



EUROPEAN FORUM FOR URBAN SAFETY



SARAGOSSA MANIFESTO

The participants in the Saragossa Conference of 2-4 November 2006 adopted the Saragossa Manifesto on urban safety and democracy:

1- safety is an essential public interest, closely linked to other public goods such as social inclusion and the right to work, to health care, education and culture. Every strategy using fear is to be rejected in favour of policies furthering active citizenship, an appropriation of the city's territory and the development of collective life. Access to other rights also favours the right to security.

2- Conscious of the profoundly worrying stakes caused by crime in all its forms, weighing heavy on the maintenance of social, legal, cultural and political balances, the participants wish to see effective integrated global policies set up, aimed at fighting the effects of crime as well as its causes such as social exclusion, discrimination in rights, and economic inequalities.

3- In particular, conference participants made sure that the right of women to full professional and social participation be recognised and that positive initiatives be developed in this regard in this overall policy of the fight against insecurity. The violence of which they are victims is an expression of the inequality of male/female relations and cultural prejudices. Women's Rights must be the subject of programmes promoting equality and an approach by gender.

4- Despite there being dialogue amongst people and cultures at the local level, there is considerable risk that the forces supporting the 'shock of civilisations' prevail, creating an apocalyptic framework for the safety and future of citizens. In this situation, our commitment as administrators and representatives of our communities is to create a place for dialogue and encounter between populations of different origins, and an alliance between civilisations.

5- Encouraging the European Union to set up common rules on conditions for the admission and repatriation of foreigners, we confirm our commitment to ensuring reception conditions respectful of fundamental rights as well as integration measures and rules for the sharing of rights and duties, especially for immigrants whose papers are in order.

6- Terrorism tries to exploit social and cultural inequalities existing in our societies. Any response favouring discriminatory actions, designating scapegoats or encouraging aggressive, racist attitudes is to be banned.

7- We affirm the necessity of maintaining civil liberties and appeal to countries and international institutions to respect fundamental rights.

8- We ask that the role of cities be recognised by the European Union and individual countries and that this recognition be backed up by financial instruments.

Cities and local governments must provide themselves with local safety plans integrating prevention and the consequences of organised crime and human trafficking in particular.

The role of the media must be taken into account and all ideological or religious instrumentalisation avoided.

9- Providing a safe environment for their inhabitants, one favouring social cohesion, is the primary duty of elected officials. By means of urban regeneration and reconstruction strategies, by providing basic services in the areas of education, social security and culture, cities have the ability to act on the causes and effects of insecurity. By developing integrated, multisectoral approaches, and with the support of regional, national and European authorities, urban policies are innovative if they do not put security solely in the hands of justice and the police.

10- The involvement of cities and communities in sustainable safety policies must receive support from national, European, and international authorities. A 'bottom upwards' approach must guide the elaboration and unfolding of action programmes of the European Union as much as other international authorities.

Priority must be given to experimentation with innovative practices, the development of evaluative and diagnostic methodologies, exchanges and cooperation between cities, multidisciplinary training of local players and the dissemination of practices such as those concerning public-private-partnerships.

11- It is the role of local councillors, in crisis situations as well as in their daily action, to encourage bringing together all inhabitants of their city regardless of philosophical or sexual orientation, ethnic, cultural and religious membership or legal situation. This role is ensured by the vigilant respect for the equality of all in access to city services.

12- Our efforts must encourage community awareness of our problems and our ability to resolve them in cooperative fashion with a view to maintaining the dialogue between cities on all continents based on mutual enrichment, tolerance and the respect for civil liberties.

4 November 2006

Youth facing violence

Young people must occupy a central place in our local policies. They must not be considered a danger nor designated as scapegoats for insecurity, especially as they are the first victims of violence in all its forms: suicide, abuse, road violence, social insecurity and lack of perspectives. They are also subjected to more muted violence, sometimes resulting from our institutions (school, police, social services...).

These various types of violence hinder their development, their capacities for learning and proper insertion into society, which can generate new violence. In order to avoid this spiral, prevention must be as comprehensive as possible.

Responses must at once:

- Take all aspects of the life of the child and adolescent into account: emotional, psychological, academic and family life, as well as legal status...
- Develop the dialogue and listening skills between generations,
- Be based on the participation of young people themselves and the mobilisation of their life energy,
- Be viewed as long term and aim at lasting solutions.

The effectiveness of responses depends more on the quality of dialogue and coherence than on the increase in the number of police, judicial, social or academic measures.

If the local level of cities allows for stable, community, reactive and multidisciplinary policies, a trans-national approach is also indispensable in face of developments in migration and trafficking, and must consider the child as a minor to be protected and the foreign child as holder of rights benefiting from this protection.

Migrations, Minorities

Today, immigration is an inherent fact of life in our countries and city neighbourhoods. Economic life and its growth require that new generations of immigrants enter Europe, and we want our cities to continue to be hospitable and improve their capacity for integration.

At the local level, we must recognise the positive contribution of the world's cultures and see to it that their participation in the representation and administration of our cities is organised and promoted. This multicultural reality must be reflected in their overall policy and especially in the recruitment of new public employees, more particularly in social services, education and safety.

Cities must perceive immigration above all as an opportunity for our development. It is evident today that effective management of the integration of immigrants calls for a clear and secure system of rules for admission, settling and family reunification. But no country by itself can resolve these problems requiring a common European policy on rules of entry, stay and, if need be, repatriation. For all that and, more particularly, for the policies of development aid to the country of origin and for agreements on emigration and repatriation, action of the European Union towards each country of emigrants' provenance or transit is necessary.

Immigration also poses safety problems. The fight against human trafficking is a priority, especially when the lives of men, women and children are put in danger. It is also necessary to pursue conducts aiming at the illegal employment of foreigners, which sometimes verges on slavery. Current imbalances create concentrations of immigrants in certain urban areas and difficulties with the traditional inhabitants who sometimes find themselves in situations of economic crisis, and they get worse on racial or religious grounds. The fight against racism and discrimination is the guarantee of equal rights for all as well as a precondition for a successful integration policy.

New conflicts, new solutions ?

Nowadays, cities are confronted with numerous phenomena of violence, insecurity – whether real or subjective –, and other conflictual situations. These situations are often the source of misunderstandings, fears, violence and turning in on oneself, as well as a loss of confidence in institutions and their ability to provide answers. Cities are constantly on the lookout for mechanisms favouring the reception, confidence, support and the bringing together of inhabitants. This is a most important issue for our societies.

On that subject, public laws and institutions, in spite of their unifying, regulating role, reveal their limits and difficulties in adapting to the profound changes in our societies. Mediation in conflict-management is one answer. As a first step in new relations between the Law, institutions and citizens, mediation is a prevention policy as well as one of mending social cohesion and encouraging inhabitants to take on greater responsibility.

Mediation can apply to fairly wide-ranging domains by taking the form of legal, social or family mediation, to name only those. It constitutes a full-fledged discipline and is therefore subject to very precise rules of professional ethics. As a partnership project, it must be considered as much a culture as a technique.

We wish to:

- Develop mediation competences at the city level;
- Create conditions in the cities that will favour a mediation service and amicable conflict regulation that are accessible to all;
- Recommend and support the inclusion, within the European legislative framework, of access to mediation as being a right for citizens and an obligation for public authorities.

Urban planning, public spaces and insecurity

The phenomena of crime and, perhaps even more, forms of incivility in public spaces have a tremendous impact on citizens' feelings of insecurity. For 21st-century cities, management of these public spaces, out of concern for reducing anxiety and fear, is a priority challenge. Elected officials are thus asked by citizens to produce their first responses, which requires close collaboration with national and international institutions. Conflicts regarding the use of public spaces (such as the deterioration of historic centres), are only one example of this segmentation of the city and are the fruit of erroneous management that did not take into account socio-economic aspects such as urban development, use, management or monitoring of urban space. Over the past few years, European cities have been forced to develop projects to meet citizens' expectations and to prevent problems of crime, vandalism and urban degradation, on the basis of orientations linking urban rehabilitation with the use of public spaces as meeting places for social contacts and exchanges between generations and cultures. Urban planning and architecture have an acknowledged impact on security: they must be instruments capable of resolving existing problems, avoiding the outbreak of new problems, recomposing existing divisions and creating links between the city's various spaces.

The conference participants recommend integrating, in every intervention aimed at modifying the development of cities, instruments allowing for both a preventive diagnosis and the evaluation of results. Public spaces are a reflection of vital forces and of the confrontations and conflicts present in cities. From the urban planner to the police agent, the notion of 'city' must be understood on several levels and necessitates a dialogue between different forms of knowledge and know-how and between all the players (from residents to the various users), taking into account their interests and the conflicts that sometimes oppose them.

Management of urban crisis

Cities are subject to crises caused by social happenings, natural catastrophes, terrorist attacks or else because of problems in public management facilities. These crises subject all services and institutions to emergency imperatives of effectiveness for repairing damage or restoring calm in the streets and public areas. Prevention and the coordination of interventions are the norm for reducing the vulnerability of property and persons.

These crises are revealing the drawbacks and the lack of prevention policies.

New phenomena arise, such as the simplicity resulting from uncontrolled use of the Internet; vandalism and lack of civic spirit in cities; increasingly important natural phenomena that go beyond borders; the risk of social exclusion of a large portion of the population; the difficulties of access to decent housing, etc. These are but a few of the challenges that local officials must confront, in addition to their own traditional competences.

The current scale of these problems, the globalisation of terrorism, major catastrophes, etc., make it indispensable that the various administrations tackle them in a cross-disciplinary manner, with special commitment on the part of the local authorities.

With the intention of obtaining the best coordination and effectiveness possible in these policies, it is necessary to improve training and better inform the population regarding risks and prevention, as well as strengthening and encouraging coordination at the European level on the topics of Civil Protection and, more particularly, in promoting international voluntary work.

Large events

Cities regularly host large sports, cultural or festive events that necessitate concentrations of means raising the question of safety management. These events are also revealing as to existing situations of insecurity. In addition to manifestations of hooliganism or violence, they generate concentrations of crime to be handled, such as human trafficking for sexual exploitation, drug trafficking, excessive consumption of alcohol, illegal employment or thefts.

However, the event also represents an opportunity to bring out positive social policies and a lever for catalysing energies to carry out social or pedagogical programmes, and can be a special vector for the diffusion of democratic values. The wager is to establish an equilibrium between the event's necessary conviviality and the indispensable safety for the participants as well as for the inhabitants of the host city. Cities want the accumulated experience to be mutualised so that prevention arrangements accompany the organisation of events. The better prepared they are with the participation of the city's kinetic energy, by including the underprivileged populations in the form of jobs, training programmes and access to the activity, the more will safety be ensured for the whole community.

Given the scope that football has attained in all countries, related events warrant particular attention, especially in policies for violence prevention organised on that occasion, and in particular for fighting racism. The fan clubs constitute key players in this prevention and, with the support of the clubs and the UEFA, can develop positive trans-national actions in partnership with the cities, whilst associating amateur football at the local level.

The European Union must help local authorities to produce a mission statement and, above all, to adopt structural measures in order to implement these preventive initiatives during large sports and cultural events.

Organised crime and trafficking

Cities are concerned with organised crime and the trafficking in human beings, phenomena that constitute a terrible violation of human rights and undermine the fundamental principles of democracy and the supremacy of the law.

It is at the local level that many manifestations of organised crime occur, finding a favourable terrain in social exclusion and the destruction of human and social fabric in certain neighbourhoods. Life in those neighbourhoods comes progressively under the sway of criminal networks, serving as relays to entities that are sometimes international. Young people are recruited into these networks, families settle into the criminal process, and social policies are put into a no-win situation by such phenomena.

The responses to these situations must be total and not involve only the police. Furthermore, they must be sustainable and constitute policies adapted to each specific situation, based on a precise diagnosis. Local authorities have a fundamental role to play as promoters of these complete policies, which aim at social cohesion and the safety of all their citizens.

Victims must be at the centre of local policies aimed at persons subjected to trafficking for sexual ends or illegal work. As such, these persons, regardless of their legal status, must benefit from services to which all victims of crime are entitled.

The information of public opinion on the nature of trafficking must be ensured, and cooperation with the country or city of origin developed. On this point, the association of cities for the definition and enactment of European Union policies is keenly desired. Cities support the fight against human trafficking waged by the Council of Europe with the double objective of making public opinion more aware of this problem and inciting all member States of the Council of Europe to ratify and sign the agreement on the fight against human trafficking.

Drugs

>> différence dans l'ordre des paragraphes avec le texte français???

The local level is confronted with citizens who are drug users, and it is at this level that national and international strategies take shape.

Faced with the complexity of situations and the obligation to find responses, local officials have the responsibility of giving coherence to the various strategies implemented by players in the field.

This level thus turns out to be more appropriate for collecting information and experiments likely to enrich the discussion concerning the adaptation of legislation and regulations at the national and supranational levels. Consequently, and in order to support the development of integrated local policies that are both balanced and innovative, we affirm that:

- The issue of drug consumption lies within the health sector;
- Repressive policies towards drug users turn out to be unsuitable to the evolution of cultures and practices and maximise risks, whilst accentuating a stigmatisation that undermines their civil rights (human rights including the right to health, education, respect...).
- countries and regions must develop regulations and financing mechanisms favouring local intersectoral co-operations;
- The dividing-up of public expenditures in the area of drugs must be coherent with the stated desire for balance between the reduction of supply, reduction of demand and reduction of damage;
- The reduction of demand and reduction of damage must be recognised by international agreements on narcotics at the same level as the reduction of supply;
- Local authorities must be given the means and leeway necessary for the experimentation with innovative responses respecting individual freedom and taking the diversity of situations into account.

Prevention tools

In the eyes of the public and of political decision-makers, the credibility of prevention policy can exist only at the price of adopting specific, standardised methods giving a rational foundation to the investments realised. The multidisciplinary, integrated nature of prevention policies imposes thorough knowledge of reality and analyses allowing for taking into account the many causes of crime, the diversity of delinquents and the different forms of victimisations.

Cities promote the setting-up of local multidisciplinary coalitions bringing together all the partners concerned by crime. Amongst these partners, the central state and regional authorities must agree to commit themselves in the framework of their responsibilities alongside the cities. The recourse to diagnostic tools, in the form of audits, victimisation surveys and self-reporting schemes; as well as the implementation of local research institutes in particular, must be used to achieve the objectives. The definition of indicators – quantitative as well as qualitative – for monitoring policies and results constitutes the basis for a necessary policy evaluation. In the

diagnostic and evaluative phases, the partners and local prevention coordinators must be able to rely on the scientific expertise of university researchers.

Aiming at assessing the effects – beneficial or harmful, expected or unexpected, direct or secondary – of actions undertaken, evaluation must be less an instrument of supervision than an aid in decision-making, a tool for the smooth running of democracy.

Partnerships can exist only after considerable exchanges of information on persons and situations; something which has to be done in accordance with the European agreement on Human Rights and European and national legislation regarding protection of personal data as well as the professional ethics of the various partners.

It is up to countries and the European Union to favour the training of partners and new professionals in the prevention professions, to encourage and support the exchange of practices between cities and to let players in the field share in defining their prevention plans at the central and European levels. This local policy must remain in constant touch with citizens and be the subject of an active communication policy presupposing participation of the media.

Public Private partnership

The involvement of the private sector in the area of safety is more and more visible. Private security businesses have an increasingly important part to play in contributing to the development of strategies on European, national, regional and local level for creating safer neighbourhoods, dealing with serious cross-border crime or reducing the risks of terrorist threats, for example.

The business sector can also support crime prevention work by supporting social and community crime prevention measures including the reduction of risk factors such as poor living conditions, poverty, unemployment etc. The private sector can help to create and maintain a safe environment by contributing their know-how about crime problems, business management, creativity and ingenuity, human resources, and support partnership projects that tackle the root causes of crime.

The role of the private sector in crime prevention has broad implications for social change. Therefore, it is recommended to bring together the best of what the public and business sector can offer in packages that deliver effective, efficient and economically viable services that reduce crime, crime risks and create safe environments for everyone whilst protecting common human rights.

Whereas public authorities are involved in the development of policies for crime prevention, private parties could be more engaged in their implementation and execution.

The complementarity in roles as well as in responsibilities between public and private partners should be clearly defined in order to reduce crime and enhance community safety with the involvement of other partners such as police, voluntary organisations, industry, civil society and citizens.

The development of the private sector should not lead public authorities to abandon their control over public safety. Privatization of security should not increase existing inequalities by favouring those who can afford to pay for their personal safety.

Technologies and liberties

It is unavoidable for cities to resort to technological means for ensuring the smooth running of facilities accessible to the public and video surveillance systems in particular, although the results remain mixed. On the other hand, even though its effect in crime prevention has yet to be proven, video surveillance can be useful in criminal investigations provided the images are of satisfactory quality. Whilst they can help in reducing the feeling of insecurity, there remains the fact that these technologies are ineffective as regards persons in a position of social or institutional difficulty or in cases of provocation.

An expensive tool, video surveillance makes sense only if used to fight all urban problems. On the occasion of the rehabilitation of social housing or the protection of a commercial area, video surveillance can help in the regeneration of public space.

Faced with the risks linked to the respect for private life and the heavy investments involved in the use of the new technologies, cities affirm the necessity of:

- developing regulations and financing mechanisms favouring local cooperation between public institutions or even private co-financing by certain beneficiaries (chambers of commerce),
- evaluating their impact and optimising the expense,
- guaranteeing a code of ethics and training of the operating personnel,
- respecting European and national texts regarding the protection of personal data and storage of images in accordance with four principles: functionality and proportionality in view of the stakes; limiting storage time; citizen information concerning the existence of the system; and identification of the person in charge for asserting their rights,
- involving inhabitants as widely as possible in the code of ethics of surveillance systems.

The rapid development of new technologies (biometry, multiplication of databases that can be interconnected, thermometry...) imposes heightened vigilance in face of the risk of automatic profiling based on the correlation of imperfect criminological data, it being understood that human behaviour cannot be standardised.

Police and Communities

The police forces are an additional player in the community but a player that must perform a service to ensure safety for the whole community. In providing this service, the police forces often find themselves faced with obstacles that local institutions must know and analyse in order to obtain a harmonious insertion of the police in their communities.

The police work on a principle of legitimacy issuing from the democratic sovereignty that holds sway in their social communities. This legitimacy gives them the power to apply the laws and guarantee citizens' safety.

However, local authorities must use all means so that the legitimate power of the police is based on a social recognition of their value, recognition issuing from the integration of the police in their community, integration that is translated by an authority conferred by the citizens themselves. In this sense, we must mention the role of the independent arbitrator in the resolution of conflicts that the police must have in their communities starting from the exercise of this legitimate authority conferred to them by the citizens.

The police must exercise their authority in close collaboration with citizens, starting from a precise diagnosis of needs. The principles on which they must base their acts are the preventive vision, first of all complete and balanced, of citizens' problems, from proximity and collaboration with the citizen and support for victims of crimes, who are the least protected element in the criminal equation. Finally, they must integrate parameters of code of ethics and quality evaluation in their acts, upholding high standards of ethics and effectiveness in the provision of the social service of safety within the community and for the community.

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