

30 august 2010

Press release

The universality of Human Rights under examination at the forum of the conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe

150 participants are expected to attend the two day conference to examine current developments in the domain of Human Rights, of which the universal nature is being called into question at the same time as the balance in our societal systems is undergoing transformation.

Conference organisers are hoping for an intercultural dialogue and a reaffirmation of human values which are essential for more harmonious relations between people from vastly different cultures.

21 & 22 October 2010
Oslo - Thon Oslofjord Hotel

This forum is organised by the *conference of International non-governmental organisations* (INGO) of the Council of Europe. *The Chair of the Culture, Science, and Education Commission* of the conference of INGOs, Mr Edouard JAGODNIK, and in close collaboration with the *European Wergeland Centre on Education for Human Rights*.

The intention of this conference is to find the keys to a new language which expresses that the universality of human rights is not a strategy of domination by the western world over the formerly colonized countries, but that it is essential to share a common law framework, which preceded the existence of modern nations, in order to shape the world for future generations.

In order to reaffirm the universality of Human Rights and their indivisible nature, plenary sessions, workshops and round tables shall take place focussing on sensitive topics such as:

- Can we accept "sovereign universal rights" in each state?
- Shouldn't "universal rights" laid down by some religions all join together in serving this common human heritage?
- Can there be a hierarchy of rights?
- How to resolve conflicts between rights?

Experts and philosophers are invited to contribute to sessions, including:

Gérard FELLOUS, former Secretary General of the French National Consultative Commission of Human Rights, Expert with the United Nations and the European Union, author of "*Les droits de l'homme, une universalité menacée*" [*Human Rights, universality under threat*].

Peter LEUPRECHT, Director of the Montréal Institute of International Studies, special representative of the United Nations Secretary General on the situation of Human Rights in Cambodia.

Abdelwahab MEDDED, Director of the Dédale Journal, founder of "Culture d'Islam" [*Culture of Islam*] on France Culture.

Solon SMITH, Doctor in philosophy and psychology.

The closing reception shall be hosted by the Mayor of Oslo at the City Hall, in the Nobel Peace Prize Award Hall.

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