted the text "**Human Rights and Business**" which aims to protect workers, children, indigenous peoples and human rights defenders vis-à-vis

companies in their country or in other countries where they are present. This text is back-to-back with an identical document issued by the UN.

- ✓ Preparing a side event on this issue by developing businesses that respect human rights, denouncing those who neglect them and offering **tools to improve difficult situations**.

- ***Europe and the Mediterranean Group*** :

- ✓ Exchanges on migration-related news.
- ✓ The European Union/Turkey agreement.
- ✓ Protecting migrants pursuant to major risk prevention and management. Speech given by MIAMSI - Europe.
- ✓ The actions of various INGOs to be developed and structured around institutional actions.

- ***CINGO Group: Council of Europe-accredited Christian INGOs:***

- ✓ **INGO participation in the upcoming World Democracy Congress** from 7 to 9 November 2016 in Strasbourg (Council of Europe) Topic:

Education and democracy: how to reduce inequalities?

INGOs focused on Education will offer workshops. Reflections centered on the place of religions in intercultural dialogue for better understanding of the world will also be offered in various forms.

- ✓ Echoes of actions and reflections on receiving migrants.
- ✓ Vigilance on the next side event entitled "Women and religions."
- ✓ Participation in upcoming meetings on the recent post-synod exhortation "Amoris laetitia".

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