



Economic and Social Council

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Committee on NGOs

3rd & 4th Meetings (AM & PM)

NGO COMMITTEE APPROVES 17 ORGANIZATIONS FOR CONSULTATIVE STATUS

WITH ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

The Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations, in two meetings today, recommended 17 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) for consultative status with the Economic and Social Council.

A standing committee of the Council, the 19-member body uses various criteria to recommend general, special or roster status with the Economic and Social Council, including the applicant's mandate, governance and financial regime. Organizations that have general and special consultative status can attend meetings of the Council and circulate statements of a certain length. Those with general status can, in addition, speak at meetings and propose items for the Council's agenda, while NGOs with roster status can only attend meetings.

The Committee recommended that the Economic and Social Council grant special consultative status to:

-- International Association for Humanitarian Medicine Brock Chisholm, an international organization based in Italy, which provides free specialist care in any medical field on a humanitarian basis;

-- Italian Association for Aid to Children, a national organization based in Italy, working with adoption issues;

-- Big Brothers Big Sisters International, an international organization based in the United States, working to improve the lives of children and youth around the world;

-- Maxim Institute, a national organization based in New Zealand, concerned with the active involvement of citizens in creating and sustaining a functioning democracy;

-- Network of Ugandan Researchers and Research Users, a national organization based in Uganda, developing the capacity of its stakeholders in participatory research methodology, research utilization, advocacy and networking;

-- Inter-European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development, an international organization based in Belgium, which believes that parliamentarians have a responsibility to promote and defend the sexual and reproductive health and rights of all individuals;

-- World for World Organization, an international organization based in Italy, mobilizing resources through fundraising campaigns aimed at achieving the Millennium Development Goals;

-- International Coastal and Ocean Organization, an international organization based in the United States, which aims to advance the global agenda of oceans, coasts, and small island developing States;

-- Leonard Cheshire International, an international organization based in the United Kingdom, aiming to change attitudes to disability and to serve disabled people around the world;

-- Consortium d'appui aux actions pour la promotion et le développement de l'Afrique, an international organization based in Cameroon, dealing with development in rural and urban areas through initiatives aimed at eradicating hunger and poverty;

-- Association des Parlementaires Tunisiens, a national organization based in Tunisia, aiming to, among other things, eradicate poverty and illiteracy;

-- Egyptian Organization for Human Rights, a national organization based in Egypt, working for the protection and promotion of human rights in that country;

-- Association "For Sustainable Human Development", a national organization based in Armenia, promoting sustainable development in that country;

-- Le Forum pour l'Intégration des Migrants et des Migrants, an international organization based in Switzerland, focusing on, among other things, the social and professional integration of migrants in the country; and

-- Amman Center for Human Rights Studies, an international organization based in Jordan, which, among other things, provides a platform for dialogue and coordination among governmental and non-governmental human rights organizations.

Special consultative status was also recommended for Conectas Direitos Humanos, a national organization based in Brazil, whose mission is to enhance respect for human rights through dialogue and collaboration leading to the strengthening of civil society organizations in the South, following a dialogue between the Committee and the NGO's representative.

Responding to questions posed, that NGO's representative said the overall objective of his organization was to connect the human rights groups of the South, including for sharing experiences, and to connect those groups to the United Nations system. The NGO focused on the South in an effort to offer a platform for those countries to work together, and to have a voice on issues within the United Nations system. The NGO's human rights dialogue network included partners from the North, and their participation was no less than those from the South. Human rights were universal values, and a focus on the South did not mean there was not a need for similar work in the North.

In addition, the Committee recommended roster status for International Partnership for Microbicides, an international organization based in the United States, aiming to prevent HIV transmission by accelerating the development and availability of safe and effective microbicides for use by women in developing countries.

With regard to applications for reclassification, the Committee decided to maintain roster status for Armenian Relief Society, an international organization based in the United States, which had sought general consultative status. It took that decision following an intervention by Turkey's Ambassador, who recalled that the Committee had previously decided not to recommend reclassification to general status for the NGO. He said NGOs seeking status with the Economic and Social Council should respect the principles of the Charter and Council resolution 1996/31, and provide accurate information. The NGO in question had not done that. He presented documentation in which the NGO had referred to parts of Turkey as "Western or Turkish-occupied Armenia" and to a Turk as "more of a beast than a man".

Also, the Committee decided to recommend reclassification for World ORT Union, an international organization based in Switzerland, from roster to special consultative status; and reclassification for The Association of Medical Doctors of Asia, from special to general consultative status.

As the representatives of France and Germany were awaiting instructions from their capitals on

China International Institute of Multinational Corporations, a national organization based in China, that NGO's application was left pending. China's representative noted that the NGO's work was closely related to that of the Council, and suggested that special status be recommended.

Several questions were raised regarding Henri Dunant Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, an international organization based in Switzerland, which aims to prevent human suffering caused by war, by the representative of the Sudan. In particular, he wanted more information on the NGO's activities in Darfur, as well as the nature of the role it had supposedly played in the Abuja talks. Was the NGO an intermediary or a humanitarian agent? he asked.

The Committee also left pending the application of Geneva Call, an international organization based in Switzerland, aiming to engage armed non-State actors to accept humanitarian norms, in particular to ban anti-personnel landmines. Representatives of Colombia, Turkey and Iran wondered whether the NGO worked with the consent of, and in conjunction with, relevant Governments when dealing with armed non-State actors. Turkey's representative also asked about the NGO's stance on combating terrorism, as some of the armed non-State actors with which the NGO had contact were on international terrorist lists.

Strongly supporting that NGO, Switzerland's representative said the mechanisms put in place by Geneva Call constituted an effective way to further the universalization of the mine-ban treaty. As a result of its work so far, 28 armed groups had agreed to ban landmines. Noting that the NGO always worked in full transparency with the Governments concerned, she invited the Committee to recommend consultative status, when the case was taken up again. Also voicing support for the NGO's work were the delegates of France and the United States.

Also left pending was the application of World Children's Relief and Volunteer Organization, an international organization based in the United States, focused on improving the quality of education in primary schools in rural areas of developing countries, as Senegal's representative requested further information on the group's activities in her country. Likewise, Ma Qualcuno Pensi ad Abele, an international organization based in Italy, aiming to uphold the principle of responsibility in the defence of human and civil rights, was asked by Cuba's representative to clarify its activities related to his country.

The following applications were also left pending while the Committee awaited replies to questions posed and/or further clarifications: Associazione Comunita Papa Giovanni XXIII, an international organization based in Italy; Conflict Management Group, an international organization based in the United States; Tchad agir pour l'environnement, an international organization based in Switzerland; Tides Center, a national organization based in the United States; Biopolitics International Organisation, an international organization based in Greece; National Foundation for Women Legislators, a national organization based in the United States; Traditions pour demain, an international organization based in Switzerland; G én ération recherche action & formation pour l'environnement, an international organization based in Switzerland; and Africa Action, a national organization based in the United States.

That was also the case with West Africa Network for Peacebuilding, an international organization based in Ghana; Vital Voices Global Partnership, an international organization based in the United States; and Nonviolent Peaceforce, an international organization based in Belgium.

The Committee members are Cameroon, Chile, China, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, France, Germany, India, Iran, Peru, Pakistan, Romania, Russian Federation, Senegal, Sudan, Turkey, United States, and Zimbabwe.

The Committee will meet again at 10 a.m. on Monday, 23 January, to continue consideration of new applications and new requests for reclassification.

* In Press Release NGO/585 dated 19 January, the symbol ECOSOC/6182 should have been added.

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