



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

During the autumn session of the Council of Europe Parliament in Strasbourg from 28 September to 2 October 2015, the working groups of the various committees met to continue their exchanges and projects:

- **The fight against poverty:** the meeting was exclusively devoted to preparing the 16 October eradication of poverty day.
- **Migration and the Mediterranean:** exchanges between INGOs and preparing a position paper for the Chair of the INGO Conference. The group stressed the importance of working in coordination with the various bodies involved: political, social, religious, civil society in general.
- **Human Rights, co-development and migration:** preparing a Council of Europe Side Event to draw attention to the need for consistency between fighting corruption, development aid and ultinationals' attitude vis-à-vis developing countries and their inhabitants. This situation also has effects on migration. A necessary business ethics code is essential (see references to documents from the CoE Human Rights Committee and UN papers on the subject). our UN representatives have been asked to see how we can pool our actions/positions.
- **Living together in Europe:** The central topic of this work is collecting good practices in education for intercultural dialogue. Testimonials enable us to rise to the challenges and consider how to address them in the first decades of this century.

At the same time we were able to take part in several meetings and make some contacts:

- **A climate change round table:** many speakers (including Pope Francis's proposals) helped to better appropriate the position taken by the INGO Conference which emphasizes the effects of climate change on basic rights such as life, dignity and decent living conditions, security, health, water supply, protection of property, nationality, freedom of movement among others.
- The quarterly meeting of **Christian INGOs** accredited to the Council of Europe. The following issues were discussed: Laudato Si and COP 21 - Migrations - World Poverty Day.
- An exchange with the Human Rights Department to **prepare the migration conference in Pozzallo**, preparing the statement from the Human Rights Department representative.
- A first contact with the Deputy Executive Secretary of the Major Hazards Working Group, **migrants** are considered a **vulnerable population** to be protected.

In the days that followed, three meetings were held with effective MIAMSI - Europe participation:

1. A meeting of Catholic INGOs at the Holy See's Permanent Mission in Strasbourg:

- The encyclical *Laudato si* considered as a model of systemic analysis of the world situation
 - *Laudato si* and the Bull on mercy: the same caring attitude to take vis-à-vis the "common house" and the Humans who inhabit it.
 - A reflection on the need to group Catholic INGOs together
2. The second meeting of the working group on "**migrants, asylum seekers and refugees as part of major risk prevention and management**" where the Pozzallo symposium was presented extensively. (Brussels 22 October 2015)
3. The annual **international anti-poverty day** (16 October).
Two MIAMSI-Europe representatives took part in the ceremony on the forecourt of the Council of Europe Human Rights Hall and attended the roundtables on:
- the impact of poverty on children's health
 - the impact of poverty on children's schooling and access to culture
 - The lives of children and young people
 - Support for Children

For its part, the Council of Europe Parliament dealt with several important files (documents attached) :

- **Migration** :
 - After Dublin: the need for a *genuine European asylum system*
 - Transit countries: meeting the new migration and asylum challenges
 - Letter from the Secretary General to the 47 heads of Council of Europe governments
 - Document on protecting migrants and asylum seekers (states' main legal obligations under the Council of Europe conventions)
- **Freedom of religion and living together** in a democratic society

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