



**3RD WORLD FORUM ON
HUMAN RIGHTS**

From universal principles to local action

NANTES - FRANCE 30 JUNE - 3 JULY 2008
NANTES INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION CENTRE

3RD WORLD FORUM ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Within this year of the 60th anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of 1948, Human Rights keep their fundamental characteristic of common ideal and their fulfilment remains an ardent commitment for all the States and all the people, for all men and all women.

Despite the multiplication and the ever-growing fluidity of economic and digital exchanges, inequalities, intolerance and violence continue to increase throughout the world while, in many countries, tyranny still prevails in various forms - even if it is sometimes concealed by a veneer of democracy – and economic development, where it exists, is governed by a consumer and financial logic, neglecting too often the “human development” factor.

Faced with such a situation, human rights need more than ever to be promoted, protected and enforced. This protection is none other than a collective enterprise, the work of the international community as a whole, from the State – which is responsible for the enforcement of treaties or conventions adopted and ratified – to individuals, alone or in groups, and local governments.

With a view to taking an active part in this collective enterprise, the World Forum on Human Rights has been held in Nantes every second year since 2004. Like the past two editions, **the 3rd World Forum will take place at the Nantes International Convention Centre from Monday 30th June to Thursday 3rd July 2008.**

AN INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVE RELAYED BY A « COALITION » OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

The first Nantes Forum was organised by the City of Nantes in May 2004, upon the request of UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation) and with its support and, more specifically, with the support of its Sector of Social and Human Sciences (SHS) headed by Pierre Sané. The aim was – and still is – to develop a new approach linking the input of both theory and practice which usually have the tendency to exclude and ignore each other. Combining reflection and action should enable to put forward appropriate and efficient answers in response to the challenges that the protection and defence of human rights are facing.

Following the success of the first forum, a second edition was held in July 2006. It was attended by 1 200 delegates and speakers, representing some seventy different nationalities. The second edition was fully supported by a “coalition” of local authorities, including Nantes Metropole (urban community of Nantes), the Pays de la Loire Regional Council, the “department” of Loire-Atlantique and the City of Nantes. It also had the support of the French Foreign Office, the International Organisation for the French-speaking communities, the “Caisse des Depots” and the Charles Leopold Mayer Foundation for the Progress of Humankind.

The Nantes Forum has also brought together delegates from other national and international organisations such as: the Commission of the African Union, the Council of Europe, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Development Programme, the Spanish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights, the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the French National Commission on Human Rights, the French National Commission for UNESCO...

This “coalition” recently entrusted a new organisation with the planning and set-up of the World Forum on Human Rights. This young non-profit organisation, located in Nantes and within the jurisdiction of French law (namely the “1901 Law” pertaining to associations) is called the **International Permanent Secretariat for Rights and Local Governments**. It is headed by Professor Emmanuel Decaux, Professor of Law at the University of Paris II Panthéon-Assas, and former Member of the United Nations Sub-commission on the promotion and protection of Human Rights.

In addition to the bi-annual organisation of the Nantes Forum, the broader mission of the permanent secretariat is mostly to gather and facilitate the action of a network of actors involved in the defence and the implementation of human rights, especially at a local level. Since November 2007, the International permanent secretariat (SPIDH) – as part of the World Federation of local communities UCLG (United cities and local governments) – has been leading a working group on human rights composed of local communities from all over the world.

A FORUM TO SHARE KNOWLEDGE, CREATE NETWORKS AND EXCHANGE GOOD PRACTICES

With open discussions and exchange of opinions, the World Forum on Human Rights is not meant to adopt resolutions or declarations, nor is it the place to draw up protection or monitoring standards concerning respect for human rights, a responsibility that is borne by relevant authorities and institutions entrusted with such tasks. Modest yet ambitious, the Forum aims at providing a new meeting place for **reflection, intensive discussion and, above all, promotion of good practices** towards achieving progress in the field of human rights.

¹ The SPIDH is now in charge of the animation of the working group on the « Global Charter-Agenda for Human Rights in the City » within the Social Inclusion and Participative Democracy Commission of UCLG, chaired by Eloi Pietá, mayor of Guarhulos (Brazil), and Richard Gomà, deputy mayor of Barcelona (Spain). <http://www.spidh.org/en/the-charter-agenda/index.html>

All too often, the different human rights actors work separately. Therefore, the aim of the Nantes Forum is to encourage the **exchange of views** and the **sharing of knowledge**. The Forum makes it possible for participants to establish contacts, launch discussions, **create new networks** and reach agreements on possible joint actions and their subsequent follow-up.

In order to face the existing and forthcoming human rights challenges, solidarity among all those working in the promotion, protection and enforcement of human rights is essential. The level of responsibility may vary – whether one represents a State or acts on a personal basis – but the international community as a whole has a joint responsibility that should make each individual act. The Nantes World Forum reaffirms this sense of solidarity and responsibility by focusing on the local issues, on the ground, as it there that the effective implementation of human rights can be measured.

ALLOWING LOCAL GOVERNMENTS TO HAVE A SAY

It is up to the cities, provinces, counties or regions – depending on the administrative structure of the country – to take local action for a more effective implementation of human rights. To do so, they work closely with local citizens and other actors (academics, researchers, trade unions, associations, NGOs in the field), and increasingly with national and international organisations.

For some years, local governments have come together to create networks with a view to making their voice heard and to place more weight on national and international decisions. In some cases, they may act even as a counter-balance to the power of the State. In others, unfortunately, they forge links with tyranny. Whatever the case, local governments have become full-fledged actors in the discussion on human rights, in between the approach of the States and of the individuals or organisations fighting for respect and implementation of these rights.

The Nantes World Forum aims at illustrating the ever-increasing role of cities and local governments in the field of human rights. It raises issues on their diplomatic influence, their organisational capacity and on the conditions under which local governments can efficiently engage in international solidarity networks indispensable for making progress in the field of human rights.

By focusing mainly on local action, the Nantes Forum addresses **all categories of human rights actors equally**. The Forum is **a useful meeting place** to exchange ideas and experiences, to share knowledge and to strengthen cooperation among the many actors dedicated to fundamental rights at a local, national, regional and international level.

THE TARGET AUDIENCE

As a global event, the Nantes Forum is open to all categories of human rights actors. As in 2004 and 2006, the 3rd Nantes Forum will feature discussions on current human rights issues with:

- **Public authorities** at a local, national, regional and international level, representatives of governments, parliaments, cities, inter-governmental organisations, as well as national human rights commissions and national institutions for the defence of human rights.
- **Representatives of civil society**, non-governmental organisations, associations, trade unions, foundations, human rights defenders and the media.
- **Human rights institutions and specialists**, lawyers and experts working with national, regional and international organisations, as well as researchers and academics in the field of human rights.
- **Economic and business actors**, representatives of the corporate world, in particular, multinational companies and development agencies.

All the above actors are invited to join in to prepare the programme and organise the Forum (suggesting ideas for round tables, conferences, etc...).

THE ORGANISATION

The Forum provides a meeting space for all with open dialogue on issues relating to human rights implementation and protection. It is organised as follows:

• **Plenary sessions managed by the body in charge of the organisation and potential partners (based on the Scientific Committee's recommendations)**

The global issues referring to the main themes (see the main themes) selected by the Scientific Committee are raised during the plenary sessions. The themes which are more specific will be discussed during the round tables. They are conducted in the 3 official languages: French, English and Spanish.

• **Round tables proposed and hosted by participating organisations: institutions, NGOs or associations...**

The 3 main themes are discussed in more detail with a specific approach during the round tables. Round tables can be organised by any organisation invited to the Forum, regardless of its field of activity. They can be conducted in 3 languages (French, English and Spanish). The Nantes International Convention Centre has the facilities for 5 round tables with simultaneous interpretation services. Other rooms are available with no interpretation services.

• **Other highlights: conferences, cultural events, exhibitions...**

Highlights and other events may be initiated by participants and the pilot committee. It would be appreciated to have cultural events reflecting the cultural diversity of the Forum, to facilitate understanding and mutual respect among the different nationalities and cultures represented. Also, participants are invited to organise exhibitions. Proposals should be submitted to the Scientific Committee and to the Pilot Committee for assessment and approval (see hereafter).

REPRESENTATIVE ORGANISATION

2 committees have been set up:

1. The Scientific Committee drafts recommendations on the overall framework of the Forum, the programme and the topics to be discussed at the plenary sessions. The Committee also formulates recommendations on the selection of participants and the main speakers and on the proposed themes for round tables and workshops. The Committee has about 20 members, representing all the different categories of participants (see list hereafter).

2. The Pilot Committee is composed of members of the Executive Board, the team of the International Permanent Secretariat (SPIDH) and various partners. The Pilot Committee makes decisions on the organisation of the Forum based on the Scientific Committee's recommendations. It also defines the terms and conditions for the participants, for the cultural events organised within the Forum, and for all communication aspects and contacts with the media.

SELECTION CRITERIA AND ORGANISATION OF THE ROUND TABLES, CONFERENCES AND EXHIBITIONS

The aim of the World Forum is to contribute to the progress of human rights, in compliance with the common objective of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The round table discussions should focus on the 3 major themes short listed for the Forum. Held in the morning or in the afternoon, these 2^{1/2} hour-sessions will be the opportunity for the public to exchange and debate with the speakers.

Proposals for round tables and conferences should be submitted to the Scientific Committee for assessment. They must include a detailed description of the theme to be discussed (at least one typed page) and mention the number of speakers together with their position. Once the proposal has been approved, the organiser shall take full responsibility for the round table, including payment of any relevant expenses.

Round tables, conferences and exhibitions should not include:

- any aggressive contents or messages in breach of human rights
- any messages justifying or encouraging national, ethnic, racial, sexual, religious, cultural or linguistic hatred, hostility or violence
- any messages encouraging or legitimising any attack against public order or any act of terrorism or violence.

Each round table is conducted by a moderator, who ensures that the speakers' allotted time is respected and that the questions and comments from the audience do not exceed 2 or 3 minutes each. If need be, the moderator may allow a short right of reply that should not exceed 2 minutes.

The terms and conditions for the organisation of round tables, conferences, exhibitions and other cultural events are detailed on the registration and entry form attached herewith.

ONLINE WORKSHOPS

A multilingual website has been set up (French, English, Spanish) to facilitate the organisation of round tables: <http://www.spidh.org>

The website features the following:

- Presentation of the Permanent Secretariat and partners
- Themes and information related to the next World Forum on Human Rights
- Online registration forms for the 2008 Forum
- Database of documents and archives on the 2004 and 2006 editions
- Discussion forum
- Newsletter subscription, etc.

Please note that the website www.spidh.org has an extranet facility: a Web exchange platform for on-line workshops open to anyone in the world.

This **free** service is accessible via an identification system (personal codes).

After validation by the Website administrator, it is possible:

- to join in an online workshop
- to create a personal online workshop
- to create your personal space and modify your choices at a later stage

SHARING INFORMATION

An online workshop is a virtual working space which brings different members (contributors) together to discuss a common area of interest (e.g. the theme of a round table). Online workshops are open to all, even to people who do not physically take part in the World Forum on Human Rights. They are given the opportunity to start or continue exchanging ideas before, during or after the Forum. These individuals and/or groups must identify themselves on the Home Page using a registration form / login.

Each workshop is managed by a *moderator* (someone who volunteers to do so and who is, for example, in charge of an organisation willing to conduct a round table at the next Forum). The *moderator* manages the workspace, he/she regulates exchanges and contributions where necessary, by refusing irrelevant subjects and banning all messages that may harm human dignity and human rights. The moderator is in direct contact with the website administration and submits online contributions for validation.

The contributors who are part of an online workshop are offered practical and easy-to-use communication tools to keep themselves informed and to exchange (document centre, discussion forum, messages, diary, etc.). They may:

- send a document that can only be read by members of the workshop
- propose a discussion via an online forum dedicated to the workshop members
- view the agenda common to all workshop members
- send an email to the other workshop members

To make it easier to access information, an email warning is sent to all workshop members for each new contribution.

Should you be interested, please contact the website administrator:

Amanda Rio de Pedro, SPIDH, phone +33 (0)2 51 83 70 07. E-mail: a.riodepedro@spidh.org

THE THEMES

The opening ceremony of the 3rd World Forum on Human Rights (on Monday 30 June 2008) will be dedicated to the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (see below). In addition, the Scientific Committee has selected three main themes that will be presented during the plenary sessions and developed in further detail in the round tables.

ROUND TABLES: CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

A call for contributions has been sent to all organisations and to all actors interested in conducting a round table. After validation by the Scientific Committee (content and speakers) and the Pilot Committee (terms and conditions), the propositions will be integrated into the final programme.

OPENING CEREMONY

60 YEARS AFTER... THE PERTINENCE OF THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Defined as the “common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations”, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) was adopted on 10 December 1948 by the General Assembly of the United Nations, in the aftermath of the Second World War, with the shared hope of definitely warding off any barbarous act by implementing “better living conditions with greater freedom”. Sixty years after being its adoption, the World Forum on Human Rights proposes to reflect on both the reality of that ideal aiming at “the universal and effective respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms” and the strength of this message of freedom, justice and peace in today’s world.

What about the universality proclaimed by the UDHR? And what for? Is it some abstract standard that would be imposed in the same manner on all human beings without taking into account their social, cultural, philosophical and/or religious diversity? Or is it more a definition of common principles acknowledging the right of everyone – individual or group – to autonomy? If the basic principle of human rights is the recognition of the inherent dignity of the human being, then what is happening today to the rights of each woman and each man? If everyone has the right to participate freely in the life of his/her community, where do we place individual and collective rights? How can we reconcile freedom and equality, individualism and national solidarity, State responsibility and the role of the international community?

Does not the human rights programme, implicit in the UDHR, induce a democratisation of international life, if not the development of an international democracy, when fully enforced? Is this still mere utopia, in a world dominated by power clashes, or is this a concrete goal attainable by all citizens of the world?

The UDHR’s effectiveness has been strengthened over the past 60 years. At the beginning, a mere resolution by the General Assembly and a non-binding text just like any other Declaration, the UDHR did not only respond to a political commitment by all State members, but it also induced legal obligations within the framework of the United Nations. How can the UDHR be considered together with treaties that have extended its primary ambition by making the very principles it proclaims justiciable, especially the International Covenants on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), and on Economic, Social and Cultural rights (ICESCR) that are being ratified by more and more States parties? Does the multiplication of regional systems and specialised instruments reinforce the universality and the effectiveness of the UDHR? How to protect the central place of the UDHR in a more and more complex and compartmentalised international system?

Is the UDHR ready for the new challenges of the 21st century as regards the environment and sustainable development, the new technologies and genetic progress? Is there not an additional risk of a gap between rich and poor countries?

Beyond the prime responsibility of States, what is the role of “individuals and social institutions” in the promotion and protection of human rights, be they public or private actors? Ten years after the adoption by the General Assembly on 9 December 1998 of the Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, how can we assess the actions taken by international and national NGOs?



Dignity and justice for all of us

TUESDAY
1ST JULY 2008

PLENARY SESSION

HUMAN RIGHTS - BETWEEN GLOBALISATION AND INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

As an irreversible fact, globalisation is part of a sphere in which two different logics are conflicting: one, in the field of international trade, that gives more importance to power clashes rather than to legal and ethical considerations, while the second one tries to reinstate law (and, above all, respect for human rights) at the very heart of economic and trade preoccupations. The continuous contradiction between these two logics can be seen in the different strategies of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

Economic globalisation is generally blamed for creating great inequalities, widening the gap between economic powers and developing countries and generating drastic consequences for women and men in these countries. International actions for solidarity and cooperation are being taken by various actors (NGOs, trades unions, companies, governments, various institutions, States, intergovernmental and transregional organisations...). These actions may indeed limit the negative impact of the market economy. But, in between the effects of globalisation and international solidarity, is there an approach giving priority to respect for human rights? Should we consider international solidarity and cooperation as a stopgap when the current international order needs a wider reform?

Is the right to development clearly integrated into the human rights issue? And, in countries where solidarity and cooperation are essential, what about respect for civil and political rights? How can we persuade the officials in those countries that human rights defenders need to be protected?

Generally speaking, what about the effective implementation of economic, social and cultural rights? How to further strengthen their justiciability, in other words, how to ensure access and effective guarantees or the exercises of these rights, the "right to the right"? First, where do we stand with regard to training, information, education and knowledge of these rights which should be everyone's concern? What place do we give to human rights education and children's rights? What are the consequences of globalisation with regard to cultural diversity, especially for the most vulnerable groups such as indigenous peoples?

Today, the relation between globalisation and international solidarity is unbalanced. There is a relative but growing awareness on the part of international financial institutions and companies alike (through Corporate Social Responsibility, for instance). How can globalisation take human rights into account so that economic requirements are no longer a hindrance to their advancement as well as the advancement of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (2000-2015)? To what extent are international financial institutions and transnational companies responsible for inequalities? And should international solidarity represent a sustainable solution; does its future rely on the significant input of economic powers and private foundations (e.g. Bill Gates Foundation)?

Is it possible that market requirements and human-rights based solidarity may one day converge, especially in the field of the environment? Are the concepts of sustainable development and co-development something more than just buzzwords? How can they generate long-term and legally-based dynamics, committed to the cause of humankind?

Possible points to be discussed in round tables (non-exhaustive list):

- Women's rights worldwide: evolutions and regressions. Proposition of the Loire-Atlantique County Council.
- Protection of human rights defenders: how can solidarity be promoted?
- City diplomacy and promotion of respect for human rights.
- The Information Society, communication and individual freedoms.
- Economic sanctions, boycott of sporting events, opinion polls and human rights: condemn or convince?
- Global warming: towards an environmental migrant status?
- Corporate social responsibility.
- The right to development (and co-development).
- What type of solidarity within transregional areas? The European Union and the Mediterranean countries, the French-speaking world and the Commonwealth countries...
- The challenges of the right to land
- Children's rights: the North / South divide

WEDNESDAY 2ND JULY 2008

PLENARY SESSION

WHICH EUROPE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS? WHICH HUMAN RIGHTS FOR EUROPE?

Since the creation of the Council of Europe in 1949 and the adoption of the European Convention on Human Rights in 1950, in line with the Universal Declaration, human rights in Europe have shown remarkable progress. However, this dynamic goes along with a growing complexity as three regional systems overlap: the Council of Europe with 47 member States to date, the European Union with 27 member States, and the OSCE which extends from Vancouver to Vladivostok through the European continent. These three organisations share essential common values, based on human rights, democracy and the rule of law. Nevertheless, beyond reference texts and principles, what is the daily situation for citizens, whether they are nationals of the European Union, the Council of Europe, the OSCE or other countries?

The ratification of the Treaty of Lisbon should validate the legal status of the Charter of Fundamental Rights ratified in Nice in 2000. At a time when France is to hold the presidency of the European Union, it seems particularly relevant to reflect on the significance of human rights in Europe, with a comprehensive view of the challenges.

Which Europe for Human Rights?

Does Europe hold a specific responsibility on a worldwide level for human rights? Without a doubt, if we are to listen to the public question raised by the American NGO Human Rights Watch (HRW) in early 2006 (launch of the HRW World Report 2007). First of all, does Europe wish to take on this responsibility? Is Europe capable of doing so? « Rather than choosing unanimity over effectiveness, the European Union should fill up the lack of world leadership on human rights by implementing a vigorous policy based on principles », said Kenneth Roth, HRW Executive Director. He then found deplorable that the EU Member States had agreed upon a strategy based on « the lowest common denominator » with regard to respect for human rights. In other terms, is there not a risk that EU Member States' governments which are tilting toward an « accommodating » position with regard to human rights' violations of luring into their wake those who prefer a more respectable approach of principles?

Hence, what is the European Union's attitude towards the new UN Human Rights Council? How able is the EU to defend its priorities or to react to disturbing initiatives? Also, how to overcome the logic of empowering policies and power clashes that seem to be dominating again the East-West relationships within the Council of Europe or the OSCE once again?

How can Europe remain on the front line of the fight for human rights? Does Europe have legitimacy and sufficient means to play this leadership role? How can the European Parliament and national parliaments play a leadership role to democratise European diplomacy on human rights? And to what extent should European citizens be involved?

Which Human Rights for Europe?

The several European mechanisms set up for the protection of human rights have enabled their effective enforcement, as shown in the dense jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights which has induced a number of significant reforms in various States. Other mechanisms have been created by the Council of Europe, guaranteeing social rights, protecting national minorities or preventing torture and inhuman or degrading treatment, especially in situations of detention. Europe has also turned the abolition of the death penalty into a priority.

But how long is the path we still have to walk before the full implementation of all human rights generalised, especially economic and social rights, without discrimination? Even within the States that have ratified the European Convention on Human Rights and its protocols – especially Protocol n° 12 on non-discrimination, not yet ratified by France – progress still needs to be made on gender parity, and on the fight against discrimination based on ethnic or national origin, sexual preference, age or disability. Surprisingly, some national extremist groups stirring up openly racist and xenophobic theses seem to be benefiting from a disturbing indulgence...

In an international environment of security withdrawal and fight against terrorism, the European construction – with harmonised policies on immigration and asylum – may involve risks of human rights losing ground. For the migration policy followed by the European Union, are we not going backwards with the externalisation of the problem outside EU borders (North African « gate » countries) and the non-respect for immigrants' fundamental rights, be they illegal immigrants or not? Not to mention the many barriers that asylum seekers face? And how to explain the security fears using the fight against terrorism as an excuse (arbitrary detention, data transfers, file multiplication, telephone tapping, blacklists...) to justify violations of fundamental rights and the most basic civil and political freedoms?

Which role can the European institutions such as the new Agency for Fundamental Rights¹ and the various independent bodies like the European Council's Commissioner for Human Rights or the network of national human rights institutions, play to promote and protect the effective respect for human rights all over the continent? What should be the place of civil society in this European public space in the making? Which conclusions can we draw from other regional experiences, in America or Africa?

Possible points to be developed in round tables (non-exhaustive list):

- Civil society and European institutions: European Union, Council of Europe (with the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities), Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)... Which actors and which partners for human rights?
- Xenophobia, racism and intolerance: are the old demons back?
- Europe faced with increased security abuses due to the fight against terrorism
- Migration and human rights: towards common migration policies?
- The scope of the EU Charter for Fundamental Rights: social rights challenged?
- European diplomacy, democracy and human rights
- Human rights in prison
- Europe and rights of asylum
- Europe, cultural diversity and multiculturalism
- For a comparative and critical analysis of "migratory tests" (to validate candidates' aptitude for citizenship in an EU country).
- The European Fundamental Rights Agency: stakes and challenges
- What role should Europe play to further strengthen international criminal justice?
- Human rights face to face with the construction of the European Union
- International trade, Europe and human rights

¹ *The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights is a body of the European Union (EU), established through Council Regulation (EC) No 168/2007 of 15 February 2007. It is based in Vienna and is built on the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC). The Agency carries out its tasks independently. It cooperates with national and international bodies and organisations, in particular with the Council of Europe. It also works closely with civil society organisations. The objective of the Agency is to provide the relevant institutions and authorities of the Community and its Member States - when implementing Community law - with assistance and expertise relating to fundamental rights in order to support them when they take measures or formulate courses of action within their respective spheres of competence to fully respect fundamental rights. The Agency is not empowered to examine individual complaints.*

THURSDAY
3RD JULY 2008

PLENARY SESSION

LOCAL GOVERNANCE AND HUMAN RIGHTS: EFFECTIVENESS WITHIN THE REACH OF CITIZENS?

Following a classical pattern, States – and therefore public authorities – face a triple obligation to respect, protect and fulfill human rights. Public authorities must not only respect but also ensure that human rights are respected at all responsibility levels, globally and locally, especially in private relationships. They must also implement them and make use of all appropriate means to induce their full effectiveness, both for civil and political rights (CPR) and economic, social and cultural rights (ESCR).

Due to their close relationship with the citizens, cities and local governments, local authorities are on front line among « public authorities », especially in the field of ESCR. They can make the difference by developing rights to housing, health, employment as well as education, culture and leisure. And this is crucial given the progressive realization of ESCR. It is worth mentioning that the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights now systematically refers to the « obligations for actors other than State parties » and, in particular, local authorities' obligations. The fulfilment of human rights at local level is an indication of the involvement of all actors, private and public, through initiatives, innovative partnerships and new solidarities facilitating « the will to live together ».

« Local governance » aims at associating governing and governed people through the identification and the management of issues on their territories. Therefore, it should be possible for answers to be commonly thought about, formulated and implemented amongst officials (politicians, technicians...) and citizens. In this context, can human rights be the foundation for – good – local governance? Would such a model boost urban policies favouring justiciability of rights, citizens' cohesion, exchange and solidarity? How do local governments position themselves? Can they be considered as full-fledged new actors for human rights? What kind of cooperation and also what responsibilities can then be redefined for the States to ensure the enforcement of citizens' fundamental rights (justice, housing, water, education)?

In 2030, 60% of the world population will live in cities, sparking off risks of tension linked to conurbation, impoverishment, exclusion of persons without resources and risks related to the lack of infrastructure and appropriate services especially in developing countries. Violations of human rights are mostly concentrated in cities and urban areas because that is where power is exercised. Yet, being close to their citizens, are local governments not the best political instrument to provide solutions to people's preoccupations, to protect their rights, defend their implementation and ensure their effectiveness?

In this context, how can the implementation of rights be encouraged at local level by political authorities, academics and NGO activists? How can we influence local political authorities to adopt a human rights-based approach in territories under their jurisdiction as well as in their actions for decentralised cooperation? Is it a sine qua non condition or can it be negotiated?

Last, the World Forum on Human Rights aims at identifying and disseminating all the good practices existing at local level.

Possible points to be developed for round tables (non-exhaustive list):

- Global Charter Agenda for Human Rights in the City. Working group on the Global Charter Agenda for Human Rights in the City of the UCLG committee (United Cities and Local Governments) on *Social Inclusion and Participative Democracy*.
- Rights of migrants, local communities and (co)-development. In partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) / Platform for innovative partnerships.
- Access to social rights. Proposition of the Nantes Bar Association.
- Decentralised cooperation and implementation of human rights: what kind of reciprocity?
- Justiciability of rights: the role of the States and local governments.
- Rights of persons with disabilities and local policies.
- Citizens' cohesion at local level and cultural diversity: Examples of local initiatives. In partnership with the European Fundamental Rights Agency.
- Reintegration of young victims of trafficking. Programme conducted by the European Forum for Urban Safety.
- Politics of local governments and European migrant minorities.

THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

In alphabetical order

Mr. Federico Andreu Guzman, Deputy Secretary-General and General Counsellor for the International Commission of Jurists / ICJ (Colombia);

Mrs Martine Anstett, Governmental Office on Constitutional State and Liberties, Democratic Governance Department, DCGID, European and Foreign Affairs Ministry (France);

Mr. Antoine Bernard, Executive Director of the International Federation for Human Rights (headquarters in Paris, France);

Mrs Laurence Boisson de Chazournes, Professor and Director of the International Public Law and International Organisation Department, Faculty of Law, University of Geneva (Switzerland);

Mrs Virginia Bras Gomes, Member of the United Nations Committee on Economic Social and Cultural Rights; Senior Advisor of the Directorate General of Solidarity and Social Security, Portuguese Labour and Social Solidarity Ministry (Portugal);

Mrs Sylvie Bukhari-de Pontual, President of the FIACAT (International Federation of Action by Christians for the Abolition of Torture), Lawyer, Teacher in International Law at the Social Sciences Faculty of the Catholic Institute of Paris (France);

Mrs Christine Chanut, Counsellor at the French Court of Cassation, former Chairperson of the United Nations Human Rights Committee, (France);

Mr. Abdoullah Cissé, University Professor, Rector of the University of Bambey, Diourbel (Senegal);

Mr. Emmanuel Decaux, President of the International Permanent Secretariat « Human rights and local governments » (Nantes), Law Professor at the University of Paris II Panthéon-Assas, former member of the United Nations Sub-commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights (France)

Mrs Yvonne Donders, Deputy Director of the Amsterdam Center for International Law (ACIL) of the Law Faculty of the University of Amsterdam (Netherlands);

Mr. Michel Doucin, former Ambassador for Human Rights (France);

Mr. Jean-Marie Fardeau, Director of the Paris office of Human Rights Watch (France);

Mr. Michel Forst, General Secretary of the National Consultative Commission of Human Rights (France);

Mr. Ryuichi Ida, Law Professor at the University of Kyoto, former President of the UNESCO's International Bioethics Committee (Japan);

Mr. Pierre-Henri Imbert, former General Director of Human Rights for the Council of Europe, Public Law Professor (France);

Mr. Ibrahim Kaboglu, Constitutional Law Professor at the University of Marmara, former president of the Human Right Consultative Council, (Turkey);

Mr. Fatsah Ougergouz, Professor, Judge at the African Court on Human and People's Rights, Executive Director of the African Foundation for International Law, former Secretary at the International Court of Justice of The Haye (Algeria);

Mr. Anil Naidoo, Managing Director of Indiba Africa Development Alliance (Durban) Advocate of the High-Court of South-Africa, Chairman of the South-African Coalition for an International Criminal Court (South Africa);

Mr. Francis Perrin, Member of the Executive Committee and former President of the French section of Amnesty International France (France).

Mrs Mónica Pinto, Public Law Professor, Coordinator of the Human Rights program at the University of Buenos Aires (Argentina);

Mr. Hugo Sada, Head of Delegation on Peace, Democracy and Human Rights, International Organisation of the French-speaking communities, substitute **Mrs Alexandra Veleva**.

Mr. Pierre Sané, UNESCO Deputy General Director for Social and Human Sciences (United Nations);

Mr. William Schabas, Professor, Director of the Irish Centre for Human Rights, National University of Ireland (Canada / Ireland);

Mr. Linos Sicilianos, University of Athens, Member of the United Nations Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (Greece / United Nations);

Mr. Yann Tanguy, Professor and Honorary Rector of the University of Nantes, Delegated Director of the Université Numérique Juridique Francophone / Francophone Digital Law University (France);

Mr. Philippe Texier, Counsellor at the French Court of Cassation, President of the Committee of the Economical, Social and Cultural Rights of the United Nations (France);

Mr. Théo Van Boven, International Law Professor, University of Maastricht, former United Nations special Rapporteur on torture (Netherlands);

Mrs Leïla Zerrougui, Vice President of the International Lawyer Commission, Judge, President of the UN working group on arbitrary detentions (Algeria).

FROM THE EDICT OF NANTES TO HUMAN RIGHTS

Nantes is the 6th largest city of France. Located in the West, it is the administrative and economic centre of the Pays de la Loire region.

It is obviously not by chance that Nantes is hosting the next World Forum on Human Rights, and has been doing so since 2004. There is a clear and strong political will in the city that is shared by a large number of institutions, associations and private actors, to ensure economic and technological development and at the same time, respect the values that are the foundation of international law. These values are clearly stated in the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights whose 60th anniversary will be celebrated throughout the year 2008.

The anniversary will give the opportunity to reaffirm the respect, the protection and the fulfilment of human rights is a global responsibility for the whole international community and that each actor, at his/her own level, has a role to play: human rights by all and for all, as in the words of Sergio Vieira de Mello*: « *We all have a role to play for human rights to become a reality for everyone* ».

Nantes assumes responsibility for its own history. Known as the first French port during the 18th century, Nantes played a significant role in the worldwide slavery system from the end of the 17th century to the mid-19th century. That system allowed the deportation and trade of millions of Africans (men, women, children) who were regarded as mere objects, with a view to supplying the plantations in American colonies with the necessary work force. This dreadful and cruel system was part of an economic model that prevailed at that time for the benefit of all great European countries. Nantes was part of the scheme just like all the other great European ports. This sad reality, even long after the abolition of slavery, was silenced, ignored or... distorted.

From the early 90's, the Nantes authorities, considering that no common future could be built without revisiting history, decided « *to face the past* » with the help of local, national and international partners. Largely financed by the City of Nantes, a comprehensive study was launched, which fathered a major public cultural event called **The Shackles of Memory / Europe – Africa – Americas** (1992 – 1994). A huge exhibition – the largest ever organised on this theme in Europe –, event attracted about 400 000 visitors from all over the world to Nantes.

This ongoing work has brought together different actors, including academics and associations. In addition, the City of Nantes is behind major projects such as the design of the **Memorial commemorating the Abolition of Slavery**, commissioned to the artist Krzysztof Wodiczko and the architect Julian Bonder (opening in 2009). In doing so and without pretension, Nantes suggested to a number of partners, private and institutional, to get together and ponder over common values. This led to the creation of the **International Alliance for The Shackles of Memory**, presided by Mr Nicéphore Soglo, Mayor of Cotonou and former President of the Republic of Benin. The aim of the Alliance is to bring cities and local governments together and work on the common history of the slave trade and its consequences on the contemporary world.

Freedom: a prerequisite for civil peace

On the occasion of the 400th anniversary of the Edict of Nantes (1598 – 1998), the city of Nantes raised a number of questions on tolerance, freedom of speech, religious and civil peace freedoms. In April 1598, Henri IV, king of France, issued the world-known edict bearing the name of the city. As a royal law, the edict was to grant the Calvinist Protestants of France freedom of worship, albeit limited, with the definite aim of putting an end to the religious war that had been opposing Catholics and « *those of the reformed church* » since 1562. When he wrote « *I want to make peace in my kingdom* », Henri IV had understood that, to solve any conflict in a pacific manner, it was essential to recognise a freedom that is today regarded as a “fundamental” freedom.

A series of events (historical displays, conferences, shows, etc.) were organised on that occasion around the main theme: *Peace in Liberty*. With this in mind, the city of Nantes launched in 1990 the Edict of Nantes Prize which rewards « *individuals or organisations working or having worked for the advancement of civilian peace, rule of law and freedom of conscience* ». In 2006, the winner of the Edict of Nantes Prize was Somaly Mam, President of AFESIP (Acting for Women in Distressing Situations). Based in Cambodia, her motherland, she very bravely combats trafficking in women and girls for sex slavery.

The World Forum on Human Rights since 2004

As a result of all this work inspired by human values, the city of Nantes decided in 2004 to be actively involved in the promotion of human rights together with UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation). The 1st World Forum on Human Rights was held in Nantes in May 2004, upon UNESCO's request, with the full support of the City of Nantes.

* Former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Sergio Vieira de Mello was killed in a bombing in Baghdad (Iraq) on 19 August 2003 while he was working there as the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative.

Following the 2006 World Forum on Human Rights, it became clear that the implementation of human rights would require a sustainable and long-term action. Nantes then created the Permanent International Secretariat for Human Rights and Local Governments with two partners (Pays de la Loire region, department of Loire-Atlantique). The Secretariat was given a dual mission:

- To organise the World Forum on Human Rights every two years
- To coordinate and promote a network of actors involved in the advancement of human rights, especially at a local level.

Nantes considers that cities and local communities, alongside with non-governmental organisations and individuals, can play a significant role in the enforcement of human rights. This work can be done locally but it also takes an international dimension through the various actions for decentralised cooperation, partnerships and territorial authorities' networks which today carry more and more weight in the international sphere.

This is the reason why Nantes has become a member of the international federation UCLG (United Cities and Local Governments) within which the Nantes International Permanent Secretariat coordinates a working group on the *World Charter-agenda on Human Rights in the City*. Nantes also works with the UCLG Committee on *City Diplomacy, Peace Building and Human Rights* chaired by the city of The Hague. Also, Nantes Metropole (the urban community) has joined the Eurocities Executive Committee. Finally, the City of Nantes is part of the network called *European Cities for Human Rights*, the *European Coalition of Cities against Racism and Discrimination*, and has ratified the *Charter of Child Friendly Cities*, with UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund).





PROGRAMME AND OVERALL ORGANISATION

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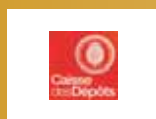
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- Nantes Métropole www.nantesmetropole.fr
- Pays de la Loire Regional Council www.paysdelaloire.fr
- Loire-Atlantique County Council www.cg44.fr
- City of Nantes www.nantes.fr
- Caisse des dépôts www.caissedesdepots.fr

AND THE PARTICIPATION OF:

- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) / Sector of Social and Human Sciences www.unesco.org
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) / Platform for innovative partnerships – Geneva www.undp.org
- French Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs www.diplomatie.gouv.fr
- International Organisation for the French-speaking communities (OIF) www.francophonie.org
- University of Nantes – department for Adult Training, facilitator for the CODES international digital academy (Open Academy on Law, Ethics and Society) and the website www.oasis-tv.net
- Maison des citoyens du Monde (World Citizen's Centre in Nantes) www.maisondescitoyensdumonde.org
- The Lawyers Council / Bar of Nantes www.barreau-nantes.avocat.fr

THE 3rd WORLD FORUM ON HUMAN RIGHTS THANKS ITS PARTNERS



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