

President

To all members

Strasbourg, 26 July 2024

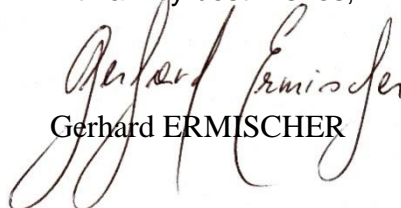
Dear colleagues and friends,

Before leaving to Salzburg for my own summer vacation I would like to wish you all a very relaxing and enjoyable summer break. Here in the Council of Europe the last weeks were still filled with exiting events, like the [annual exchange of views of the President of the Conference of INGOs with the Committee of Ministers](#), [the 100th meeting of the CDDH](#), [the intergovernmental Steering Committee on Human Rights in Helsinki](#) and the [High-Level Conference on the Social Charter in Vilnius](#). Our representatives were also present at the CDDH and the Social Charter. They made strong and clear statements on behalf of Civil Society. We also have been addressed by representatives of Civil Society from the French Overseas Territories concerning the exclusion of these territories from the Social Charter, have addressed the issue in Vilnius, started a dialogue with the French Ambassador and are looking into the issue of territorial exclusion in general. We also have agreed on an even stronger co-operation with the European Committee on Social Rights.

We are also looking forward, especially to our upcoming General Assembly from 14 to 16 October. The newly elected Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Alain Berset, has already agreed to come and present himself to our members, with vision and working programme. Furthermore, we are working on two special issues for our meeting on Gender Equality and Gender Mainstreaming (in close co-operation with our Committee on Gender Equality) and on our new Youth Strategy. To strengthen our work with Youth we have had meetings with the Youth Sector of the Council of Europe and its Youth Advisory Council – and we have prepared a series of [online meetings](#) for young people in the run-up to our Conference. It will start on 12 August, the International Day for Youth.

And we will organise again a common dinner thanks to our OING Service – who found a really great place for a very decent price. If you want to join for a convivial evening in Strasbourg, please subscribe following the instructions in the [invitation letter](#).

With all my best wishes,


Gerhard ERMISCHER