

2012 REPORT OF ACTIVITIES

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Abbreviations

CINGO	Catholic-inspired Non-Governmental Organization
HRC	Human Rights Council
ILO	International Labour Organization
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
UPR	Universal Periodic Review

Dear friends of the Center,

What a year 2012 has been! It is my great pleasure to address you today to present our annual report. This year our organization has undergone numerous positive changes and completed many plans.

On the planning level, a new cycle has begun. Like all organizations with a history, the Center's 63 years make it an institution with a grand tradition. A tradition that is first and foremost for NGOs and other Catholic-inspired organizations and for their interactions with governments and international organizations in Geneva. As Thomas Moore, Gustav Mahler, and even Pope John XXIII were fond of saying, "Tradition is not to preserve the ashes, but to pass on the flame!" CCIG must therefore update its approach to responding to the needs and wishes of its members more efficiently in the wake of the economic crisis and during a time when human solidarity must be (re)discovered.

With a change in the Presidency and the re-election of half of the members of our Committee, in early 2012 the organization was able to achieve the means of this *aggiornamento* for commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the Second Vatican Council. After an internal workshop and numerous strategic reflection meetings, the new Committee had progressively elaborated the **2013-2017 strategy** and its action plan. As the most important factor of this strategy, we hope to be recognized as a catalyst and facilitator of projects, dynamic interaction and meetings amongst our members **for a more united world**.

For our membership, 2012 was an encouraging year. We had welcomed four new organizations: Associazione Comunità Giovanni Papa XXIII (APG23), Association Points-Cœur, Edmund Rice International (ERI), and l'Office International de l'Enseignement Catholique (OIEC). In this context, it is important to remember that the experiences of our members is our wealth. With each new member, their additional experiences enrich our exchanges, our ideas and our collaboration efforts. To all our members: thank you!

Regarding our activities, we had the opportunity to participate in many pilot activities in addition to our more 'classic' training. We have also been delighted to accompany the implementation of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) platform, comprised of 17 NGOs. Additionally, another success this year was the organization of the consultation on youth employment within the context of the International Labour Organization (ILO).

In conclusion, I offer my sincerest thanks for your support and wish you a happy read!

Sincerely,

Jean-Benoit Charrin
Committee President

Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Platform

In December 2011, in view of the conclusion of the first UPR cycle, a group of NGOs met at CCIG to: (i) create an assessment of the contributions made towards the UPR by sharing difficulties experienced and successes obtained; and (ii) to envision new ways to collaborate in order to realize more effective lobbying. In effect, the second review cycle is crucial for assuring effective commitments made by governments in the first cycle.

This is why the participants of the UPR Platform have identified the priorities of their future efforts and activities to achieve the following goals: (i) develop joint strategies with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in the context of UPR sessions; (ii) in recognition of the key role of local actors, the sensitization of human rights defenders in the field in order to become highly efficient "monitoring actors."

This platform, which met throughout 2012, showed a growing participation among NGO members and other NGOs in CCIG's network. Ten (10) joint written statements were submitted to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) thanks to CCIG's Platform and the frequent joint oral statements given during point 6 of the Human Rights Council. Concerning the work methodology, platform members identified countries that were engaged in providing accurate information. This allowed for the identification within the platform of 'groups by country.' Each of these groups named a contact person responsible for facilitating work and group coordination for the review and joint written statement for the country concerned. Additionally, Platform members shared tools designed for data collection for their respective members in the field as well as the practical suggestions for resource optimization based on their concrete experiences.

Furthermore, in accordance with certain Platform members' request, CCIG started organizing meetings with OHCHR representatives to discuss the methodology of UPR review reports. A meeting between UPR Platform NGOs and the OHCHR took place on December 12, 2012 (9:30-11:30AM) in the OHCHR offices on Motta Avenue. 15 representatives from 13 NGOs participated in the event. The OHCHR was represented by 4 officials, including the head of the UPR team. The objective of the seminar was to help facilitate NGOs' work with the UPR, particularly for the review of reports for the 17th, 18th and 19th sessions, in addition to the early follow up for the 13th and 14th sessions. A detailed report concerning the meeting was written by CCIG and distributed to participants. It constitutes a practical tool for facilitating responses during the UPR. Likewise, an article regarding the meeting was published on CCIG's webpage (<http://www.ccig-iccg.org/>). The head of the UPR group proposed holding meetings annually.

Several Platform members have expressed interest in participating in a training course specifically on the UPR, which would be included in activities beginning in 2013. The objective of this course would be to offer NGO representatives tools to help optimize their work with the review.

The added value of the UPR Platform promoted by CCIG is a shared space open to all which would allow, in a simple but effective manner, learning amongst users and to experiment in types of collaboration that are increasingly structured among Catholic- and Christian-inspired NGOs. This is for the realization of a common goal: the advancement of human rights throughout the world without distinction.

Other activities in service to NGOs achieved by CCIG:

- Information concerning the life of international Geneva regarding the intention of NGOs of Christian-inspiration, religious congregations and other NGOs.
- Development of CCIG's website to inform NGOs about its activities.
- Participation in the Forum of Catholic-Inspired NGO's organized meetings, including the annual day-long meeting for Forum NGOs in Brussels, Geneva and Strasbourg on October 23, 2012 on the theme of "the agenda of international organizations on the right to education: priorities and strategies of CINGO."
- Participation in the work on religious freedom seminar organized by the Caritas in Veritate Foundation on October 22, 2012 at the Palais de Nations in Geneva.
- Welcome and logistical assistance for visitors from national NGOs from the following countries: Zambia, France, United States and Germany.

CCIG has continued its training program on UN human rights mechanisms. In 2012, at the request of certain NGO members of the Center (for example, Edmund Rice International and Marist International Solidarity Foundation), we have expanded our collaboration for training meetings on the role of NGOs regarding different UN human rights mechanisms. In May 2012, CCIG was invited by the International Catholic Child Bureau (BICE) to participate in an informal meeting with their partners who wanted to better understand the possibilities for work in the Catholic network in the field of human rights in Geneva.

In September 2012, CCIG organized a weeklong training session on the UN mechanisms for the protection of human rights at the request of the Basque country UNESCO center, "UNESCO Etxea": 12 representatives from Basque country NGOs working on human rights, cooperation and development participated in the training program. The aim of the training was to learn how to use a basic approach to human rights in development cooperation activities between different Basque country governmental and non-governmental institutions and their partners in developing countries. The participants studied different mechanisms to learn how to correctly identify the most appropriate mechanism for their work. We have also facilitated meetings between the participants and different key actors in the human rights field, notably those responsible in the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights at the UN and the international NGO representatives in Geneva. The UNESCO Etxea center was so pleased with our collaboration that a new session in 2013 was proposed.

We also explored the possibility of creating a space to exchange views and NGO networking for UN treaties bodies. In the goal of providing tools to address these organs, CCIG has envisaged the organization of seminars in 2013 to give NGOs substantial guidance and strategies for their work with organs and treaties.

Informal Meeting on the Youth Employment Crisis

An activity of sensitization was undertaken by CCIG in order to specifically launch the subject of youth employment among member organizations and those who are involved in the subject through their network. In particular, an informal meeting was held on April 18, 2012, in which CCIG committee member and former ILO official Larry Kohler presented numerous implications of the subject.

Consultation on Decent Work: Domestic Workers and Youth Employment

For several years, CCIG has shown a great interest in the activities of the International Labour Organization (ILO) and particularly in the context of the Annual International Labour Conference. This interest cumulated with the organization of Catholic NGO consultations, which, in conjunction with the Conference, had offered a space for exchanging views and sharing for NGOs regarding the issue of decent work.

After the 2010 and 2011 consultations, CCIG organized a consultation of NGOs, in collaboration with the German Commission for Justice and Peace/Kolping International, International Coordination of Young Christian Workers (ICYCW) and Caritas Internationalis, on May 31-June 1, 2012. The consultation was structured into two sessions: a session on youth employment and a session on the follow-up of the 2011 project on domestic workers.

The session focused on youth employment offered participants a space for exchange of views in parallel to the International Labour Conference sessions, which were held at the same time. The session on domestic workers assessed the ratification of the ILO Convention N°.189 concerning decent work for domestic workers. About 40 people attended the conference, particularly international NGO representatives based in Geneva and other countries, which are all interested in issues of work, migration, education, etc. A final report was prepared and distributed after the consultation and was subsequently published on various websites, including the International Domestic Workers Network.

Support for the Swiss initiative on the organization of a national campaign of "Recognition of the Domestic Economy – Regularize Undocumented Migrants."

Following the consultation on decent work, the Roman Catholic Church of Geneva organized an informal meeting with CCIG and Catholic and Protestant church representatives to consider opportunities to work on the issue of domestic workers in Switzerland. Moreover, the group linked the subject of domestic workers with the national initiative for the organization of a sensitization campaign. In this context, CCIG highlighted the importance of the inclusion of the ratification of the ILO International Convention N°.189 among the objectives of the campaign, giving its support for insuring the link between the national Swiss campaign with the ILO and with the international network for this subject already in existence. In this context, CCIG participated in the organization of round table discussions in a facilitating capacity (the invitation of officials and access to ILO documentation).

Circulation of Information

CCIG has circulated information regarding major international issues. The organization uses a mailing list for circulation in particular, which is a wealth of previously made contacts. Apart from sharing articles previously submitted by network members, CCIG co-organizes and participates in meetings and discussion forums.

Climate Change and Human Rights

As part of the continuity of its various work concerning the theme of climate change, CCIG participated in the Human Rights Council Seminar regarding the impact of climate change on the legal implementation of human rights. The seminar was held at the Palais des Nations in Geneva on February 23-24, 2012. This event was held through the decision of the Council following a civil society mobilization at the Council's Social Forum, which was held in 2011. Ahead of this meeting, CCIG had co-organized a conference in cooperation with the World Council of Churches (WCC) and other partner NGOs to harmonize messages from Civil Society into a joint statement. This statement was supported with quasi-unanimity by more than 40 national and international NGOs at the Social Forum.

Collaboration with the Church of Geneva

In the framework of our collaboration with the Roman Catholic Church of Geneva, CCIG has continued to participate in meetings with the Department of World Outreach, a permanent member. These meetings were occasions for exchange and reinforcement of links in a Geneva where the world of international organizations appear a long way off from the concerns of the Department.

Structuring of Our Activities

Over the past year the Committee has held over 10 meetings at CCIG headquarters. A large part of the work consisted of stabilizing the work of the organization and to support the Secretary General with their work and to develop new sources of financial support. The preparation for meetings, session minutes in addition to regular meetings with the President as well as between the President and Secretary General at the end for planning purposes and organization are tasks that are part of any organization's life, including CCIG.

Apart from meetings with organizations applying for membership, it is important to note that this year updating the Center's database concerning its members. The update was made through telephone interviews. Lastly, like every year, several *ad hoc* meetings were held between the secretariat and members requiring assistance for the development of their activities.

Financial Strategies

In November 2012, the Committee of CCIG organized and held an internal seminar to revise the vision, mission and objects of CCIG in order to identify priorities for our 2013-2017 Strategy and Action Plan. This work served as the base for identification of new methods of diversification of our financial sources.

Key Elements in Fundraising Activities:

- The Decent Work Project was realized through **financial support** and partnership of Caritas Internationalis and the German Commission for Justice and Peace/Kolping International.
- The training course for Basque Country NGO representatives was proposed to CCIG by UNESCO Etxea, which contributed the financial resources for the project.
- Similarly, in late 2012 we had obtained a contribution on behalf of Trócaire towards the UPR Platform.
- Our research for Swiss German funding— which began in late 2011 and continued throughout 2012—was successful in obtaining donations for CCIG from the Interior Mission of Zug and the Catholic Church of Zug.