

**Report of the 25th meeting of the
European Coordination Committee on Human Rights Documentation
(ECCHR)**

16-17 May 2002, Geneva, Switzerland

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The 25th meeting of the European Coordination Committee on Human Rights Documentation (ECCHR) was organised by HURIDOCs and the documentation centre of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Geneva, in collaboration with the Netherlands Institute of Human Rights (SIM) in Utrecht, acting as Secretariat for the meeting. The meeting was held at the International Bureau of Education/UNESCO, Geneva.

Excursions

The meeting was preceded, on May 15th, by several excursions to libraries/documentation centres of United Nations agencies: the International Labour Office (ILO), the World Health Organisation (WHO), the United Nations Office Geneva (UNOG), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).

One part of the participants visited the ILO Library (ILO Bureau of Library and Information Services) where Liliana Cañadas demonstrated several searching tools on the ILO Library website (www.ilo.org/bibl). She announced that soon the thesaurus of the ILO Library will be available on the website.

A second group visited the World Health Organisation (WHO), where Carole Modis gave a brief presentation on the WHO website (www.who.int), followed by a presentation on Health InterNetwork (HIN), by Barbara Aronson. The Health InterNetwork brings together international agencies, the private sector, foundations, non-governmental organizations and country partners under the principle of ensuring equitable access to health information, especially in the developing countries. It aims to improve public health by facilitating the flow of health information, using the Internet. (For more information see the website www.healthinternetwork.org).

The next excursion was to the United Nations Office Geneva (UNOG), where Nina Leneman and Ms. MacDonald showed the participants around in the UN Library. The UNOG Library is one of the leading social science libraries in Europe. It has extensive collections in the field of international law, international relations, economic and social development, energy, political science and environmental policies.

In the afternoon the UNHCR was visited, where a video was shown (by Angelika Montillot) about 50 years of refugee protection, followed by a presentation by Kirsten Young on the UNHCR and its activities. She has worked in the field herself, and she mentioned among other things the dilemma's which the UNHCR staff sometimes has to deal with.

After that the participants visited the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). Susan Rodin gave a presentation on the OHCHR website, its history and problems, and its documents, databases and search engine.

Thursday, May 16th

1. Opening of the meeting

On behalf of the Secretariat Saskia Bal, from the Netherlands Institute of Human Rights (SIM), welcomed the participants on this special 25th anniversary ECCHR meeting.

2. Opening address by the Executive Director of HURIDOCS

On behalf of HURIDOCS Manuel Guzman, Executive Director of HURIDOCS, welcomed all the participants in Geneva. He mentioned two important tendencies in the field of human rights documentation: creativity and innovation on the one hand, and the awareness of what is already there on the other hand. He also emphasized the importance of cross-regional cooperation.

3. Election of the chairperson

James Lawson (Council of Europe) was elected Chair, with acclamation.

4. Adoption of the agenda

A few changes in the agenda were announced: under agenda item 8, United Nations documentation: instead of Maggie Wachter, Nathalie Leroy will introduce the subject.

On Friday morning, May 17th, a new agenda item (agenda item 10) has been added: a presentation on documentation work at the International Bureau of Education by Felicity Nacereddine.

5. Minutes of the 24th meeting (St. Petersburg, 2001)

The minutes were adopted unchanged.

6. Presentation of participants and their organisations

All the participants gave a short presentation of themselves and their organisations (see list of participants in annex) and gave a brief comment on why they were attending this meeting.

Because there was some time left after the presentation of the participants, Sven-Erik Baun from the International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT) gave a brief demonstration of the new development on the IRCT website: the access to the IRCT- CDS/ISIS databases. (www.irct.org/docudatabases).

Harriet Nyback-Alanen presented the outcome of the proposal from last year to set up a pilot project to create a cross-database search facility for four databases using the Bibliographic Standard Formats of HURIDOCS: the databases of the Institute for Human Rights, Finland, the Danish Centre for Human Rights, the Norwegian Institute for Human Rights and the Netherlands Institute for Human Rights (SIM). With the help from her ICT colleagues and her son Harriet managed to realize this 'List of databases' with the possibility to search them all together in one search. This demonstration was received with great enthusiasm from all the participants. The purpose is to extend the list with other databases using the Bibliographic Standard Formats of HURIDOCS; it is not necessary that the databases use the same software.

7. Copyright

Kurt Kemper, Director Advisor of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) gave a presentation on copyright law. The emphasis was on the aspects of copyright law which are interesting for human rights documentation. First KK gave a brief overview of some basic features of copyright

protection. Copyright law does have common features in different countries, but in the details copyright law is national law and it applies territory-wise. The purpose of copyright law is to protect artistic or scientific intellectual production. Copyright protection extends to the expression or form, not to ideas, theories, discoveries or concepts, nor to factual information as such, contained in the material. Certain productions may be excluded from copyright protection by the legislator, such as news facts and official texts of a legislative, administrative or judicial nature.

Exclusive rights of exploitation granted to authors include: rights of reproduction (photocopying, printing, digital storage); right of distribution of copies to the public; right of Internet dissemination (uploading on a server for public access, electronic transmission of data). In all these cases authorization of the owner is needed. When the owner and user have the same (non profit) interests, arrangements can be made to allow copying information etc. It is for example possible to mention on a particular website that copying is permitted in certain cases.

In the International Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works some guidelines are given to balance public/user interests against the exclusive private rights of the owner. These include the right to quote, user privileges for the purpose of reporting on current political, economic or religious events, and user privileges for the purpose of teaching. In the same context the US copyright law contains the general principle of "fair use", in particular non-commercial use, and the UK Copyright Act mentions reproduction privileges for certain "prescribed libraries or archives".

An exceptional area in copyright law concerns the use of databases. Through EU law data contained in databases are protected. Free use exceptions are: private use; use for purpose of illustration for teaching or scientific research; and use for purposes of public security or an administrative or judicial procedure.

Human rights interests are taken into consideration when, in the copyright law context, individual rights of copyright holders are balanced against user interests or the public interest in general. Human rights may be involved on both sides. On the side of the creator there is the right to benefit from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which one is the owner; and on the side of the potential user the right to seek, receive and impart information and the right to take part in cultural life and to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress and its applications. The conclusion is that human rights considerations are not irrelevant, but add little value to resolving the conflicts of interests in copyright law.

KK finished his presentation by giving a list of practical checking points for collecting and disseminating human rights information.

Questions from participants concerned mainly the use of the table of contents and/or abstract of a book or article for someone's own bibliographic database. KK pointed out that normally the table of contents of a book is not copyrighted, but in some cases it can be, e.g. when it reflects the scientific scope of the book. With regard to abstracts of articles from scientific journals, it is not clear if these are copyrighted, probably not. But also an abstract may be a creative work.

8. United Nations documentation

Nina Leneman, Chief User Services Section and Deputy Chief Librarian of the UNOG Library, gave a demonstration of the UNOG website (www.unog.ch), the UNOG Library website (www.unog.ch/library/about/library.htm) and the UN Dag Hammarskjöld Library website (www.un.org/Depts/dhl/). She showed useful links to e.g. UNBISnet (UN Bibliographic Information System), UN documentation research guide, UN conferences and observances, services and collections, databases and publications, and depository libraries.

Patrice Piguet, Chief Sales and Marketing Section Department of Public Information, gave some information on UN publications since 1945, and spoke about the differences between a 'normal'

publisher and the UN as a publishing organisation. He also mentioned ODS (Official Document System), the possibility to search many UN documents online (not for free), in different languages, from the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the Trusteeship Council etc. since 1946. The UN Yearbooks (1946-1998) will be available on cd-rom for \$500. It is possible to choose a short term ODS subscription once in a while, e.g. for a week or a month, and download relevant documents during that time. The General Assembly is discussing the free use of ODS. In answer to a question of one of the participants about emailing lists of new publications PP answered that there is an electronic newsletter on which you can subscribe on the website for free (<http://www.un.org/Pubs/sales.htm>, scroll down, subscribe E-news).

Nathalie Leroy, Chief of the Information Processing Section of the UNOG Library and member of the Board of Trustees of the Dublin Core Meta Data Initiative, gave a more detailed presentation on the previously mentioned ODS, the Official Documents System of the United Nations. ODS started in 1992 as Optical Disk System. It includes all UN documents except UN sales publications, confidential documents, summary records, press releases and UN treaties. New documents are added daily. The costs are around \$1200, but maybe in the future it will be free of charge.

9. Dublin Core

Nathalie Leroy, Chief of the Information Processing Section of the UNOG Library and member of the Board of Trustees of the Dublin Core Meta Data Initiative, continued with a presentation on "The web, metadata and the Dublin Core".

NL demonstrated that the same search on the web can give very different results depending on the search engine. Why do we get such different results? Search engines do not use the same criteria for indexing web documents: titles, full-text are indexed but often metadata are ignored.

Metadata are 'data about data' and metatags are developed for web-publications. Publications and other information can be found by search engines on the information provided by the publisher in the metadata. Organisations which provide human rights information on the Internet can also use meta-tagging to ensure a correct description of their publications and to provide search engines with the right information. This is becoming more important because of the ever growing number of websites.

There are five categories of metadata: administrative (used in managing and administering information resources), descriptive (used to describe or identify information resources), preservation metadata (related to the preservation management of information resources), technical metadata (related to how a system functions or metadata behave), and use metadata (related to the level and type of use of information resources).

The use of metadata is important because of the following reasons: increased accessibility (rich metadata can improve searching and use of the same descriptive metadata allows searching across multiple collections); retention of context (documenting and maintaining complex interrelationships); expanding use (digital versions of unique objects can be disseminated to users around the world); multi-versioning (metadata will link the multiple versions of information and cultural objects and capture what is the same and what is different about each version); and legal issues (metadata allows repositories to track the many layers of rights and reproduction information that exist for information objects and their multiple versions).

The Dublin Core is a metadata element set which is developed to be used as a metadata standard. This standard set can be adjusted for human rights publications. The characteristics of the Dublin Core are: the elements are simple to understand and use, every element is both optional and repeatable, the elements are international and cross-disciplinary in scope and applicability, the element set is extensible and has a syntax within html (metatags), e.g.: `<meta name = "DC.Creator" content = "Simpson, Homer">`. The Dublin Core consists of the following 15 elements: title, creator, subject,

description, publisher, contributors, date, type, format, identifier, source, language, relation, coverage, rights.

The Dublin Core was created initially by an international, cross-disciplinary group of professionals from, among others, librarianship, computer science, and the museum community. Communities who participate now in the development of the Dublin Core include: museums, libraries, government agencies, international organizations. The initiative has been formalized in a body: the Dublin Core Metadata Initiative, DCMI. NL explained the organizational structure of the DCMI and gave an overview of the recent developments, activities and projects. For more information: see <http://www.dublincore.org/>.

Reception

The HURIDOCS secretariat organised a reception on Thursday evening on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of HURIDOCS. The celebration was attended by members of the Continuation Committee, members of the ECCHR network, representatives of UN agencies and international NGOs based in Geneva, and other guests. The gathering carried the theme "Globalising the capacity to maximise use of human rights information: 20 years of HURIDOCS". Judith Dueck, member of the Continuation Committee, gave the welcome address where she stressed the importance of a strong human rights community. CC Chairperson Kofi Kumado also addressed the audience, recounting some key events in the history of HURIDOCS. Saskia Bal spoke on behalf of the guests, she pointed out that the ECCHR also had an occasion to celebrate as its ongoing meeting marked the 25th time that the network met since its establishment.

Friday, May 17th

10. International Bureau of Education (IBE) documentation

Felicity Nacereddine received the participants in the IBE documentation centre and gave a presentation of the history and developments of the IBE documentation work. IBE was founded in 1925 as a co-ordinating centre for institutions and societies concerned with education. In 1929 the IBE extended membership to governments. In 1946 cooperation with UNESCO started and in 1969-1971 IBE was integrated into UNESCO. In 1996 the website was launched (www.ibe.unesco.org). On the website you can find among others a full text database, country dossiers and other publications, and information on the International Conference on Education which is held since 1934, among others on the topic of "Education for all for learning to live together", including respect for human rights.

11. Developments within HURIDOCS

James Lawson started with thanking the HURIDOCS Secretariat for organising the nice reception held on the previous day. The powerpoint slideshow which was made for this occasion, on the history, structure and work of HURIDOCS, was showed once again and will be also available on the HURIDOCS website in the future.

After this Bert Verstappen gave a summary of the activities of HURIDOCS since the last meeting of the ECCHR. The HURIDOCS Events Standard Formats and the Micro-thesauri have been published in French (also available on the HURIDOCS website). A translation into Spanish and Russian will be published in the near future. In the Human Rights Monitoring and Documentation Series two publications are translated in Russian, vol. 1: What is documentation, and vol. 2: What is monitoring, both are available on the HURIDOCS website. Another new publication is a manual for trainers: Training the HURIDOCS Way: A Manual for Trainers in the HURIDOCS Network.

BV gave an overview of recent HURIDOCS courses world wide (Albania, Uganda, Uzbekistan and Haiti (by James Lawson)). Courses planned for the future include Georgia, Senegal, India, Ghana and Lebanon. A Guide to Monitoring Economic, Social and Cultural Rights is also planned for the future.

Andrea Khan asked for a Manual on children's rights. BV answered that there are plans for a training course.

Manuel Guzman gave a demonstration of WinEVSYS, software (programmed in Microsoft Access) for documenting human rights violations, using the Revised HURIDOCS Events Standard Formats. James Lawson remarked that the software is not very complicated and not too difficult to learn. He also added that it's quite remarkable that nobody is working on documenting human rights violations in Europe. In developing countries there is more awareness of the importance of documenting human rights violations. Betty Haugen suggested that maybe this should be more promoted in Europe, e.g. more training courses in Europe.

12. Exchange of views with HURIDOCS CC members on activities in the European region

CC members present: Kofi Kumado, Judith Dueck, James Lawson, Aida Maria Noval, Agnethe Olesen and Manuel Guzman (Director of HURIDOCS)

This item was put on the agenda on the occasion of the 25th ECCHR meeting and the 20th anniversary of HURIDOCS. James Lawson started the discussion with mentioning that compared with other regional networks the European network is very active (this being the 25th meeting is kind of a proof of that). The European network is especially active in generating ideas, more than in the implementation of the ideas. The project of Harriet Nyback-Alanen (the cross-database search facility) however is a good example of the actual implementation of an idea. Maybe there should be more emphasis on the actual implementation of ideas in the future.

Judith Dueck pointed out the differences between the European network and the situation in North America, where such a network no longer exists. It depends partly on the people and the right timing. Jeff Howarth suggested that there should be more exchange of information between the regional networks, and more cooperation between them. Saskia Bal replied that the General Assembly meeting is the occasion where the different regional networks meet, but maybe there is a need to exchange views more often. Kirsti Sparrevohn remarked that the HURIDOCS newsletter could be used more to give information on the regional networks. James Lawson mentioned the possibility to put this subject on the agenda for the next meeting: more details on what is happening in the other regions. Bert Verstappen remarked that every network has its own history and that it's very expensive to hold a meeting, so the networks are active on a more modest scale. James Lawson mentioned the importance of fundraising. Jeff Howarth said that people should not only be pushed towards HURIDOCS but to the regional networks as well.

Kofi Kumado made some remarks on the situation in Africa. The North African Network also has its difficulties to continue to exist. The organisations involved do attend meetings when they are organised by HURIDOCS, but they don't show much initiative to organise meetings etc. themselves. Judith Dueck said that part of the problem, like in North America, is the fact that people often change jobs, in Europe people tend to stay longer, so there is more continuity.

Aida Maria Noval reported on the situation in Latin America. The cooperation between organisations depends on the moment, if it is needed on a certain moment than they will cooperate. If it is not necessary than there is no networking. It is important that relevant information is available, also in Spanish. Kofi Kumado concludes that the conception of what a network is may differ in different regions. James Lawson mentioned the difference between North America and Europe, in North America members are more oriented on results, in Europe the networking itself is reason enough to continue. Judith Dueck noted that in North America there is a trend that the process is becoming more important, apart from the product, so maybe things will change.

Agnethe Olesen emphasized the importance of information towards the members of what is going on in the networks, by means of the HURIDOCS newsletter and homepage. Many participants agreed with her. Bert Verstappen replied that there was not enough input from the organisations. Saskia Bal

suggested to ask the secretariats of the regional networks to report to the HURIDOCS secretariat e.g. twice a year or when something is organized. Betty Haugen remarked that the regional networks are hard to find on the internet, there should be more links on a higher level to the members of the networks.

Marc van Kuik expressed his disappointment about the little time planned on the agenda for the thematic groups. According to him the emphasis should be more on human rights subjects instead of documentation, and there should be more time to work on thematical subjects in groups. Agnethe Olesen agreed with him on the importance of not becoming too general. Maybe it's an idea to take two days for the meeting and after that one day for the thematic groups. James Lawson replied that on the last meeting the thematic groups didn't really work, there weren't enough people for all the groups and there had not been much activity within the groups.

Geneviève Bador emphasised the importance of the fact that several people from the United Nations visited this ECCHR meeting. This is a chance to get things done, like electronic subscription to UN databases and access to all sorts of information for NGOs. It is also good for the interaction between NGOs and IGOs.

13. Constitution of thematic groupings

Three groups were formed:

- Torture, including PDN (Psychotrauma Documentation Network);
- Vulnerable groups, including refugees, children, women;
- Database project and Dublin Core

Decided was not to form a group on the subject of electronic access to UN databases, but to make this a subject of interest on which a discussion can follow later by e-mail (Geneviève Bador). Also no group was formed on the subject of the organisation of the ECCHR meeting, which was suggested. This subject will be discussed later on.

14. Reports of thematic groupings

After a long lunch/discussion break the groups reported on the outcome of the group meetings. Cathrin Larimian reported for the Database project / Dublin Core group. The project of Hariet was evaluated. The aim of the project is to offer bibliographic information to the public and for human rights organisations to share the information. If other organisations want to join with bibliographic databases they can send an email to Hariet. The result of the project was named "HURILIST" (Human Rights Library Searching Tool). About Dublin Core: this is very useful, everyone should check their website and start indexing it according to the Dublin Core for human rights. In 1998 Lise Bruun drafted a proposal for HURIDOCS to recommend the use of metadata for electronic publishing on the web. This proposal is based on the Dublin Core Metadata, with the use of HURIDOCS BSF. Since this proposal is still a draft the CC will be asked to adopt this proposal. Agnethe Olesen will have a thorough look at the Draft Proposal and will change/update it were necessary.

Marc van Kuik reported on PDN. This network was established in 1999 by libraries and organisations specialized in psychotrauma and the consequences of war and organized violence. MK reported on the developments within the network over the last three years. The PDN website was realized, with a directory of important websites on psychotrauma and a thesaurus on psychotrauma has been developed. The website is still in the making and libraries and other organisations can participate.

Kristi Sparrevohn reported on the subject of torture. There is some progress made in the work on a list of index terms on torture. There are three different work fields: prevention of torture; rehabilitation of torture victims; psychological effects of torture. More organisations can join the project.

Andrea Khan reported on the session of the group on vulnerable groups. The group decided to focus on two main projects: the development of the thesaurus on refugees, which will include trafficking; and the realization of a map or list that will outline which organisations (working on issues of children, refugees, and trafficking) are already using HURIDOCS bibliographic standard formats. This will include cooperation with the HURIDOCS secretariat and regional groups to set up a mechanism for gathering this information, as well as a list of who to contact.

15. XML for human rights

James Lawson gave a presentation on XML, explaining what XML is and how it can be used, including the relevance for human rights documentation. XML (Extensible Markup Language) is a method to structure data, which facilitates the electronic exchange of data in a format that is independent of hardware or software. Like HTML it uses tags, but unlike HTML it is not about the presentation of the data, but about the structure and meaning of the data.

A template is used to publish an XML-document: DTD (document type definition) or XML schema definition (XSD). XML is associated with XSL (Extensible Style Language), to present the data and to transform the data, e.g. for a database import. For the web you could use CSS (Cascading Style Sheet). XML-documents can easily be imported and exported in and out databases.

XML is used by national courts and international organisations, like the European Union and the Council of Europe. With regard to human rights, the main IGOs are looking at a solution for multimedia and multilingual publishing, a way to produce documents with the same data in many different ways (e.g. a printed publication, a publication on the Internet or a record in a database).

NGOs can use XML to structure data, to output data in different ways, to exchange and merge data. JL gave an example of the use of XML in the form of HRXML, an XML schema for data on e.g. human rights violations. He also explained the use of namespaces; a namespace is a way of avoiding ambiguity (e.g. an 'act' in a play or an 'act' in a description of human rights violations).

A way to start using XML is: define areas where XML could be of benefit; define the best implementation of XML; create DTD or schema; create a human rights namespace. JL made a draft call for expression of interest and proposed that HURIDOCS sends out a call for expression of interest to the human rights community worldwide so they can express their interest in this topic. All the participants agreed with the proposal so JL handed the draft call over to the HURIDOCS secretariat.

16. Any other business

Patrick Müller asked if the decision to use the Dublin Core could be made on short-term. Saskia Bal answered that this was already proposed to HURIDOCS. We as the European network can start to use it, and other regions can follow.

Saskia Bal continued on the subject of the organisation of the ECCHR meeting for next year. She urged everyone to send in ideas for the next agenda, and also ideas for excursions. She would also like to know how the participants experienced this meeting. Kristi Sparrevohn replied that she appreciated this meeting very much. James Lawson suggested for the secretariat to send out a sort of questionnaire about this meeting and the next meeting (for ideas for the agenda etc.) in the coming weeks.

There was a short evaluation about the excursions and presentations. The participants were all enthusiastic about the excursions. It is important to tell the speakers what subjects we are interested in and what the purpose of the meeting is.

Frederiek Eggink was disappointed in the fact that the agenda was changed at the last moment, so there was no time for a PDN presentation. Saskia Bal responded that the final agenda was sent to everyone. Marc van Kuik remarked that the PDN group (himself included) should have contacted the

secretariat about their plans for a presentation. James Lawson emphasized the importance of an interesting agenda, every year the same items is not very inspiring - so please send in new ideas and let the secretariat know if you want to do something.

17. Date and place of next meeting

Some proposals were made for the venue of the next meeting. Betty Haugen suggested Belfast. Yvo Peeters offered to host the meeting in Brussels. Fiona Bolt offered London. Tale Evenhuis suggested some place in eastern Europe, but the participants from eastern Europe remarked that western Europe was more interesting for excursions, and that they would have to discuss this issue with their directors first. Jeff Howarth suggested Finland. Decided was that the secretariat will consider all the suggestions and decide on the date and place of the next meeting in the coming months.

18. Closing

James Lawson thanked all the participants for attending this meeting. Saskia Bal, on behalf of the secretariat, thanked the International Bureau of Education/UNESCO for letting us use the meeting room free of charge, and the CC members for joining the meeting. She also expressed many thanks to the local organisers, Geneviève Bador, Nejib Ghali and Bert Verstappen, who did an excellent job arranging the excursions and all kind of practical things. She also thanked the members of the former secretariat from the IRCT, Sven-Erik Baun, Ion Iacos, Kirsten Reimer and Kirsti Sparrevohn for organising the meeting for so many times in the past. And last but not least she thanked James Lawson for being, again, an excellent chair.