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**Working Session 16/17: "Promotion of tolerance, non-discrimination
and mutual respect and understanding"**

Contribution of the Council of Europe

Introduction

As early as 1954, the European Cultural Convention defined mutual understanding as the central goal of co-operation in the field of culture. Originally focused on understanding between nations, this concern has progressively widened to include migrants, national minorities, linguistic and cultural communities, and religious groups. It has also become linked to the goal of social cohesion and the inclusion of all groups at risk of disadvantage.

The increase in recent years of social and political conflicts exacerbated by the exploitation of cultural differences gives even greater importance to the need for a "culture of peace". High-level political statements, notably the declarations and action plans of the Council of Europe Heads of State and Government (Vienna Summit of 1993, Warsaw Summit of 2005), have repeatedly underlined the absolute necessity for tolerance and good-neighbourliness within the rich diversity out of which Europe's identity is made, under a shared commitment to the human rights of all.

As a result, a large number of the Council of Europe's activities in education, culture, heritage, sport and youth focus on fostering intercultural dialogue combating racism and xenophobia, mutual understanding and values such as tolerance, respect for others and participation in society. This document contains information on the most important programmes and activities in the Directorate General IV which contribute to these values.

I. Intercultural dialogue

Individuals and communities need to be provided with tools and models for real dialogue on the sensitive issues that separate, but should not divide them. The Council of Europe projects in cultural policy, education and youth on the theme of intercultural dialogue, cover both the creation of a general openness to dialogue and specific action for conflict prevention and reconciliation.

1. Intercultural Dialogue – the way ahead

“Intercultural Dialogue – the way ahead” was the topic of a Ministerial Conference organised in Faro, Portugal, on 27-28 October 2006, within the framework of the Portuguese Presidency of the Committee of Ministers. The Conference brought the celebrations for the 50th Anniversary of the European Cultural Convention to a close.

The main focus of the Conference was the promotion of intercultural dialogue within European societies and between Europe and neighbouring regions – the southern shores of the Mediterranean, the Middle East and Central Asia. The conference adopted the “Faro Declaration on the Council of Europe’s Strategy for Developing Intercultural Dialogue”. In addition, the Secretary General signed with UNESCO a “Declaration of intent on the setting up of an open platform of inter-institutional cooperation for intercultural dialogue”, as well as cooperation agreements with the “Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures” and the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO).

On 7 and 8 September 2006, an international conference in Nizhniy Novgorod on intercultural and interfaith dialogue, organised by the Russian Federation in conjunction with the Council of Europe, brought together some 300 government representatives, experts and leading figures from religious communities all across Europe. Those taking part looked at the challenges and opportunities of cultural diversity, the religious dimension of intercultural dialogue and the contribution the media can make to greater mutual understanding. The conference ended with the adoption of the Volga Forum Declaration, in which the representatives of the Council of Europe and religious organisations from across Europe came out in favour of a regular dialogue on the issues of human rights, social cohesion and cultural diversity.

Over the two days' discussion, the conference participants stressed how important it was for representatives of religious communities to take an active part at international level, as they generally did at national level, in the debate on the topical issues with which Europe is confronted.

The declaration, which highlights the fundamental principles of freedom of religion, conscience and expression enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights, calls on the media to act responsibly by reflecting the diversity of society and encouraging greater mutual understanding and respect for human dignity.

The competent authorities of the 46 Council of Europe member states, including local and regional authorities, are also encouraged to take rapid action to adopt policies setting out effective tools and measures to foster the democratic management of cultural diversity. The Volga Region provides an example of dialogue and co-operation among various ethnic groups and religious communities.

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2. White Paper on intercultural dialogue

The Council of Europe has made it a priority to promote intercultural and inter-religious dialogue in order to ensure not only a better understanding among cultures but also cohesion and stability in our societies, on the basis of the principle of accepting others, with their differences, and the principle of freedom of expression. To this end, the Council of Europe is to publish a White Paper on intercultural dialogue.

The concept of “the White Paper on intercultural dialogue” is based on the view that intercultural dialogue is one tool – among several others – contributing to the democratic management of (cultural) diversity within European societies and Europe’s relations with neighbouring regions. It can also make an important contribution to the prevention of tensions. The White Paper is thus placed in a larger political context and marks the beginning of a reflection process, which the Action Plan, adopted at the Third Summit, invites the Council of Europe to elaborate and concentrate upon in years to come, in order to build “a more humane and inclusive Europe”. The preparation of the White Paper and the outcome of this process will be an important occasion to define the role of the Council of Europe and the added value of its activities in the area of intercultural dialogue and of the promotion of tolerance.

Basic references of the White Paper are the universally recognised human rights as well as the “Faro Declaration on the Council of Europe’s Strategy for Developing Intercultural Dialogue” and its related instruments. The White Paper will review the conceptual and operational achievements of the Council of Europe that are relevant to intercultural dialogue from an intersectoral, multi-disciplinary point of view, and will propose orientations for future action by the Council of Europe. The religious dimension of intercultural dialogue will be given appropriate attention. The White Paper will, in particular:

- identify ways and means to respond to the need for intensified intercultural dialogue within and between European societies, so as to enhance the ability for everyone to contribute to, and benefit from, the cultural diversity of our continent in daily life and to promote active citizenship especially among young people and ensure the cohesion of our societies;
- identify ways and means to respond to the need for structured dialogue between Europe and its neighbours as a means to further co-operation and to promote mutual understanding and to prevent tensions;
- provide policy makers at international, national, regional and local levels, and civil society organisations with guidelines for the development and implementation of intercultural dialogue, and with the necessary analytical and methodological tools and standards indispensable for successful practice.

Following open consultations with the interinstitutional partners of the Council of Europe (including the OSCE), civil society, representatives of minorities and religious communities in forthcoming months, the White Paper will be published in November 2007.

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3. Intercultural Dialogue and Conflict Prevention

This project which was launched in 2002, aimed to secure intercultural dialogue, including the aspect of religious diversity. Its main objective was to provide policymakers, civil society and cultural actors with instruments and models for effective cultural action and co-operation to support dialogue in order to prevent violent conflict, manage and control conflicts and favour post-conflict reconciliation.

A series of Forums have been organised within this framework and, in 2006, the Third Intercultural Forum focused on “promoting intercultural dialogue between

generations” took place in Bucharest, on 17-18 March 2006 within the framework of the Romanian Presidency of the Committee of Ministers.

The programme of the Forum was constructed around four plenary sessions:

- educating young people for intercultural understanding;
- understanding the new cultural territories of young people;
- understanding the role of memory and identities in intercultural dialogue;
- developing intercultural understanding in young people in their daily life.

The Forum brought together 100 participants from all the Council of Europe of Europe member States. A financial contribution was received from the Japan Foundation and two Japanese speakers took part in the programme.

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<http://www.coe.int/InterculturalDialogue>

4. *The Kyiv Initiative (KI) for democratic development through culture*

This regional programme of co-operation in culture and heritage, devoted to Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, was initiated in September 2005 during the 5th (enlarged) Ministerial Colloquy of the countries participating in the STAGE (Support for Transition in the Arts and Culture in Greater Europe) Project, as a means to assist these countries in addressing the challenges of post-Soviet transition.

The Kyiv Initiative reflects modern understanding of culture, heritage, environment protection and urban planning as interconnected components of a comprehensive policy for sustainable community development. Its main objective is to contribute to sustainable cultural, social and economic development through regional co-operation and a trans-sectoral approach in the management of culture and cultural heritage.

Actions within the framework of the programme are structured according to three components: 1. Capacity building; 2. Pilot projects on transversal themes; 3. Public awareness. From January 2006, consultations have been carried out by the Council of Europe Secretariat with the Kyiv Initiative participating countries, in order to identify the concrete activities to be carried out within main areas of co-operation, which include: cultural policies information systems, cultural heritage legislation, cinema policy, cultural routes, building up of cultural networks, etc.

As for the methods of their implementation, the Council of Europe promotes a transversal and integrated approach, through the setting up, in each participating country, of an appropriate management body at the national, regional and local levels. The aim is to ensure effective coordination and synergies between all stakeholders and thus foster an integrated approach towards the objectives of sustainable development.

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5. *The challenge of intercultural education today*

The Council of Europe has dealt with many aspects of intercultural education over the years. In order to consolidate this longstanding work and, in particular, to promote

intercultural and interreligious dialogue, the project "The challenge of intercultural education today" was launched in 2002. It aims to raise the awareness of decision makers and teaching staff of the implications of the religious dimension of intercultural education, as well as of good practice, new methods and approaches of intercultural education in general, both in school and out-of-school education. Thus the project will attempt to be both theoretically innovative and practice orientated.

Two major achievements are expected:

- enabling individual Europeans to engage in intercultural dialogue based on mutual tolerance and understanding on matters involving religion;
- providing policymakers and practitioners in formal and non-formal education with concepts and tools for supporting the above goal.

The outputs of the project will include, *inter alia*, case studies (school practice), methodological guidelines, and recommendations to governments.

A Reference Book, to be published in 2006, is the main outcome of the project.

The main purpose of the Reference Book is to aid teachers and other education practitioners to address religious diversity based on respect for human rights. In concrete terms, the various methods and inspiring practices presented in it focus on the development of intercultural competence in the case of pupils with widely differing social, cultural and religious backgrounds. This generic competence presupposes, in turn, other specific competences:

- sensitivity to cultural facts and sources of human diversity;
- ability to communicate and enter into dialogue;
- skills required for learning to live together such as teamwork, cooperative learning, empathic communication, peaceful conflict resolution, confidence building;
- capacity to explore symbols and deal with sensitive and controversial issues;
- critical thinking and individual deliberation.

The Reference Book is the outcome of cooperation between various practitioners (teachers and other educational staff, teacher-trainers) and researchers. Its origins lie in an extensive survey on the intercultural approach to European diversity which brought together representatives of most Council of Europe member states. The responses were completed by syntheses drawn up by researchers from universities, specialised institutions or the civil society.

The link between research and practice is plain to see in the structure of the Reference Book, which includes:

- a chapter dedicated to the concepts which are fundamental to the various methods and learning experiences;
- a set of intercultural learning experiences devoted to teachers, dealing with religious diversity (e.g. cooperative learning, emphatic communication, intercultural sensitivity, deliberative learning, conflict management, multiperspectivity);
- examples of how to apply intercultural education principles (participation, inclusion and respect for human rights) in different educational settings: in public and faith schools, formal and non-formal learning, management and school governance;
- a set of innovative practices collected on the basis of a survey carried out in member states.

Consequently, intercultural education is addressed at three levels:

- at the level of education policies, in the form of clear-cut education aims;
- at the level of institutions, especially through democratic governance, student participation, open learning settings and inclusive policies;
- at teaching-staff level, through the methods that make up the very substance of the "Guide".

The most extensive part of the guide is devoted to teaching and learning activities. We are referring to the second and fourth sections, which include concrete examples of intercultural learning activities in a context of religious and cultural diversity. The purpose of these activities is to encourage teachers and other categories of educational practitioners (mediators, counsellors, mentors, and learning facilitators) to construct situations of dialogue, cooperative learning and team building.

Unlike traditional approaches to intercultural education, promoted especially in the '80s, these methods focus not on the link between the dominant culture (e.g. dominant religion) and minority cultures (e.g. minority religions), but instead on learning to live together. The reference entity is no longer the community and the differences between several cultural communities but the manner of resolving common issues and working on joint projects. These experiences are assimilated with the aid of briefing and intercultural awareness-raising sessions which clarify the values and regulations that make learning to live together and intercultural dialogue possible.

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http://www.coe.int/t/e/cultural_co-operation/education/Intercultural_education/Intro.asp#TopOfPage

6. Youth building peace and intercultural dialogue

The new priorities for the youth sector (2006-2008) stem from work done between 2003 and 2005, in particular: "human rights education and intercultural dialogue" and "social cohesion and inclusion of young people".

Activities of these projects include an Advanced Training for Trainers in Human Rights Education, a seminar on "Realities of Young Refugees, IDP in Europe Today" (in cooperation with the UNHCR), a forum on conflict transformation, a long term training course on "Intercultural Dialogue in South Caucasus". In the near future, a booklet on "Conflict transformation: the role of youth organisations" will be published.

A number of activities are carried out within a Partnership Agreement with the European Commission on Euro-Mediterranean Co-operation in the Field of Youth Training and non-formal Education.

A European campaign "All Different, All Equal" will be held from 2006-2007. The aim of the European Campaign for Diversity and Participation is to encourage and enable young people to participate in building peaceful societies based on diversity and inclusion, in a spirit of respect, tolerance, and mutual understanding. In its undertaking, it will highlight the links with the 1995 Campaign against Racism, Anti-Semitism, Xenophobia and Intolerance; to this end, the slogan selected for the Campaign is that of the previous initiative, namely: "All Different, All Equal".

The partners involved in this Campaign are the Council of Europe, mainly the Directorate of Youth and Sport (DYS) and the European Youth Forum. Its activities will be undertaken essentially by young people in partnership with public authorities; the target group of the Campaign is the civil society, both at European and national

levels. However, the Campaign should of course reach out to as many young people in Europe as possible, with a particular focus on those who are victims of discrimination, and in particular through activities involving schools.

The Campaign starts in 2006, with a continuation of its activities and follow-up in 2007.”

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II. Education for democratic culture

This programme aims at making an important contribution to the main objectives of the Council of Europe that is strengthening democracy, human rights and the rule of law. It addresses areas in which the education process should promote the learning of key skills for a democratic culture on a lifelong basis: citizenship and human rights education, history, languages and intercultural education.

1. Language Policies for Democratic Citizenship and Social Inclusion

In the follow-up to the [3rd Council of Europe Summit](#), this medium term project (2006 – 2009) addresses social cohesion and democratic citizenship; three broad domains: analysis and development of policies for plurilingualism; European standards for quality and transparency; language policies for the education of minorities.

Language education policies should promote plurilingualism and lifelong learning in order to foster intercultural competences and thus facilitate communication with others in all domains. The main innovation concerns a new project on policies and standards for languages of education / mother tongue.

The activities include, among others

- assistance to member states in reviewing their language education policies (Language Education Policy Profiles);
- development of common European standards for foreign and second languages;
- development of guidelines related to language requirements for adult migrants in relation to residence or citizenship;
- development of tools for improving intercultural understanding and dialogue;
- development of curriculum standards for the Romani language in education.

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2. Education policies and practice for democratic citizenship and human rights

The Project on Education for Democratic Citizenship launched in 1997 aims to support and promote educational policy and practice that help young people and adults to play an active part in democratic life and exercise their rights and responsibilities in society. Respect for the rights of the others and intercultural competencies and are an integral part of the programme.

The Committee of Ministers Recommendation (2002) 12 on Education for Democratic Citizenship outlines the main EDC principles and provides guidelines for

the member states. The publication "All European Study on EDC policies" looks at the existing policies and practices in this field and makes a number of recommendations. A collection of manuals for decision makers and education practitioners (EDC Pack) was developed. A network of EDC coordinators nominated by the member States provides a link between national and European activities. A number of bilateral programmes were put into practice in co-operation with the European Commission to promote EDC/HRE in the new member states. In 2005, the European Year of Citizenship through Education launched by the Council of Europe was strongly supported in most European countries.

The CoE Programme of Activities 2006-2009 on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights (EDC/HRE) focuses on the following priorities: Education policy development and implementation for democratic citizenship and social inclusion; New roles and competences of teachers and other educational staff in EDC/HRE; and Democratic governance of educational institutions.

As a follow up to the Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation "Education for Europe", a feasibility study on "framework policy documents" on EDC/HRE will be prepared by a group of experts by the end of 2006.

The feasibility of setting up a European center or a European network of centers on teacher training in EDC/HRE is currently being explored. Should such a centre be set up, it would also deal with other priority issues, such as intercultural education including the religious dimension of this education and history teaching.

Following a recommendation of the 1st NGOs Forum on EDC/HRE (Warsaw, 2005), it is foreseen to organise the 2nd NGOs Forum, possibly in 2007. The objectives of this event will be to present the CoE work on EDC/HRE, to strengthen co-operation between the CoE and NGOs and to share examples of good practice. One question that clearly needs a debate is how to link formal and non-formal education in EDC/HRE.

The Tool on Democratic Governance at School will be finalised in 2006. The Tool provides practical guidelines for school leaders, teachers and all those interested in promoting democratic practice in educational institutions. The CoE will continue to work on Quality Assurance in EDC/HRE. The Tool on this subject has been translated in Albanian, Azerbaijani, Bulgarian, French, Romanian and Ukrainian. Possible adaptations of the tool for particular audiences and countries are currently under discussion. It is also foreseen to test the tool in a network of schools, through co-operation with the German Foundation "Erinnerung, Verantwortung und Zukunft". A school manual on children's rights should be ready by the end of the year.

The CoE co-operates with the European Commission in the framework of a research project on "Active Citizenship for Democracy". The aim of the project is to propose indicators that could be agreed by the EU member states. Relevant data will then be collected, analysed and published, in order to assist governments and parliaments in developing and promoting relevant educational policy and practice. On 20-21 September 2006 the initial findings of the project will be presented in Ispra (Italy) at a conference "Towards indicators on active citizenship".

The CoE assists the UN in monitoring the implementation of the first phase of the Action Plan of the World Programme for Human Rights Education (2005-2007).

Other important areas of work will include the issues of pupils' assessment in EDC/HRE, strengthening the links between formal and non-formal education, and dissemination of the best practice. For example, discussions are currently under way on possible co-operation with ODIHR in the preparation of a compendium of good practice in human rights and tolerance education.

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3. History education and its contribution to democratic society and citizenship

As a follow up of Recommendation (2001) 15 of the Committee of Ministers on "History Teaching in the 21st Century in Europe" and in the framework of the work on strengthening and developing intercultural dialogue, being done in all sectors of the Council of Europe, its Steering Committee for Education has decided to run a project on "The Image of the Other in History Teaching" from 2006 to 2009.

This project aims at drafting general guidelines for policies on history teaching within the framework of intercultural dialogue; proposing strategies, methods and instruments which can be used to turn these general guidelines into specific projects; and making proposals on the training, not just of history teachers, but of all those involved in the history learning process.

For that purpose three themes have been selected:

- Multiple images, shared destinies? - Learning history in a multicultural society;
- Images of others and images of ourselves in the context of globalisation;
- Images of the other in conflict and post-conflict situations: learning different histories as a mean of rebuilding confidence.

Seminars will be organised on each of the themes followed by a European conference, presenting the findings.

Regional and bilateral initiatives are being developed on the development of new methodologies and the implementation of multiperspectivity in history lessons (Tbilissi Initiative, Cyprus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova, Russian Federation...)

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4. Teaching remembrance – Education for the prevention of crimes against humanity

This project also has its origin in Recommendation (2001) 15 "History teaching in 21st Century Europe". According to this Recommendation, history teaching must not be an instrument of ideological manipulation, of propaganda or used for the promotion of intolerant and ultra-nationalistic, xenophobic, racist or anti-semitic ideas. On the contrary, everything possible should be done in the educational sphere to prevent recurrence or denial of the devastating events that have marked this century.

Consequently, the objectives of this project are

- to assist member States in organising a "Day of Remembrance" in memory of the Holocaust, all the genocides and crimes against humanity that left their

mark on the 20th Century. The various themes and dates chosen should be linked to the history of the countries concerned;

to pass knowledge of these tragedies on to pupils and educate them in the prevention of crimes against humanity. In order to achieve these aims, teaching material will be produced, teachers will be trained in these subjects and given the possibility to exchange information and experiences.

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III. Education of Roma/Gypsy children in Europe

As regards the education of Roma there are different activities developed in the framework of the project "Education of Roma children in Europe" – Directorate of Education - Division for the European Dimension of Education.

Due to the specific situation of Roma, who face educational, social, cultural and economic problems all at the same time, the education is not considered in isolation, but in relation to cultural identity and heritage, integration into society, preparation for employment and involvement in the community.

As part of the Project, the Council of Europe has designed an education pack for Roma pre-school children. This pack prepares Roma and Traveller children who have not attended nursery school and are neither ready nor sufficiently mature for the first primary school class to start school so that they do not fall too far behind.

Through the Council of Europe's in-service training programme Pestalozzi about 40 training seminars are held each year, some of them on Roma issues (use of teaching material, Roma culture and history in schools, Roma school mediators, etc.). Planned seminars for 2006 are :

- Training seminar for teachers on Roma history and culture, Vienna, Austria, 18-21 October 2006 ;
- The Education of Roma children in Estonia, Tallin, Estonia, 4-7 December 2006.

The Council of Europe is producing a Guide for Roma school mediators. Positions such as that of Roma mediator or school assistant can be made more effective by promoting high-quality initial training geared to the needs on the ground. This Guide will contain an occupational profile, training modules for mediators and other essential practical information.

The Council of Europe is producing teaching material suitable for use by Roma and non-Roma teachers working with classes made up of both Roma and other children. This material, in the form of publications or sets of educational fact sheets covering a number of topics, such as history, culture, cinema, literature and theatre, will foster mutual understanding of differences, which is the basic principle underlying the intercultural approach. It will be used in both formal education and non-formal educational settings such as cultural centres or museums of Roma culture and history. Some of this material can be used in the community by children and their parents.

As part of the Council of Europe's project on the education of Roma children, representatives of the Roma community are involved at each stage, and play an active role in the implementation of policies concerning them. The idea of involving

community representatives in developing the project is in keeping with the more general principle of encouraging direct participation by, and empowerment of, members of these communities.

The Language Policy Division has started a medium term project that aims to elaborate a common framework of reference for the development of Romani language curricula, drawing as far as possible on those used in member states and adapting to this effect the structure of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) to the specific situation of Romani language use in society and its place in education systems. Among the expected results there is also a proposal for a European Language Portfolio model as well as a Guide for teachers. The work has benefited from a voluntary contribution from Finland. The European Roma and Travellers Forum has followed the work with interest and is kept informed of developments. The project, along with other policy actions on minority education, was also presented at a Hearing of the Committee of Experts of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages with the Language Policy Division.

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IV. Towards a European Higher Education area

1. Higher education governance

The main activity of this project was the Council of Europe Higher Education Forum held in Strasbourg in September 2005 and the publication *Higher education governance between democratic culture, academic aspirations and market forces* (editors Jürgen Kohler and Josef Huber – Strasbourg 2006: Council of Europe Publishing – Council of Europe Higher Education Series No. 5. The project described governance in higher education, highlighted challenges and related them to basic issues of democratic societies in general and higher education reform in particular.

2. The responsibility of higher education for democratic culture

On 22 – 23 June 2006, the Council of Europe organised a Forum on Higher Education and Democratic Culture: Citizenship, Human Rights and Civic Responsibility, in cooperation with partners in US higher education. The Forum gathered some 150 participants from European and North American higher education institutions and public authorities as well as a number of participants from other parts of the world. The Forum was addressed by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Mr. Terry Davis, and the Commissioner for Human Rights, Mr. Thomas Hammarberg. Discussion focused on four main topics:

- the role of higher education for sustainable democratic culture,
- fostering the culture of democracy,
- promoting human rights and democratic citizenship
- building sustainable democratic communities.

The Forum adopted a Declaration on the Responsibility of Higher Education for Democratic Culture¹ and established an interactive web page to support the global Network on Higher Education for Democratic Culture through which participating

¹ http://www.coe.int/T/DG4/HigherEducation/DemocraticCulture/Declaration_EN.pdf

institutions can publish and link their activities in support of democratic culture². The conference will also give rise to a publication in the Council of Europe Higher Education Series, to appear in late 2006 or early 2007.

3. Recognition of qualifications

On the basis of the Council of Europe/UNESCO Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region, the Council of Europe – in close cooperation with UNESCO and also with the European Commission – promotes good practice in the recognition of qualifications with a view to facilitating the mobility of learners and holders of qualifications. The ENIC Network³, coordinated jointly by the Council of Europe and UNESCO, is made up of national information centres of all countries of the European Region. In cooperation with the NARIC⁴ Network of the European Commission, it constitutes the main body for the elaboration of recognition policy and practice in Europe. The two networks hold annual joint meetings; the 2006 meeting was held in Tallinn in June.

4. Quality assurance in higher education

The Forum to be held in Strasbourg on 19 – 20 September 2006 will explore the role of public authorities and institutions in establishing the legitimacy of quality assurance in higher education and to draw upon the Steering Committee for Higher Education and Research (CDESR) as a pan-European forum of policy makers at both higher education institutions and within public authorities to address questions of principle relating to quality assurance. It will, in particular, focus on the triangle public responsibility, higher education governance and quality assurance, and it will also give consideration to the relationship between quality assurance and the recognition of qualifications.

5. Bilateral and regional cooperation

Within the Bologna Process aiming to establish a European Higher Education Area by 2010, the Council of Europe has a particular mission in providing advice and assistance to countries that joined the Bologna Process relatively recently. This activities encompasses all major aspects of higher education reform, including higher education governance and the role of higher education in promoting democratic culture and citizenship. In 2006, the Council of Europe has in particular been engaged in Albania, Georgia and “the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”.

6. New project on “The University between humanism and market: redefining its values and functions for the 21st century”

In 2007, the Council of Europe will launch a new three year project aiming to develop a comprehensive view of the roles, functions and values of higher education in modern, complex societies. The project will further develop the concept of the four-fold mission of higher education and research developed through a previous project on the Public Responsibility for Higher Education and Research. Elements will include a widened notion of employability, the contribution of research beyond the confines of economic interest and the importance of higher education institutions as

² <http://dc.ecml.at/>

³ European Network of national Information Centres on academic mobility and recognition

⁴ National Academic Recognition Centres

sites of citizenship and as models of and preparation for life in pluralist democratic societies. The new project will explore the role of higher education in helping modern society cope with and benefit from the cultural diversity that is already and is likely to continue to be a characteristic of European societies – to help build societies that remain communities while accepting and drawing strength from diversity. The project will also further contribute to the development of a European Higher Education Area addressing the full range of rationales, functions and values of higher education.

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V. European identities through culture and heritage

This programme aims to enable Europeans to appreciate their diverse cultural achievements as a common heritage, through wide public participation in highly visible and high quality events and projects.

The activities organised in this framework are the European Heritage Days (jointly with the European Union), Cultural Routes and Arts Exhibitions, educational activities for mutual understanding through heritage and cross-border activities to test the contribution of heritage education to intercultural dialogue and conflict prevention.

The idea is not only to mobilise European citizens to go and visit a variety of sites, monuments and works of art, but in so doing meet other Europeans, and to make, out of travel and tourism, an intercultural (and in some cases inter-religious) human experience. Cooperative activities involving youth focus more on the quality of human participation and civilized encounters around innovative and widely distributed heritage projects.

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VI. Sport in modern society

Sport has a distinctive role to play for social integration and understanding. The Council of Europe programme on sport policies has long emphasized the necessity of keeping the sport movement mobilized against racism, xenophobia and discrimination, and to use sport gatherings as opportunities to promote positive intercultural experience.

The activities developed within the framework of the European Convention on Spectator Violence put a special emphasis on measure to fight racism, xenophobia and hooliganism. This includes monitoring sport legislations and initiatives to fight racism and xenophobia in sport and gathering of good practice.

This question has been identified as a key issue to prevent violence in stadiums and their surroundings. The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe adopted in 2001 a Recommendation on the prevention of racism, xenophobia and racial intolerance in sport.

A network of “Ambassadors for Sport, Tolerance and Fair Play” is being co-ordinated by the Council of Europe. It consists of top athletes who are appointed by their governments for promoting fair play and tolerance in sport. This network should be developed in the coming years.

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