

COUNCIL OF EUROPE

CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

CDDH.HELENJDHCD871.E

Strasbourg, 28 January 1987

DH-CD(87) 1

EUROPEAN CO-ORDINATION COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS DOCUMENTATION

10th meeting, 26 and 27 January 1987

Strasbourg, Palais de l'Europe
Room 5

I. Introduction (Items 1 and 2 of the agenda)

1. The European Co-ordination Committee on Human Rights Documentation held its 10th meeting at the Council of Europe Headquarters in Strasbourg from 26 to 27 January 1987.

2. The meeting was opened by Mr Bjørn Stormorken, Administrator in the Directorate of Human Rights, who welcomed participants on the behalf of Mr Peter Leuprecht, Director of Human Rights. Mr Stormorken presented the Director's apologies for not being able to assist at this meeting due to the fact that it was taking place at the same time as the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.

3. The list of participants appears in Appendix I.

4. The Secretariat received apologies from:

E. Boumans, European Parliament
A. Eide, The Norwegian Institute of Human Rights
A. Fumagalli, European Parliament
K. Wild, International Labour Office

5. The agenda of the meeting, as revised and adopted, appears in Appendix II.

E 99.450
06.1

THIS DOCUMENT WILL NOT BE DISTRIBUTED DURING THE MEETING PLEASE BRING THIS COPY

II. Summary of proceedings

6. During the meeting, the Co-ordination Committee in particular:

- i. noted the enormous contribution of the Resource Centre of the British Refugee Council towards the practical implementation of the HURIDOCS Standard Formats through its ambitious training programme, including 'training of trainers';
- ii. decided to charge the Resource Centre of the British Refugee Council with the task of acting as a secretariat to the European Co-ordination Committee;
- iii. decided to charge the British Refugee Council to animate the development of training courses in different countries in Europe, including the use of traineeships within organisations;
- iv. thanked SIM for its longstanding contribution both to HURIDOCS and the European Co-ordination Committee, and decided to charge SIM with the task of dispatching essential HURIDOCS material;
- v. decided to establish a basic list of documentation centres already existing in Europe in the field of human rights and interested in HURIDOCS activities, and a list of experts in different areas of information management available through different individuals and organisations. The Committee decided to ask the newly established Article 19 to undertake this task;
- vi. decided to charge the Danish Refugee Council with the task of producing a collection of practical and illustrative examples of the use of the HURIDOCS Standard Formats;
- vii. decided to charge the ZDWF, in consultation with Mme Blum, British Refugee Council and Mr Protz-Schwarz, Diakonisches Werk der EKD, with the task of raising money for "training trainers" in the use of the HURIDOCS Standard Formats;
- viii. decided to send a European HURIDOCS questionnaire on human rights teaching material to its constituency in order to submit a synthesised report to the preparatory regional conference on teaching, information and documentation in the field of human rights to be organised by the International Institute of Human Rights on behalf of UNESCO;

- ix. decided to urge its constituency to produce and submit to the Secretariat of the European Co-ordination Committee, accession lists of documents received twice a year in advance of the Committee meetings. The Council of Europe will distribute these lists together with other preparatory papers for the European Co-ordination Committee meetings;

III. The proceedings

Item 3 and 5 of the agenda: HURIDOCs

a) Developments within HURIDOCs internationally

7. Mr Thoolen, Secretary to HURIDOCs, reported on the considerable developments that have taken place within the HURIDOCs network. Since these developments are spelt out in detail in HURIDOCs News No. 3, Mr Thoolen concentrated on the most recent developments. As usual, the functioning of HURIDOCs would not have been possible without the help of Willy van Belkum, a volunteer working for HURIDOCs in SIM. The Rome Conference gave a strong impetus to the HURIDOCs network. The structure of the organisation was changed at the 2nd HURIDOCs Assembly (held in conjunction with the Rome Conference) to better reflect the decentralised nature of the operation of HURIDOCs and the very limited funds available. The new structure has two new main features.

The first is the replacement of the Board with a small but mobile and practical Continuation Committee, charged with policy development through influencing, not only decision makers in human rights NGOs, but also donors and long-term funding. The Continuation Committee (CC) has had two formal and several informal meetings since May 1986, when it was created. An international advisory council is being established and a number of international candidates have been contacted and/or visited. Most of the energy of the CC has been channelled into the creation of a "donor consortium". Such a donor consortium will have two aims: (1) to ensure a coherent and compatible policy between donors within the area of assistance in transfer of information handling know-how and technology, and (2) facilitate and increase the funds available for third world documentation centres to professionalise and increase their information handling capacity.

The second element is the creation of ad hoc task-forces charged with specific tasks, such as the further development of standards, terminology, communication, etc. Such task-forces can be created and dismantled according to the needs and should be able to funnel resources and expertise from a wide base in a flexible manner. The "real work" should have taken place in the task-forces throughout the year, but the reporting back has been poor. This could partly be due to the fact that there were no resources available from the CC to animate their work. It is hoped that this will change in 1987.

8. Mrs Knabe presented her report from the Conference on Communication, Development and Human Rights, held in Rome 8 - 13 April 1986, organised jointly by HURIDOCs, INTERDOC, IPS and SID. In short, the Conference was a success and brought together more than 110 individuals representing some 70 non-governmental and intergovernmental organisations, of which more than 50 % came from the so-called "south". The aim of the Conference was to:

- i. raise the level of knowledge of the participants with regard to the possibilities and limitations of present-day information and communication technology;
- ii. bring together individuals concerned with human rights, development and communications and encourage co-operation and exchange of ideas, programmes and actions; to get to know each other's past efforts, progress and experience and establish a basis of confidence and understanding needed for future collaboration;
- iii. develop common strategies and models for better coping with the threats and potential of information and communication developments through closer co-operation, standardisation and division of labour.

In addition a series of regional meetings was held as a part of the Conference. The number of documents circulated during the Conference was enormous and the report of the meeting has been published in two volumes (Communication, development and human rights: final report of a Conference organised jointly by: HURIDOCs, INTERDOC, IPS and SID, Rome, 8 - 13 April 1986 / Knabe, F. (ed.) . - London: HURIDOCs, 19861100 . - 2 Vol. [175 p.] available from HURIDOCs Secretariat, c/o SIM, Domplein 24, 3512 JE Utrecht, the Netherlands).

b) Establishment of a Secretarial Unit

9. Mme Blum pointed out the fact that expectations generated by the relative success of HURIDOCs would put an unfair load on the shoulders of those persons, who in a personal and private capacity, took upon them to carry out the administrative work necessary for HURIDOCs to "survive". This is evident both on the international and regional level. Even with respect to the situation in Europe, the work that needs to be done immediately is formidable and will require some sort of secretariat. The Resource Centre of the British Refugee Council would be prepared, if certain conditions could be met, to take on some of these tasks.

10. A general discussion on this theme ensued, and a number of topics were brought up, such as the relationship between the European Co-ordination Committee of HURIDOCs and "international" HURIDOCs and the Council of Europe, the relationship with other networks, the resource situation, the direction of the future development, etc.

11. There was a concensus that the level of activity within the European Co-ordination Committee needed to be raised considerably for the bi-annual meetings to be worthwhile. The level of attendance have been steadily declining both in level and number and this trend must be reversed in order for the Committee to be able to carry out its work. The Committee therefore proceeded to spell out the most immediate tasks to be undertaken in a short term perspective and identified organisations and individuals responsible for progress within these areas.

12. The mandate for the European Co-ordination Committee and work plan, as adopted, is appended in Appendix III.

13. Due to the fact that intensification of the training programme was considered to be one of the important tasks to be undertaken in 1987, agenda item 5 (Training) was discussed in conjunction with item 3.

14. The British Refugee Council was asked to give a run-down of their impressive training programme, run partly in co-operation with HURIDOCs and the Council of Europe. According to the experience of the British Refugee Council the following points should be taken into consideration when developing new training courses:

- short introductory courses on information handling techniques followed by hands-on experience with computers;
- seminars/course should be held at local level;
- there is a definite need for training in the use of Standard Formats on micro-computers;
- there is a need for refresher/refinement courses on the Standard Formats

15. The British Refugee Council announced that up to six persons external to them, may participate in the courses that are planned and run by them in 1987, provided that a participation fee be paid. Board, travel and lodging would be at the expense of the participants. The Committee welcomed and thanked the British Refugee Council for this generous offer.

16. Mrs. Knabe added that the context of the training is very important and that experience showed that:

- training courses should not be too short;
- the smaller the group the more effective the training;
- a wider constituency of beneficiaries from information handling techniques should be involved;

- the topics covered in the courses should be expanded to include communication know-how and technology.

The British Refugee Council was thanked by the Committee for its good work and especially mentioned was the fact that the British Refugee Council was willing to take on the extra cost of allowing "training of trainers" for HURIDOCS take place alongside its courses.

15. A discussion ensued on the best way to further develop and fund training courses for trainers in Europe after the animation undertaken by the British Refugee Council. ZDWF agreed that, after due consultation with Diakonisches Werk and HURIDOCS, it would consider taking the initiative to raise money in Germany for the training of trainers.

Item 8 of the agenda: Consultation on documentation in Europe

16. Mr. Kiss informed the Committee of the plans for a European regional preparatory conference for the International Congress on Teaching, Information and Documentation in the Field of Human Rights, to be organised by UNESCO in 1987.

17. The regional preparatory conference will be organised, under contract, by the International Institute of Human Rights, Strasbourg on behalf of UNESCO. It will take place near Strasbourg between 13 - 15 May 1987, with approximately 30 European experts in human rights information. A report will be prepared on the state of information gathering and usage of human rights teaching material, based on a detailed questionnaire to be filled in by each participating expert.

18. After a short discussion it was decided that the European Co-ordination Committee of HURIDOCS should be sent the final version of the questionnaire so that it can extract the most pertinent questions to be answered by its constituency [The questionnaire should be sent to the Secretariat at the British Refugee Council]. A synthesis of the answers to these points of the questionnaire will be submitted to the Conference.

Item 6 on the agenda: Distribution of documents

19. A number of suggestions to increase the flow of documents between human rights organisations in Europe were put forward. Notably the physical exchange of documents, information in electronic format or manually compiled acquisition lists. However, it was noted that a large amount of non-specific information shared between organisations may in fact decrease the accessibility of pertinent documents held within each organisation.

20. It was decided that the most practical way to ensure the increased flow of documentation among the network participants would be to share acquisition lists.

Item 4 on the agenda: Developments since the 9th meeting

Europe

The Centre of Documentation - Paris

21. It was reported that the new Centre of documentation in Paris had come into existence, as a result of joint planning by six key refugee assisting organisations in France. It was hoped that the Centre would computerise as soon as possible in such a way that the method for recording the holdings on computer would be standard with other documentation centres. It had been decided that the Centre would try and collate all existing documentation in France concerning refugees and where there was no specific refugee interest monitored it would create it. In this regard it would take over France Terre D'Asile's activities in documentation. The content of the Documentation Centre would include information on case law and background on countries in particular. It was anticipated that the main users of the Centre would be academics, lawyers and the public.

The Zentrale Dokumentationsstelle der freien Wohlfahrtspflege für Flüchtlinge - Bonn

22. ZDWF are considering implementing the HURIDOCs Standard Formats and will report at the next HURIDOCs European Co-ordination Committee meeting on the decision taken and ensuing results in this regard. They are preparing a new thesaurus of terms.

The British Refugee Council - London

23. It was reported that the current holdings of the British Refugee Council's Resource Centre number 20,000 and have now all been catalogued. The BRC's classification scheme has been recently revised and this classification scheme is openly available. The Resource Centre of the British Refugee Council has helped to develop a Link Project of agencies in the UK holding documentation on refugees and through which it is hoped that a union catalogue of the most prominent refugee organisations in Britain can be stored in the BRC's Resource Centre. The Resource Centre has also helped to establish a new Historical Records Project for refugee community groups in the UK, which aims at facilitating effective storage of information in these groups.

A number of training courses on human rights documentation techniques have been held and more are planned for 1987. The BRC has also been active in the ECRE Information and Documentation Working Group and administered a meeting on the international exchange of refugee documentation in Bonn, between 18 and 22 November 1986.

The point was made that the Resource Centre of the British Refugee Council was not a library but an active centre on information, including as its main holdings extensive documentation, but also including audio-visual material, exhibitions, kits etc..

HURIDOCS - Strasbourg

24. Mr. Fernando D'Avilla reported that a new French version of the HURIDOCS Standard Formats is near to completion and that a workable draft is available already.

Grateful thanks were accorded to Mr. d'Avilla for all the hard work involved in producing this version of the Standard Formats in French.

European Parliament

25. It was reported that a bibliographic database has been defined and established. UNISIST has been adopted as a format, but this does not mean that the HURIDOCS Standard Formats, as revised, cannot be used on the microcomputers in the European Parliament. They will in fact probably be used by the human rights unit.

SIM - Utrecht

26. It was reported that the Director of SIM has left and, although not easily replaced, will be succeeded by someone in the late spring/early summer. SIM was making great progress in computerising documentation references and the computer is now becoming too small. It is hoped that this problem will be solved when the institute moves to the University and will then be able to have access to the University computer.

Several small projects are being undertaken, including the training of documentalists from third world countries in SIM itself.

Article 19 - London

27. It was reported that Article 19 was already using the HURIDOCS Standard Formats in its bibliographic data base. A human rights data base has also been set up and has proved very useful to date. In addition a data base on related organisations has been established.

Institut de la Paix - Geneva

28. It was reported that the Institut was going to have a conference between the 22 June - 4 July on the education of refugees. It was also computerising the library.

European Refugee Network (ECRE)

29. After the international refugee documentation network meeting in Germany in November 1986 the ECRE information and documentation working group met to re-define its mandate as a result of developments. It is intended that it should be the focus for documentation work on refugee matters in Europe on behalf of the European Consultation on Refugees and Exiles and to this end it has identified its work for the next six months as being to develop working lists of organisations, trade unions, political parties and organisations and national groups - including acronyms where possible. To start working at building data bases in each of the four agencies, now using the HURIDOCs standard formats and the HCR/ECRE indexing rules which have been established, with the objective of trying to spot any errors or possibilities for improvement.

To organise and run a training seminar for ECRE on developing resource centres and handling documentation.

International

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees - Geneva

29. Developments in the documentation centre at UNHCR have not yet been finalised for 1987. However, UNHCR reported that a data base on refugee related documentation is now running.

International Refugee Documentation Network

30. Mme. Blum reported on the meeting in Germany, 18-22 November 1986, at which 27 different agencies from Asia, Africa, Latin America, North America, Australia, the Middle East and Europe were represented. The meeting aimed to establish whether there was endorsement for a perceived need to establish mechanisms to exchange information on refugees systematically for a wide variety of users.

The recommendations unanimously adopted by the meeting were as follows:

- that an international network of refugee documentation centres be established.
- that the subject areas covered by such a network should relate to forced external and internal displacement, in all its aspects.
- that such a network be based on a decentralised model with a co-ordinating unit.
- that the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) be requested to assume as rapidly as possible this co-ordinating function.

Pending clarification of the role that UNHCR could play in a network, the meeting made the following additional recommendations:

- that UNHCR requested to co-ordinate efforts to establish an international refugee thesaurus with the assistance of an advisory group selected from the documentation centres, representative of the regions and the full range of needs to be met within the network;
- that UNHCR be requested to initiate work on the standardised formats required for easy exchange of documentation and information within the network.
- that the British Refugee Council (BRC) be requested to undertake on behalf of the participants of the meeting the immediate follow-up to the meeting for the six forthcoming months, until the precise role that UNHCR can assume has been fully clarified.

Funding from donors was urgently needed to ensure that this follow up takes place.

31. Other developments of interest included a meeting to be held in Lesotho, co-organised by the Institute for Southern African Studies and Harvard University on Human Rights Information in August 1987, and the SATIS Information Management System User Review.

APPENDIX I

List of Participants / Liste des Participants

- BLUM, Susan, Resource Centre Co-ordinator, British Refugee Council,
3-9 Bondway, London
- BRUUN, Lise, Librarian, Danish Refugee Council, Borgergade 103, 1002
Copenhagen K
- De FARIA, Jose, Chef, Centre pour les droits de l'homme des Nations
Unies, Geneve
- KJAERUM, morten, Head of Asylum Department, Danish Refugee Council,
Borgergade 10, 1002 Copenhagen
- KNABE, friederike, Head of Centre on Censorship, Article 19, 90
Borough High Street, London SE1 1LL
- MARTENS-PARREE, Bernard, Vice Director, Zentrale Dokumentationsstelle
der Freien Wohlfahrtspflege für Flüchtlinge
et ZDWF, Hans-Jöcklerstraße 3, 5300 Bonn 3
- MARTINEAU, Christine, Avocat, France Terre d'Asile, 4-6 Passage
Louis-Philippe, 75011 Paris
- PRINDEZIS, Monique, Secrétaire Générale, Association mondiale pour
l'Ecole instrument de paix (EIP), 5 rue du
Simplon, 1207 GENEVE
- PROTZ-SCHWARZ, Klaus Michael, Assessor, Diakonisches Werk der EKD,
Stafflenbergstraße 76, 7000 STUTTGART
- ROYLANCE, Gillian, Human Rights Unit, European Parliament, LUXEMBOURG
- THOOLEN, Hans, Chief, Centre for Documentation on Refugees, UNHCR,
Avenue de la Paix 5-7, 1202 GENEVE
- TONELOTTO, Mario, Bibliothécaire, Parlement européen, LUXEMBOURG
- TRAN THAMH, Hiep, Président du Pen Club Vietnamien, Centre DOCLAP, 63,
rue de la grange aux Belles, 75010 PARIS
- VAN DIJK, Pieter, Chairman of the Board, Netherlands Institute of
Human Rights (SIM), Janskerkhof 3, 3512 BK UTRECHT
- VIANNA, Pedro, Directeur, "Documentations-Réfugiés, 4-6 passage
Louis-Philippe, 75011 PARIS
- VU NGOC, Yen, DOC-LAP Centre, BP 1362, 7024 FILDERSTADT 1

APPENDIX IIAGENDA

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Adoption of the agenda
3. HURIDOCS
 - Developments
 - Establishment of a Secretarial Unit
4. Developments since the 9th meeting
 - Europe
 - European Refugee network
 - Other developments of interest
 - International
 - The "Bonn Refugee Network" meeting
 - Developments in documentation in UNHCR
 - Other developments of interest
5. Training
6. Distribution of documents
7. Preparation of a Directory of Computerised Human Rights Documentation and Information Centres in Europe
8. Consultation on documentation in Europe
 - The European regional meeting to prepare for the International Congress on Teaching, Information and Documentation in the Field of Human Rights. Introduction by the International Institute of Human Rights - coordination with a European Consultation on Human Rights: HURIDOCS
 - Orientation by UNESCO on the preparations for the International Congress on Teaching, Information and Documentation in the Field of Human Rights to be held in 1987
9. Any other business

APPENDIX III

MANDATE AND WORK PLAN FOR 1987

EUROPEAN CO-ORDINATION COMMITTEE ON
HUMAN RIGHTS DOCUMENTATION

Background:

1. The European Co-ordination Committee of HURIDOCs is a regional group of the HURIDOCs network. It concerns the region of Europe and the implementation of relevant working methods in that region.
2. Since 1983 the activities of this Committee have been limited due to the acute shortage of staff time amongst the members of the Committee. However, the activities of HURIDOCs itself in its international context have flourished, as a result of which even more interest than previously shown has been expressed in participating in methods established by HURIDOCs for the greater facilitation of information exchange across human rights assisting agencies in Europe.

MANDATE:

At the 10th meeting of the European Co-ordination Committee of HURIDOCs after several new developments within HURIDOCs, in particular the organisation of a central Continuation Committee in April 1986, it was decided that it was essential to devolve the most essential tasks so as to enable HURIDOCs' work to continue and flourish in Europe. To this end certain tasks were identified as being essential for the next six months/one year, until it was clearer whether a central secretariat body, linked in to International HURIDOCs, could take on some of these tasks as well as more pro-active and promotional work.

The agencies present at this 10th meeting mandated themselves to take on the following work in this regard:

1. Central Secretariat for Europe, answering enquiries, information on HURIDOCs, animating membership of the European Co-ordination Committee, liaising with the Council of Europe to prepare the bi-annual Committee meetings, and referring specific technical enquiries to the relevant individuals.

TO BE TAKEN ON BY THE BRITISH REFUGEE COUNCIL

2. Establish a list of organisations which should participate directly or indirectly in the work of the European Co-ordination Committee, with a view to expanding such a listing at a later stage to include all documentation centres on human rights in existence in Europe. Such a directory should be part of HURIDOCS' overall efforts to establish a directory on human rights agencies and consequently the efforts for the European directory have to be co-ordinated with the HURIDOCS Task Force on Directories.

In addition, a list should be established of persons and organisations in Europe who have expertise in different areas of information management.

TO BE TAKEN ON BY ARTICLE 19

3. Development of HURIDOCS training courses.

TO BE ANIMATED BY THE BRITISH REFUGEE COUNCIL AND DEVELOPED BY OTHER AGENCIES IN EUROPE AS REQUIRED AND AS IS POSSIBLE

4. Training of trainers: Raising money and running courses for trainers, using computers available.

TO BE IMPLEMENTED BY ZDWF, Germany, AFTER DUE CONSULTATION WITH DIAKONISCHES WERK AND HURIDOCS.

5. Development of training material: noting examples of the Standard Formats, for use in a future appendix and in training courses on the Standard Formats.

TO BE TAKEN ON BY THE DANISH REFUGEE COUNCIL.

NOTE:

1. The COUNCIL OF EUROPE will continue to act as convenor to, and provide the usual support for, the bi-annual meetings of the Committee.

2. The dispatching of essential HURIDOCS material (eg STANDARD FORMATS and software packages) will continue to be taken on by SIM for the whole of HURIDOCS, including the European Co-ordination Committee.

Strasbourg,
January 1987