

NEWSLETTER #8 – 28 November, 2002

FOUNDING COMMITTEE MEETING OF 20 NOVEMBER 2002

On 20 November 2002 the members of the Founding Committee (FC) had a very intensive and fruitful meeting, where important progress was made in solving critical financial, legal and operational matters, such as:

- voting rights,
- differentiation of membership fees,
- EC co-financing percentage,
- legal scenario of transition from the old to the new structure,
- operational activity plan for 2003,
- draft statutes.

Agreement was reached about the proposals to be presented to all stakeholders during the **pre-decision meeting of 11 December 2002**.

Further details related to these proposals are elaborated under (1) to (3) below.

(1) FINANCIAL ISSUES

Calculation system for membership

The FC proposes a fee calculation system, based on the following two parameters:

- the number of members affiliated to each National Platform or Network, and
- the perception of strength of each National Platform or Network.

Following the calculation, members will be allocated to five fee-categories.

EC Co-financing percentage

With regard to co-financing provided by the European Commission, the FC suggests the following percentages for 2003-2005:

- 2003: 75%.
- 2004: 70%.
- 2005: 65%.

For the year 2006 and beyond, further reduction will be decided on by the new Confederation, taking into account the aim to gain more significant financial ownership.

(2) LEGAL MATTERS

Voting rights

The simulation exercises done with regard to voting rights showed that a certain degree of differentiation, justifying the various levels of

membership fees, should be taken into account. The FC therefore proposes a differentiation of votes, according to the membership-contribution made.

Membership criteria

The FC proposes the following criteria for members of the Confederation:

- legal registration as a non-profit organisation,
- involvement in development and humanitarian activities,
- representative of civil society,
- clear governance structure, and
- transparent accountability.

Legal aspects of transition

For practical reasons, the scenario regarding the transition from the old structure (CLONG) to the new Confederation, will contain the modification of the statutes of the old structure, which forms the base for the building of the new organisation.

However, this scenario will only be executed, on the condition that:

1. The balance of the CLONG's assets and liabilities is reached (by arranging its outstanding debts and by selling its Eurocode shares, related to the building owned by the CLONG).
2. An extra clause is included in the statutes, stating that new members cannot be held responsible in any way for financial consequences resulting from old engagements.

About the statutes of the Confederation

- The draft statutes presented earlier by Mrs. Deneff (Legal Expert) and the current statutes of the CLONG will form the basis for the statutes of the new structure.
- The members of the new structure will be National Platforms and Networks (global membership criteria are defined above).
- The Board will comprise 9 members and a Chairman, who is to be nominated by the General Assembly. The Board will form a proportional representation of the five membership categories, including a minimum of three members representing the National Platforms, and another three representing the Networks. Furthermore, a gender-, as well as a geographical balance should be respected.

FOUNDING COMMITTEE FOR NEW EUROPEAN NGDO COORDINATION

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(3) OPERATIONS

Operational activity plan 2003

The framework for the operation activity plan 2003 has been worked out and will be completed following the recommendations resulting from the 11 December meeting.

Working Groups

The working groups will correspond with policy areas. It is important to distinguish between:

- *permanent working groups* of the Confederation (i.e. Project-financing, EU presidencies, Development Education), which will be covered by the core budget, and
- *thematic working groups* (for example on Cotonou, Trade & Development, Food Security, Humanitarian Aid, or Finance for Development), which will function as they currently do within the old structure, and which will grow in number as new areas of interest emerge.

The organisational structure will be characterised by three elements:

1. one in charge of guiding and co-ordinating the work of each Working Group,
2. another one in charge of advising Groups about long-term strategies and,
3. a Consultation Assembly of members, as a general forum.

Secretariat

With regard to the composition of the Secretariat of the new structure, the FC suggests as follows:

- 1 director*,
- 1 policy officer* for permanent Working Groups and the EU,
- 1 policy officer* for thematic Working Groups,
- 1 communication officer,
- 1 financial officer,
- 1 financial assistant,
- 1 secretarial/administrative assistant.

****Attached to this Newsletter, you will find the vacancy announcements for the positions of Director and Policy Officer. Please send us your application, or otherwise distribute the announcement to other people interested.***

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(4) PRE-DECISION MEETING ON 11 DECEMBER 2002

Purpose

To inform all stakeholders and member-candidates about the final results of the work of the Founding Committee, concerning the financial, legal and operational aspects, allowing them to endorse the pre-decisions, whether in accordance with the new structure. At the end of the meeting, all interested candidate-members will be asked for a provisional commitment to join the new Confederation.

Invitees

Please note that all invitees will be sent an official invitation letter by 28 November 2002.

- **15 National Platforms (members of the current CLONG) plus 3 National Platforms from accession countries:** Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Portugal, Slovakia and Czech Republic, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom
- **14 Networks that have already participated in the renewal process:** ActionAid Alliance, Aprodev, Caritas Europe, CIDSE, Eurodad, EuronAid, Eurostep, IPPF, Save the Children, Solidar, Terre des Hommes, VOICE, World Vision, and WIDE.
- **Observers:** European institutions, NGOs in accession countries, CLONG Secretariat, and candidate-members who recently expressed interest in joining the new Confederation.

Venue and time

"11.11.11" Building, Vlasfabriekstraat 11, Brussels. -- Time: 10.30 - 18.00 hrs.

(5) HELP US FIND A NAME FOR THE NEW STRUCTURE

In Newsletter #5 we asked you to think about the definite name that will be given to the new European NGDO Coordination Structure. We already received some ideas from creative readers, but would again like to invite you to send in your suggestions, bearing in mind that the name should reflect:

- a global character,
- a European reference,
- the Confederation's core business,
- the issues of relief, development and advocacy, and
- solidarity and action.

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Please send your ideas to:

Foundingcommittee@cordaid.nl

There is a special prize for the most original and appropriate contribution, which will be presented to the winner at the Founding Assembly on 30 January 2003.

(6) A FEW WORDS FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear colleagues,

Coming to the end of the delicate and ambitious process towards the new Confederation, I am very much aware of the number of people who invested a tremendous amount of time, energy and commitment into this process.

I remember how the work was started by Task Group I, one and a half years ago, followed by Task Group II and the Founding Committee.

I also recall the active, participatory involvement in the Consultation Meetings, the concerns of the Liaison Committee and the Internetwork Coordination Group, the interest expressed by the European Parliament and the European Commission (especially from the side of DG Development, EuropeAid and the Commissioner, Mr. Poul Nielson himself) and, finally, the involvement of numerous NGOs from all over Europe, also from accession countries.

With all this in mind, I am convinced we shall have a very fruitful meeting on 11 December 2002, where we shall join our strengths and our differences to organise our common driving force in the fight against poverty and injustice: the new NGDO CONFEDERATION.

Thanking you all,

*Frans Polman,
President of the Founding Committee*

(7) TIMETABLE

DATE	ACTIVITY
29 November 2002	Networks and National Platforms receive the results of the Founding Committee's work to date, to prepare for the pre-decision meeting.
11 December 2002	Pre-decision meeting for all stakeholders.
30 January 2003	Founding of the new Confederation structure and effective start of activities.

*For suggestions, comments or further information,
please contact: Foundingcommittee@cordaid.nl*