

To: IEC, EEC, ERC, NGO-Relations, EDR  
Cc: IO, CISV Germany

**Report on the extraordinary meeting of the Liaison Committee of the INGOs enjoying participatory status with the Council of Europe, the Youth Summit and Training in the College of Europe.**

13<sup>th</sup> till 18<sup>th</sup> of May 2005

**On Saturday the 14.05.2005** the Liaison Committee had an extraordinary meeting in Warsaw. This was due to the fact that the Summit of Heads of States and Governments of the Council of Europe took place on the 16.-17.05.2005 in Warsaw. The Liaison Committee (LC) is comparable to the board or the executive committee of CISV. CISV is not a part of the LC, however, the president was able to invite other people who were thought of being able to contribute to the meeting. (See also information on this in my report from April of this year.) Representatives from central and eastern European Countries were among those as well as myself. In addition to that I was also appointed Rapporteur (picture) of the English speaking working group that discussed, as the other working groups did in French and in English/French, the 'Specificities and modalities of the joint actions of the INGOs of the Council of Europe'.

I was mentioned in the official programme of the meeting with my name and explanation that I am head of the working group on intercultural dialogue. In the participants address list everyone could read that I was there, representing CISV. As rapportuer it was my responsibility to take notes of the discussions and present them back to the big group and to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe (picture). The position of rapporteur is one of great power, as the selection of what is being reported and what is not stays in his or her opinion. Hence I was given a great responsibility by the president of the INGOs. My report was well received and the results will be integrated into the multi-annual plan of the INGOs. This will be adopted by the next plenary conference of the INGOs either in October (envisaged) or in January (if Oct. doesn't work).

One of the main topics that have been addressed and that will change in the future is that the representation of INGOs shall be a lot more diverse and in this shall mirror the level of diversity that we have in the organisations. Another thing from the side of the CoE is that the expertise of the organisations should be incorporated a lot more into the policy making processes. This gives a big chance to the INGOs to really influence the way politicians shape policies. These privileges come with the responsibility to work as reliable, accountable and professional partners to the Council of Europe and its organs.

**On Sunday the 15.05.2005** I was part of the delegation of the Liaison Committee to the Youth Summit. In the morning, something great happened! The Secretary General of the CoE was also invited to address the Summit. When he arrived he saw me sitting there, came to me and shacked my hand, greeted my by name and we chatted for some while. Now he has my business card in his pocked, knows about CISV and is aware of the fact that we want to be on the next Advisory Council on Youth. I think this is great and I was really surprised, as I didn't expect at all that he would remember my name and take the time to chat with me for some minutes.

During the several speeches we had in the morning, there was also a presentation of a group of religious NGOs who are engaged in inter-religious dialogue. When there was time for questions afterwards, I took the floor and offered them to participate in the next meeting of the Working Group on Intercultural Dialogue and present what they do as an example of best practise. This had also as a result that all delegates of the Youth Summit now know that a young CISV'er is the head of a working group on such an important topic. After those speeches, in the coffee break, many representatives of youth councils and youth organisations approached me and wanted to talk to me about this and get involved in the work of the working group. All those now also carry my CISV business card in their pocket.

Throughout the day I had the possibility to talk to many members of the current Advisory Council on Youth. I specifically mentioned to the German representative of 'Youth for Understanding' that I would appreciate his support in this and he reacted very positively on this. The current president of the Advisory Council (AC) also knows about my aspirations and is a strong supporter of CISV and me.

The Secretary General, the Director for Youth and Sports as well as the officer responsible for managing the AC from the side of the Secretariat are aware and supporting of the willingness of CISV to assume more responsibility over the development and management of European Youth Policies. Also the representative of the Liaison Committee to the AC is extremely supporting of this endeavour. I am personally quite positive of this to turn out quite fine.

**Monday the 16<sup>th</sup> of May** was the second day of the Youth Summit. Throughout that day I had the possibility to talk with representatives of the National Youth Councils of Portugal and Austria, who were both very keen in welcoming CISV as a new organisation in their structures. The only obstacles that we might face are of a technical nature. The Austrian representative said that we should apply nevertheless as there are always ways to find. As we can see here the benevolence is there, we just have to make an effort and do it. Also one of the bureau members of the European Youth Forum, who is Portuguese, once again affirmed his support for the JB Portugal to join the Youth Council there.

Later on that day I also had the chance to present the work done by a little working group that I was a part of back to the plenary, where also the Director General for Education, Culture, Youth and Sports was listening (photo). Again, visibility was raised and by then most participants of the Youth Summit knew about CISV.

During the speeches that afternoon, I learned that the European Commission would announce the year of 2008 as the year of Intercultural Dialogue. This is specifically interesting for us, as we are chairing the correlating Working Group in the Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe and hence will be strongly involved with this. I will ask Annelise Oeschker (president of the Conference of INGOs) to suggest me to the Director General for Education, Culture, Youth and Sports to serve for her as an expert and liaison to the INGOs.

Aninia Schwanhäußer was one of the regular participants of the Youth Summit. You will find more information on the programme and the results of the summit in her report.

As the involvement of CISV within the structures of the Council of Europe is increasing and seems to be further increasing in the years to come, I would like to offer to give a little presentation at this year's AIM, maybe one evening, for those who are interested on the structures of the CoE and where we stand in those structures. I think an increased understanding would facilitate NAs contacts to other organisations (it is door-opening argument, for example, that CISV is heading the working group on intercultural dialogue and is hence accepted and approved by the CoE as an expert organisation on this topic).

**On Thursday the 17<sup>th</sup>** I visited a friend, who is a student at the College of Europe, an elite school, which trains future executives of international institutions. He was currently engaged in a project, which involved 15 young Belarusian to come to their campus and learn about civil society. This also included training on project management. However, as it happened the trainer to do this turned out to be very unqualified and delivered a bad training. My friend and I then sat the night together and planned a new training session for them to enable them to present their project ideas in the morning to a panel of experts from different foundations and not seem totally untrained. It then turned out that I delivered a 2 hour training on project management to them in the morning of the 18<sup>th</sup>. Also students of the College participated in that and they now all know about CISV, and they all have a CISV business card in their pocket (which might be useful in some years when they sit in responsible positions in international institutions). Also the Belarusian now know about CISV, which might facilitate our engagement in that country.

In the report you just read, I have seen the word (photo) coming up from time to time. This means that I have pictures of those events. I didn't put them in here, as I didn't want to make the document too big. If you are interested in seeing them, please write me e-mail and I will send them to you personally.

I hope you enjoyed reading the report. Again, as always, if you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me and ask questions.

All the best

Bastian