



CCIG
INTERNATIONAL
CATHOLIC
CENTER
OF GENEVA

REPORT OF ACTIVITIES 2015

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SOMMAIRE

SUMMARY 2

At the Heart of Challenges of Our Times

EDITORIAL 3

Accompanying the Work of the UN System

SERVICE TO NGOs 4

Understanding Legal Mechanisms for the Protection of Human Rights

TRAINING 5

Promoting Engagements on Issues of Shared Interest

EXCHANGES AND AWARENESS-RAISING 6

Internal Process Improvement at the Center

ADMINISTRATION 7

ABRÉVIATIONS

CINGO Catholic-inspired Non-Governmental Organization

HRC Human Rights Council

ILO International Labour Organisation

NGO Non-Governmental Organization

OHCHR Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

UPR Universal Periodic Review

« At the Heart of Challenges of Our Times »

EDITORIAL

DEAR FRIENDS OF THE CENTER,

2015 was a particularly grim year for the international community. Wars and humanitarian crisis with massive refugee flows demonstrated in a brutal way the impotence and difficulty of the international community to guarantee fundamental rights. Too often it does not even simply protect life.

I am especially grateful to all the people who have avoided becoming demotivated, who continue to engage perhaps even more so for justice and peace in this world. Their courage and strength brings new impetus. It motivates us not to give up, to continue to engage and recognize that at the heart of this suffering, acts of love and hope arise.

The work within the International Geneva remains a bit abstract. Often it seems distant from reality. But the topics discussed have great importance. The CCIG works to create links between the field and the international organizations in Geneva.

In 2015, thanks to the commitment of its team, its members and partners, the CCIG organized an NGO consultation entitled “From the informal economy to the formal economy: ensuring more fair and decent working conditions” in conjunction with the second discussion of the International Labour Organization (ILO) on the adoption of a recommendation on the transition from the informal economy to the formal economy. Focusing on youth, women and migrants often exposed to abuse and exploitation in the labor market, the consultation was a valuable opportunity for civil society to discuss the economic challenges of today and their impacts on the most vulnerable groups.

The year 2015 also marked the beginning of a project at the local level, fully designed and managed by the CCIG in collaboration with its members FMSI and ERI. With the support of the Republic and Canton of Geneva and Adveniat, CCIG has set up a children’s rights defenders training program in five countries in Central and South America. The project will end with the organization of a side event at the Palais des Nations on the occasion of the 32nd Session of the Human Rights Council.



In 2016, it is clear that our work is not finished! We must monitor the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris agreement on climate change and the reform of the Human Rights Council require a strong commitment by civil society. Another task is to continue efforts to ensure financial and structural conditions for the CCIG to continue its work in 2016 and beyond! We thank all our partners, our members, the Board, our General Secretary, Maria D’Onofrio, and her replacement, Silvia Palomba, for their commitment and good cooperation. We look forward to continue in 2016 and beyond!

Sincerely,

Felix Wertli, President of CCIG Board

SERVICE TO NGOs

UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW (UPR) PLATFORM

This platform, established in December 2011, continues and reinforces its work considering new forms of collaboration among NGO members and other partners. During 2015, four meetings of the Platform took place to facilitate joint work of NGOs between the 18th and the 23rd sessions of the UPR. Six joint written statements were submitted to the High Commissioner for Human Rights by members of the CCIG Platform and six **oral statements** were delivered under item 6 of the Human Rights Council¹. Compared with the number of sessions and countries addressed by the UPR Platform in 2013 (ten countries and three sessions) and in 2014 (fifteen countries and five sessions), there continues to be a significant and steady increase in the work of the Platform.

Moreover, at the request of its members, the CCIG organized a **training day** on May 4, 2015 focusing on lobbying in Geneva and in the field. Representatives

«The support of the CCIG was critical for promoting participation in international advocacy. Our local partners valued the advice on the implementation and the approaches concerning the United Nations. This has facilitated their parallel national advocacy efforts.»

Fondation Apprentis d'Auteuil
CCIG Member



of NGOs based in Geneva and representatives of local NGOs (especially from African countries) participated in the training. Based on the analysis of the effectiveness of UPR recommendations, the training was devoted to advocacy opportunities. The speaker, Jean-Claude Vignoli (Program Director, UPR-info), presented a range of possible options on the basis of the strategic opportunity and timing, as well as other tools to perform lobbying. The objective of the training was to provide participants with ways to enhance their participation in the context of this review, and specifically to better structure their action to ensure that the recommendations from the UPR are efficiently implemented by the States concerned. Compared with other similar training sessions in 2013 and 2014, the number of participants has more than doubled. In addition, the variety of participants demonstrates CCIG's commitment to involve not only international NGOs but also local actors. More information on the mentioned training is available on the website at the following link CCIG: <http://www.ccig-iccg.org/?p=1346>

On the CCIG website, a **database** was set up to archive all the reports and oral statements produced by the members of the Platform. To enable easy and direct access to relevant documents, the database was updated regularly throughout 2015 (consult the UPR Platform Page: http://www.ccig-iccg.org/?page_id=457).

[1] http://www.ccig-iccg.org/?page_id=457

TRAINING

UNDERSTANDING LEGAL MECHANISMS FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

The secretariat of the CCIG has offered ongoing support to the activities of NGOs to train their members on the various United Nations mechanisms for the protection and promotion of human rights, such as the treaty bodies and the Universal Periodic Review. The beneficiaries being human rights defenders in Africa and America, among others.

In addition, from September 30 to October 1, 2015, the CCIG organized a training session on the UN mechanisms at the request of the UNESCO Centre of the Basque Country ("UNESCO Etxea") of the Basque government for representatives working on issues related to human rights participated in this training. The goal was to offer participants a space for learning and exchange to reflect on how to ensure respect for and implementation of human rights in the Basque Country (Spain). Topics such as the reconciliation process and the implications between migration and human rights were discussed. CCIG has also facilitated meetings between participants and the various key players in the field of human rights, particularly officials from the UN Office of the High Commissioner for human rights and representatives of international NGOs in Geneva. For more information, please consult the CCIG website: http://www.ccig-iccg.org/?page_id=513

«Just a formal note of thanks for taking the time to make your presentation to our training group [...]. As always it was well received and much appreciated.»

*Edmund Rice International (ERI)
CCIG Member*

«MANY THANKS for your presentation on the Treaty Body System. It was all very new to me, as is everything... so I enjoyed it very much. And, I look forward to working with you in the days ahead here in Geneva.»

*Marist International Solidarity Foundation (FMSI)
CCIG Member*

In addition, at the request of UNESCO Etxea, CCIG hosted a side event held on 29th September during the 30th session of the Human Rights Council. The event focused on the relationship between cultural diversity and human rights. The panel included, among others notable speakers, Ms. Mylène Bidault (OHCHR - Assistant of Ms. Farida Shaeed, Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights). Local human rights defenders, representatives of NGOs and United Nations experts participated and contributed to the success of this event. More information about the mentioned event available on the CCIG website at the following link: <http://www.ccig-iccg.org/?p=1434>.

Finally, thanks to the support of the Republic and Canton of Geneva as well as Adveniat, the CCIG started in the 4th quarter 2015 a project for training and capacity building of Defenders of Children's Rights in five Central and South American countries, namely Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Bolivia. Designed and developed in partnership with two of its members, Edmund Rice International (ERI) and Marist International Solidarity Foundation (FMSI), this project taking place throughout 2015 and 2016 consists of a field training on the UN mechanisms to benefit 25 local representatives of NGOs committed to the rights of children; a side event will be organized in Geneva at the Human Rights Council to provide the opportunity for some of the training participants to present their experience and knowledge of the local situation to representatives of States and other international actors.

EXCHANGES AND AWARENESS-RAISING

«FROM INFORMAL TO FORMAL ECONOMY: ENSURING MORE JUST AND DECENT CONDITIONS OF WORK» CCIG CONSULTATION

For several years, the CCIG has shown great interest in the activities of the International Labour Organization (ILO), in particular in the framework of the International Labour Conference. On the occasion of the discussion of an ILO Recommendation on the transition from the informal economy to the formal economy, the CCIG organized on June 2, 2015 a consultation on this subject, in cooperation with the German Commission for Justice and Peace / Kolping International, the World Movement of Christian Workers (WMCW), the International Coordination of Young Christians Workers (ICYCW), and Caritas Internationalis, and with the support of WIEGO (Women in Informal Economy: Globalizing and Organizing). The event offered participants a forum for dialogue in parallel with the session of the International Labour Conference which was held simultaneously. It included the involvement of remarkable speakers including Mrs. Gloria Moreno Fontes, (Migration Department - ILO), as well as the work of thematic groups animated by experts. Following the event, an Outcome Document² was produced and distributed. For more information, see the article published on the CCIG website³, the invitation and the consultation program⁴.

«I really appreciated [CCIG] work [...]. All the work we did together will be a strong base for us to look at the reality of young people in the world of work and build on for a better future»

*International Coordination of Young
Christians Workers (ICYCW)
CCIG Partner*

PROMOTION OF ILO CONVENTION N° 189 CONCERNING DECENT WORK FOR DOMESTIC WORKERS

On the occasion of the entry into force in Switzerland of the Convention n° 189 concerning Decent Work for Domestic Workers, on 12 November 2015, the International Catholic Center of Geneva and the Parish of Saint Clotilde organized a public event to raise awareness on the ratification of this Convention, which is relevant to both the local community and international stakeholders in Geneva. CCIG and Saint Clotilde have produced and circulated brochures (in English⁵ and in French⁶) on Convention No. 189 and its role in Switzerland, as well as a check list (in French⁷, English⁸, Spanish⁹ and Portuguese¹⁰) as a resource for domestic workers and their employers in order to promote awareness and action regarding the fundamental rights of domestic workers. For more information, consult: <http://www.ccig-iccg.org/?p=1463>.

[2] The report is available on CCIG website at: http://www.ccig-iccg.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Outcome_Document_FINAL-final_links_to_add-22.07.2015.pdf

[3] <http://www.ccig-iccg.org/?p=1378>

[4] http://www.ccig-iccg.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Invitation_Informal-Economy_June-2-2015.pdf

[5] http://www.ccig-iccg.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Brochure_EN_V2.pdf

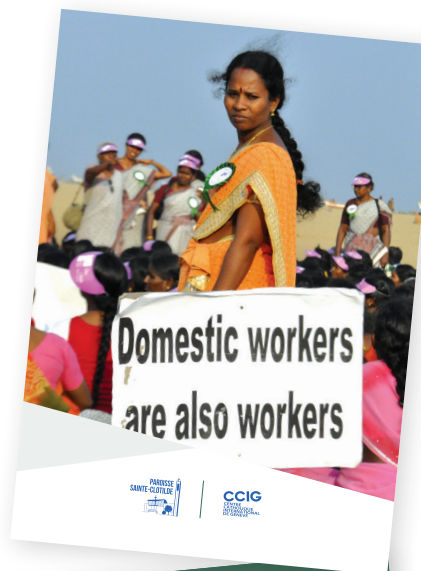
[6] http://www.ccig-iccg.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Brochure_FR_V5.pdf

[7] http://www.ccig-iccg.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Depliant_FR.pdf

[8] http://www.ccig-iccg.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Depliant_EN.pdf

[9] http://www.ccig-iccg.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Depliant_ES.pdf

[10] http://www.ccig-iccg.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Depliant_PT.pdf

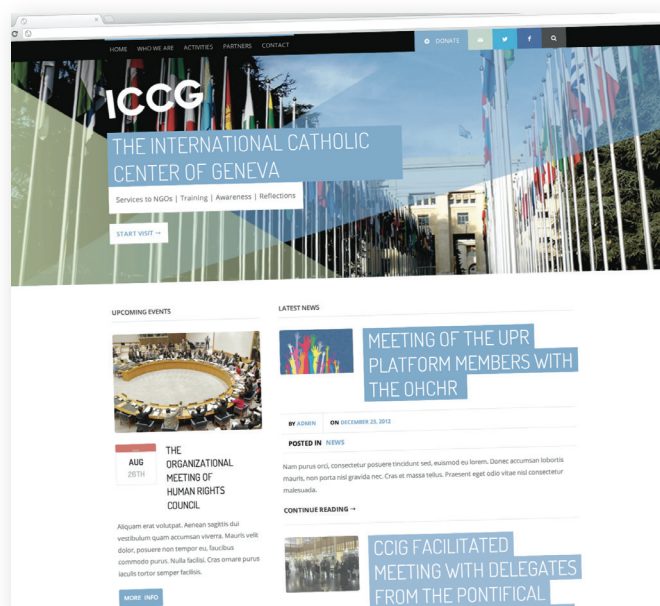


ADMINISTRATION

STRUCTURE OF CCIG ACTIVITIES

During the past year the Board has held seven meetings at the CCIG headquarters. Much of the work aimed to ensure coherence of all activities with the Strategy and Action Plan 2013-2017 and the development of fundraising efforts.

Finally, as with every year, several meetings were held between the Secretariat and members wishing to receive assistance in the development of their activities.



FINANCIAL STRATEGY

In addition to the continued and appreciated support of Action de Carême (Swiss Catholic Lenten Fund), CCIG has, in 2015, consolidated existing partnerships and took steps to identify new sources of funding. The approval by the Republic and Canton of Geneva and by Adveniat of the above-cited project for defenders of children's rights in Central and South America has been an important aspect of our fundraising efforts.



KEY POINTS RELATED TO FUNDRAISING:

- The training course for representatives of the Basque Country and the organization of the corresponding side event were mandated by the CCIG "UNESCO Extea" that ensured the financial aspects of the project.
- Similarly, in 2015, CCIG has obtained a contribution to the UPR Platform from Trócaire.
- Fundraising in German-speaking Switzerland has resulted in donations from the Interior Mission of Zug.
- Other activities such as the consultation on the transition of the informal economy to the formal economy were financed by the respective partners.

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Rue de Varembe 1 – P.O. Box 43 – Switzerland – 1211 Genève 20
Tel: 00 41 22 734 14 65 – Fax: 00 41 22 734 08 78 – E-Mail: secretariat@ccig-iccg.org

www.ccig-iccg.org