

61. DPI NGO Conference:

Reaffirming Human Rights for All: The Universal Declaration at 60

*Midday workshop: **Reconciling Human Rights with State Security***

Wednesday, September 3rd 2008

sponsored by the Foundation for Subjective Experience and Research (S.E.R.)

Under the moderation of **Ms Rita Jakob-Wiederkehr**, lawyer and psychologist, representative of the S.E.R. Foundation, the workshop started with minutes of silence and remembrance for the victims of Human Rights offenses, followed by an interactive exchange on the experiences of each attendee on the workshop subject.

In spite of different issues, the subsequent speeches of all speakers took for granted that the long-standing, monarchic primacy of state security over individual rights is shifted to the rule of the democratic principle – apprehending the people as sovereign, sole source of state authority, equipped with individual rights:

Ms Katharina Brecht, student, youth representative of the S.E.R. Foundation, underscored the importance of education as referred to in Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the 2nd Millennium Development Goal for a secure state, in which children/adults are literate, have access to information, practice respect, tolerance, responsibility, put dignity into action;

Ms Bianca Jinga, UN Volunteers (Kosovo), External Relations Officer, related to gender differences in the experiences of conflicts, the role in post-conflict reconstruction and to the huge impact of local volunteers on promoting inter-community exchange and reconciliation;

Ms Brigitte Langenhagen, Representative of the Baltic Sea Forum and retired Member of the European Parliament, reflected on the challenge of enlarging issues of cooperation as well as countries included in the EU, and the prerequisite for a progress in unity: acknowledgement and implementation of Human Rights;

Ms Felicitas Hoffmann, judge, representative of the S.E.R. Foundation, referred to the work of the UN Commission on Human Security / the Advisory Board on Human Security and underlined the indispensability of human security - the fusion of state

security with Human Rights - for the global survival of mankind as well as for conflict solution/prevention. She pointed out, that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a common standard of rights, principles and values – yet to be enhanced - demands new structures in government, organisations and on personal level, relying on reconciliation as the leading principle - reconciliation being catalyst and safeguard of the process.

Persuing the fact, that the **UN proclaimed 2009 the International Year of Reconciliation**, it was pointed out, that the International Year of Reconciliation offers the immense opportunity to jointly create a new vision in upholding and affirming the Declaration of Human Rights and especially implementing human dignity in various activities and experiences around the world (see Actionplan : www.ser-foundation.de; www.global-balance.de).

In a very vivid, respectful dialogue among the about 60 participants from different continents on a draft proposal of the S.E.R. Foundation and inspired by the statement of a present judge of the former International Criminal Tribunal, Kosovo, the participants interactively elaborated and adopted the following maxim:

“In the implementation, application and enforcement of laws it is the duty of the state and government law enforcers to safeguard and protect Human Rights as specified by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as well as humanitarian law principles.”

Stickers with an invitation for the International Reconciliation Year 2009 (Actionplan) were disseminated to the participants of the workshop.