

Annual report 2016



**NETHERLANDS
HELSINKI
COMMITTEE**

*Building and securing
justice across Europe*

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Report of the Board of Directors 2016

About the Netherlands Helsinki Committee

Historical background

Strengthening human rights protection, the rule of law, security, and democracy in the OSCE region. These are key concepts that describe the work of the non-governmental organisation the Netherlands Helsinki Committee (NHC). The name of the NHC stems from the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, which was held in Helsinki in 1975 and was attended by The Soviet Union. All countries of the Europe at that time (except Albania), Canada and the United States participated in this meeting. The conference resulted in the Helsinki Final Act, which connected security and peace to respect for human rights. In the ensuing years, various Helsinki Committees were established worldwide. The Netherlands Helsinki Committee was founded in 1987.

Policy, aims & activities

During the years 2015-2018 the NHC operates on the basis of the strategy document 'Building and Securing Justice in Europe', which responds to the existing urgency to defend, build, and secure human rights and the rule of law in Europe, particularly in the eastern European part of the OSCE region. The NHC operates in the Balkans, Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Occasionally, the NHC is active outside of this region as well.

The NHC develops and implements projects that aim to improve government policies and legal protection for vulnerable groups such as minorities, migrants, economically marginalized persons, trafficked persons and people in detention. There is a focus on humanizing detention conditions and replacing imprisonment by promoting the use of alternative sanctions and limiting pre-trial detention, in line with the international standards that have been developed on these issues. The situation of women and youth is given special attention. In addition, the NHC contributes to increasing the recognition of the rights of trafficked persons.

In cooperation with local and international partners, the NHC aims to protect the defence of human rights by civil society, and invests in the development and exploration of models and methods that enhance the effectiveness of civil society. Another important part of the work of the NHC is advocacy. The NHC works to influence governments and intergovernmental organisations and their human rights policies in an effective and constructive manner. The NHC addresses the OSCE and participating states when it comes to realising their core commitments to comprehensive security in Europe. When necessary the NHC calls on the Dutch government when concerns arise regarding human rights policies. If needed, the NHC comments on policies that are related to human rights or addresses the European Union and the Council of Europe with regard to human rights issues.

Innovative advocacy, using channels not primarily designed for engagement on human rights, is a priority. In its external communications, the NHC highlights actions to defend and improve human rights protection in Europe, and aims to increase the knowledge and recognition of the impact achieved in its projects. One of the projects of the NHC, is the publication of the 'Security and Human Rights' journal and the weblog that is connected to it. In the course of the year 2017 the journal and the weblog will merge into a new revamped online platform titled: the 'Security and Human Rights Monitor'.

The NHC continuously develops its internal monitoring, quality control, evaluation, and learning capacity. Its existing statutes have been reviewed and updated in June 2016, in line with the best practice as laid down in the recent Dutch Code on governance of non-governmental organisations (so-called 'Code-Wijffels'). The role of management, governance, and oversight structures have been updated accordingly, changing the former Board into the Supervisory Board, the Committee into an Advisory Board with the Executive Director becoming the sole member of the Board. The NHC receives funding for its projects from various donors, among others the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the European Commission.

Partners

The NHC has partners in all the countries it operates in. It joins forces with local organisations in order to increase its impact. It develops activities with other organisations based in the Netherlands, in particular in The Hague, that also

work on human rights and justice issues. Furthermore, experts who are closely connected to the organisation, are regularly deployed for NHC's projects. They can be connected to the Netherlands Custodial Institutions Agency (Dienst Justitiële Inrichtingen), The Dutch Probation Service (Reclassering) the Council for the Judiciary (Raad voor de Rechtspraak) and the Training and Study Centre for the Judiciary (SSR).

The NHC cooperates with civil society and professionals such as lawyers and thematic experts. These professionals are vital actors whose aim it is to successfully implement reforms that parties have agreed on. In addition, the NHC participates in various European NGO networks, such as: the Civic Solidarity Platform, the EU-Russia Civil Society Forum, the Human Rights and Democracy Network (HRDN) and the EU Fundamental Rights Platform. In the Netherlands, the NHC is part of the Netherlands Human Rights NGO Platform (BMO).

Reflecting on the year 2016

The year 2016 has been a dynamic year and developments have unfortunately not always been positive. Polarisation and terrorism were alarming trends that dominated news headlines worldwide. The advancement of authoritarianism and nationalism underlined the urgency to protect European systems of human rights and the rule of law, both at the national and international level.

In 2016, repression of critical voices in Russia increased. Turkey experienced a violent coup attempt, followed by large-scale dismissals and detention of (presumed) government opponents. Concerns increased regarding the strength of mechanisms to maintain the independence of judiciary and media diversity in a number of countries inside the European Union and in EU accession states. In many countries space for civil society to criticise government operations became curbed. The latter is a key concern, not just for those who work in the affected sectors, but for society as a whole. A free and open civil society and an independent judiciary system, plus a freely operating media, play a crucial role in the monitoring and countering of human rights violations, potential corruption or abuses of power. Moreover, it contributes to a healthy economy and political life.

Throughout the year 2016, the NHC monitored such trends and regularly expressed its concern when events or policies conflicted with respect for human rights, democratic values and the rule of law. 2016 was a year of a seeming thaw and a glimmer of hope for less repressive state policies in several target countries of the NHC.

Azerbaijan released several distinguished human rights defenders from prison. Over a dozen dissidents, including civil society leaders, were pardoned and several others were released on probation. However, conditions for civil society in the country did not improve and the released defenders were not acquitted. Those who remained in the country were under constant risk of reimprisonment, subject to travel bans, frequent police checks, renewed interrogations and threats.

Belarus and the EU became closer when sanctions against the regime were lifted “in anticipation of advancement in human rights”. The crackdown on peaceful protestors was softened, along with a halt in arrests of activists monitoring public assemblies. However not everything changed for the better. Parliamentary elections failed to meet international standards and several politically motivated prosecutions were registered in 2016, including prosecutions of human rights defenders. No progress was achieved in expanding the space for civil society or otherwise improving the respect for human rights.

In Russia, a new definition of “political activities” under the notorious foreign agent law was proposed, allegedly aimed at preventing its further arbitrary application. The adopted proposal expanded the definition in such a way that it could include almost every advocacy activity carried out by NGOs. At the same time Kazakhstan intensified repression of human rights defenders and activists in 2016. Large scale detentions, physical, administrative and legal harassment of activists were accompanied by the blocking of news websites and continued restrictions on the free exercise of the right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.

In Ukraine, hefty charges, including indictments of terrorism, were levied against activists in the annexed Crimea. Due to difficulties in ensuring speedy reforms for the rule of law on the territories controlled by the government, several cases of legal and physical harassment of human rights defenders and activists were registered. In Bulgaria, physical violence against Krassimir Kanev of the Bulgarian Helsinki Committee (BHC) resulted in an outcry by European civil society organisations condemning this attack.

European international cooperation mechanisms, in particular the institutional frameworks of the European Union and its accession procedures, the Council of Europe and the OSCE, offered a wide range of opportunities to challenge negative developments in 2016. The NHC engaged in network and coalition building of human rights and civil society organisations across Europe. This included exerting pressure on the OSCE on traditional ‘human dimension’ issues but also areas such as migrants and asylum seekers as well as conflict prevention.

The NHC supported the transfer of expertise from the Netherlands on juvenile detention, probation and rights of trafficked persons to a number of Western Balkan countries. Furthermore, it actively engaged in activities that help to protect victims of human trafficking.

On the organisational level, there have been several positive developments in 2016. The NHC was selected to organise the next Rule of Law Training programme for civil servants from EU pre-accession countries and three of the European Neighbourhood Partnership countries. Through this programme, starting in 2017 and onwards, the NHC and its partners from Leiden University and The Hague Academy for Local Governance will train young and promising professionals from the judicial sector on various topics concerning the Rule of Law and Human Rights.

In 2016 the NHC also worked hard to secure extension of its project portfolio on Human Rights and on strengthening the Rule of Law. Proposals were prepared in close cooperation with our partners in various regions. However, as the calls for proposals were not published by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs (the organisation's main donor) in 2016, the organisation had to partially rely on its financial reserves. Efforts to broaden the sources of funding resulted in promising contacts and inroads with new, mostly private, donors.

In 2017 the organisation expects to present new proposals and secure new funding from several donors. Most importantly, it aspires to continue with a solid funding base from the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This will ensure a firm basis in which to build the plans of the organisation for an increased volume, as set out in the 2016-2018 work plan.

Overall, the NHC has worked hard in 2016 to reach its goals and it will continue these efforts in 2017.

Pepijn Gerrits

Executive Director/Chair of the Board of the Netherlands Helsinki Committee

Activities of the NHC in the year 2016

In the year 2016, the NHC has executed activities related to its three programmes 'Strengthening the Rule of Law', 'Strengthening Civil Society' and 'Safeguarding Human Rights'. The following results have been reached.

Strengthening the Rule of Law

> Until recently, all criminal sentences in Montenegro were either a fine or prison sentence. Montenegrin society still has to get used to the fact that, for smaller violations of the law, offenders can repay society with community service. Even though probation has already started to work well in many places in Montenegro, the issue is still stigmatised. Therefore, clear, effective messages and campaigning about its benefits can be very useful.

In the field of probation the NHC engaged in Strengthening probation and the system of alternative sanctions in Montenegro. As a candidate country of the European Union (EU), Montenegro needs to meet certain requirements, related to the judicial system and the fundamental rights in order to accede to the EU. One of these requirements aims at improving the penitentiary system by reducing the prison population. Introducing alternative sanctions and conditional sentencing can be a solution.

The NHC has contributed to further enhancing and mainstreaming conditional and alternative sanctions by strengthening the probation service and training prosecutors and judges. Some positive results were reached within this field. Around four hundred and fifty community service sentences were monitored in the past year. In addition, a number of cooperation agreements have been concluded with several legal entities, municipalities and the Ministry of Health. Furthermore, a new probation office was opened in the town Bijelo Polje. By developing and operationalising a professional media and communication strategy the work done by the probation service has been highlighted. The subsequent campaign has informed its audience of the benefits and advantages of community work by conditionally and alternatively sanctioned offenders.

> Gardening projects contribute to the rehabilitation of prison inmates. Pioneering work has been done by many horticultural rehabilitation projects around the world. These have proven to be rewarding and useful learning experiences that pave the way to successful reintegration.

In Albania, Macedonia and Kosovo the NHC has contributed to enabling juveniles in these countries to enhance their capacities and skills while they are still in prison. Improved skills and capacities can help juveniles after the time spent in detention to better integrate into society. Several methodologies have been used for this, among which the YOUTURN method. This tool promotes a new attitude among juveniles and penitentiary staff and also equips juveniles with a communicative and positive demeanour.

Pilot initiatives with prison management were introduced which promoted education. Furthermore, labour and vocational training have been developed. In addition, the capacities of monitoring mechanisms have been enhanced, including the Ombudsman and local non-governmental organisations in the three countries. The NHC's efforts have contributed to diminishing the number of violent incidents in prisons. In Kosovo and Albania business cases were completed and greenhouses were opened. These initiatives have contributed to strengthening the life coping skills and social skills of juveniles and to improve the relationships between prison staff and inmates.

> The criminal and civil justice system in Moldova are being strengthened In cooperation with several partners the NHC has contributed to the strengthening of the Penitentiary Department. In addition, the implementation of a sustainable reform of the justice sector in Moldova was stimulated, in order to improve its efficiency. Several elements within the various judicial systems required an upgrade; support needed to be provided for necessary legislative adjustments and institutional developments, and operational workflows needed to be improved in the direct beneficiary institutions.

The work of the NHC has been successful: many improvements were enabled and as a consequence the penitentiary system in Moldova has been modernised. The awareness of, and commitment to, ethical and professional conduct among penitentiary workers has been expanded. Moreover, public awareness of the rehabilitation system has

increased. Quite dramatic shifts have occurred: drama therapy project for life sentenced detainees in the Rezina penitentiary has been introduced. The performance of Hamlet, a theatre play of Shakespeare, has been one of the great successes!

> In Bosnia-Herzegovina and Albania the NHC focused on the urgent topic of human trafficking. Together with partners the organisation worked on improving the position of victims who act as witnesses in human trafficking cases. Besides working with legal aid providers in its projects, the NHC has also focused on judges, prosecutors and judicial academies who have been provided with knowledge and skills, helping to guarantee the rights of victims of human trafficking during judicial procedures. It is noteworthy that a large number of judges and prosecutors in both countries attended the interactive training sessions. One of the results of the work of the NHC has been the inclusion of knowledge about a victim-centred approach, and trafficking in general, in curricula of judicial academies. Furthermore, the monitoring role of civil society in the field of human trafficking has been improved as well.

"Access to specialised legal aid is a key element to ensure the protection of the rights and interests of trafficked persons during criminal trials and other legal proceedings. In addition, it prevents secondary victimization."

Julia Koster, Programme Manager

The NHC believes in long-term approaches and regards follow-up work as vital. What lessons can be learned from our experiences in making free legal aid available to more trafficked persons in Eastern-Europe? How can these lessons be implemented in practice? Together with local partners and with input from the Netherlands Embassies in Sofia, Budapest and Bucharest, and in close cooperation with the Rule of Law Coordinator in Bucharest, four regional initiatives were developed. In these initiatives local structures to provide legal aid have been tested and described. In Bulgaria and Romania the results have been shared during round tables with relevant local actors, such as specialised NGOs, lawyers and shelters. In Hungary a needs assessment was prepared and implemented. On the basis of these results local networks can further develop specialised services and better cooperate when providing assistance to victims of human trafficking.

Strengthening Civil Society

> The Netherlands Helsinki Committee played an active role in the work of the EU Russia Civil Society Forum. The organisation took part in the Steering Committee of the Forum. On top of that the NHC participated in the elaboration of statements on the situation of civil society in Russia as well as in Poland and Hungary as the rule of law and space for civil society under threat in these states.

Furthermore, the NHC takes part in the new 'advocacy team' of the Forum that will develop the advocacy work of the Forum relating to issues of civil society concern in the EU and Russia. Development of more relations with Council of Europe bodies and procedures has been one of the top priorities. The Council of Europe standards and mechanisms apply to both the EU and Russia. Better implementation of verdicts of the European Court of Human Rights is possible and should be stimulated, amongst others.

In May, the Forum held a commemoration conference on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the creation of the Moscow Helsinki Group, an important event in the development of civil society in Russia and in broader Europe. The NHC also took part in the coordination of the Expert Group on Transborder Corruption of the Forum, that looks at corruption and the way flows of money are gained through (probably) corrupt practices. In addition, the expert group views how this is affecting both Russia and European Union member states. Despite an impressive framework of international agreements on fighting corruption, public prosecutors in many countries do not seem to fight it vehemently. The group analyses the possible reasons behind this which resulted in a new publication that was published in February 2017: 'Failed in Action; Why European Law Enforcers Are Unable to Tackle EU-Russian Transborder Corruption'.

> In December 2016, during a two-day conference in Hamburg, over 100 civil society representatives from across the OSCE region discussed urgent human dimension issues and adopted a set of Civil Society Recommendations to the Ministerial Council, as well the Hamburg Declaration on Protecting Civil Society Space. These outcome documents, in particular the Hamburg Declaration, received prominent attention from OSCE representatives and participating States.

As a member of the Coordinating Committee of the Civic Solidarity Platform (CSP), which united 80 human rights NGOs from across the OSCE region, the NHC took part in the preparation of a new strategy document for the Platform. The strategy was discussed and agreed in Warsaw in September. This Platform meeting took place on the margins of the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting of the OSCE, the largest annual human rights event in Europe. The CSP has a strong presence at this forum. The NHC contributed by organising a side event on Turkey, in view of the worrying development of human rights in that country. By participating in the closing panel of the OSCE Chairmanship conference on Tolerance and Diversity, the NHC contributed to sharing the principles and ideas of the organisation with pivotal actors in the field.

The Platform in 2016 started looking beyond the boundaries of the 'human dimension' of the OSCE, as issues related to economy and environment (second dimension) and military security and conflict resolution (first dimension) which also have important human rights aspects. Workshops were held with an active participation of the NHC on migration and asylum seekers, and on conflict prevention.

> The work of the NHC for the advocacy training for Ukrainian Philanthropists Forum consisted of a two-day training course on advocacy for Ukrainian NGOs. Approximately twenty participants from various Ukrainian NGOs, part of the Universal Peace Federation network, were trained in advocacy, its fundamental principles and planning procedures. In addition, a separate expert meeting was held during which certification systems for fundraising organisations were discussed.

Safeguarding Human Rights

> The NHC has supported human rights defenders in post-Soviet countries by raising awareness among the public, addressing authorities, enabling legal assistance, trial monitoring, solidarity actions, digital and physical security training and coaching. Over seventy HRDs in Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, the Russian Federation, Ukraine, and the disputed regions in the South Caucasus received assistance.

The appeal and the urgency of campaigning for human rights defence have grown in 2016, with more stakeholders recognising the importance of (strategic) communication by NGOs in the Eastern Europe and Central Asia, and in the EU. Campaigning by local human rights groups was a cornerstone activity in the project. A total of 15 public outreach campaigns on human rights have been implemented in target countries by civil society groups. Multiple partners and beneficiaries learned innovative tools and recruited supporters through implementing mini-outreach campaigns focusing on an array of human rights topics, ranging from discrimination to the promotion of human rights defenders, including cooperation with alternative theatre and artist filmmaker collectives or presenting human rights issues through dynamic infographics.

"As a result of our cooperation and human rights campaigning with the NHC, thousands of new supporters were recruited in social media and over two dozen of volunteers joined our organisation. We did not expect such impressive results and we look forward to continuing this joint work in 2017."

Tetiana Pechonchyk, the Human Rights Information Center, Kyiv.

The NHC provided assistance to these campaigns by providing funding, coaching human rights defenders or giving communication trainings. This resulted in thousands of new supporters for the implementing human rights NGOs who were attracted on social media. The first ever regional campaign carried out to raise awareness about human

rights defence reached over 2,5 million people in these target countries, and engaged tens of thousands on social media, followed by expressions of interest to join human rights groups or to act as a volunteer.

Jointly with Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights, an international advocacy campaign “Defenders or Violators” was launched on the role of public prosecutors and the judiciary in the prosecution of HRDs. Discussion on human rights policy was initiated at the executive level of related professional associations.

An international seminar was hosted in The Hague which discussed support options for HRDs from the disputed regions in the OSCE area. Concerns about access to international human rights mechanisms were raised with representatives of intergovernmental organisations including OSCE-HCNM, OSCE-ODIHR, Council of Europe. Various unique streams of work, including monitoring, legal assistance and human rights training were supported through trusted partnerships in these conflict-affected regions.

> In 2016 the NHC has assisted in the publication of the book ‘Criminal Law on Hate Crime, Incitement to Hatred and Hate Speech in OSCE Participating States’ by human rights researcher Alexander Verkhovsky. This book has been published both online and offline. The book is a comparative analysis of laws on hate crime and related matters in all 57 OSCE participating states. The book provides an exhaustive overview of the legal regulation of activities commonly referred to as 'hate crimes'. It complements the overview with an analysis of the legal procedure regarding groups inciting hate crimes. The book includes an extensive annex that will familiarise readers with various national legislations. Last but not the least, it elucidates the differences between the concepts of hate crimes, public incitement to hatred and hate speech.

"The NHC is proud to have been able to assist in the publication of this important comparative study on a subject that unfortunately is of great importance all over the OSCE region at this moment."

Pepijn Gerrits, Executive Director of the NHC

The author, Alexander Verkhovsky, is the director of SOVA Center for Information and Analysis in Moscow. The SOVA Center carries out research on a wide array of topics and has published more than thirty research based books. The thematic areas span from ultra-nationalism and hate crimes to misuse of anti-extremism legislation. The SOVA Center also focuses on various issues pertinent to religion in contemporary Russian society. The OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) also provided support for the publication of the book.

Finance and Organisation

In 2017 the results of the intensive acquisition efforts will become visible. In the first months of 2017 two important requests for proposals were launched. The outcome of these acquisition efforts should enable the organisation to streamline its structure and renew its corporate image and presentation. The following budget for 2017 has been agreed on by the (supervisory) board.

Income:		€ 1.723.000
Expenditures:		€ 1.708.000
Direct project costs	€ 1.000.000	
Organizational costs	€ 708.000	
	Result	€ 15.000

Following 2015, when the NHC decided to review its management structure, the organisation faced a renewal of its main contracts linked to its main projects in 2016. Consequently, 2016 has been a year of both change and investment culminating in a negative financial result. NHC underwent a much needed change of its governance in June 2016 and there have been changes in staff throughout the year. The 2015-2018 strategy, adopted in 2015, was largely continued. However, to operationalise this strategy and to add elements linked to the new structure a 2016-2018 work plan was produced by the Secretariat and approved by the Supervisory Board.

To ensure a solid financial basis for the organisation in the near future and beyond a new fundraising strategy was designed. The strategy focused on short-term results while envisioning a long-term impact. In the immediate future the focus of the organisation is on acquiring funds from its two main donors (Netherlands MFA and the EU) while on the long-term funding should be diversified by targeting on new bilateral donors and private funds. In 2016 contacts with selected private funders (mainly in The Netherlands) and donors at the OSCE level have been established. This resulted in one awarded proposal and several smaller funds for the modernisation of the Security & Human Rights Journal and two of the networks the NHC is an active member of.

In 2016 the NHC also worked hard to secure the extension of its project portfolios on Human Rights and on Strengthening the Rule of Law. Proposals have been prepared in close cooperation with partners in the various regions. However, calls for proposals were not published by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2016, despite earlier positive prospects. It left the organisation partially depending on its financial reserves, while keeping its eye carefully on its cash-flow level.

Fortunately, the first large programme from the Matra Fund was secured at the end of 2016. This Matra-Rule of Law training programme with a 2 x 2 years contract for a total of € 4,8 million provides a solid base. In the first four months of 2017 the organisation has prepared a total of 6 proposals to the Netherlands MFA. Together with a number of additional proposals it provides the organisation with a solid funding pipeline totalling € 9,2 million for the period 2017-2020, with results expected late July 2017. A minimum of at least two projects awarded will provide the organisation with a minimal base to continue its operations and proceed with its fundraising strategy.

Finally, the NHC is undergoing a much needed change of its image and corporate identity. With a new cooperate style, a new website and relocation to a new working environment (early April the NHC moved to the Nutshuis in the city centre of The Hague) the organisation will present itself as a solid yet dynamic partner in the field of Human Rights and Rule of Law that is there to stay.

Executive Director-Board / Supervisory Board

On January 1st, 2016 Pepijn Gerrits started as Executive Director of the organisation. Following the August 15th changes to the Statutes he also became the sole member of the Board.

The former Board, consisted of Ian M. de Jong (Chairman), Angela Kaptein (Vice-Chair), Anna K. Meijknecht (Secretary), Gido Visser (Treasurer until June 23rd, 2016). After August 15th the members of the former Board became the new members of the Supervisory Board. Mrs. Erika A. Marseille replaced Gido Visser as Treasurer of the (then) Board on June 23rd, 2016.

The Hague, June 1, 2017

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pepijn Gerrits', with a stylized flourish extending from the end.

Pepijn Gerrits

Executive Director / Chair of the Board of the Netherlands Helsinki Committee

FINANCIAL REPORT 2016

Balance per 31 December 2016

including result 2016

ASSETS	Ref	31 dec 16	31 dec 15
Fixed Assets			
Fixed assets	1	€ 2.216	€ 1.892
Current Assets			
Receivables & Accruals	2	€ 44.583	€ 55.280
Cash & cash equivalents	3	€ 894.967	€ 1.075.452
		<u>€ 939.551</u>	<u>€ 1.130.733</u>
Total		<u>€ 941.766</u>	<u>€ 1.132.625</u>
RESERVES AND LIABILITIES			
Reserves and Funds			
Continuity reserve	4	€ 158.472	€ 255.654
Current Liabilities			
Current liabilities projects	5	€ 533.536	€ 573.817
Payables & Accruals	6	€ 229.569	€ 290.671
Taxes	7	€ 20.191	€ 12.484
		<u>€ 783.295</u>	<u>€ 876.972</u>
Total		<u>€ 941.767</u>	<u>€ 1.132.626</u>

Statement of Income and Expenditure

	2016 Realisation	2016 Budget	2015 Realisation
INCOME			
Governmental Grants	€ 1.735.843	€ 1.528.000	€ 1.775.279
Other NGO's/non-profit organisations	€ 194.331	€ 146.000	€ 157.662
Still to be funded		€ 314.260	
Other Income	€ 3.411	€ 3.000	€ 57.145
Total income	<u>€ 1.933.585</u>	<u>€ 1.991.260</u>	<u>€ 1.990.086</u>
EXPENDITURES			
Spent on programmes and projects	€ 1.683.973	€ 1.691.000	€ 1.743.367
Spent on obtaining funds	€ 76.294	€ 45.260	€ 28.158
Management and administration	€ 270.501	€ 240.000	€ 227.895
Total expenditures	<u>€ 2.030.767</u>	<u>€ 1.976.260</u>	<u>€ 1.999.420</u>
Result	<u>€ -97.182</u>	<u>€ 15.000</u>	<u>€ -9.334</u>

The result is deducted from the continuity reserve

General notes to the financial statements 2016

Accounting principles

General

The annual accounts for 2016 have been drawn up according to general accepted accounting principles in The Netherlands and, more specifically on the basis of Directive C1 "*kleine organisaties zonder winststreven*". Before 2016 Directive 650 "*Fondswervende instellingen*" was applied. However, Directive C1 is deemed more appropriate for the organisation. The transition does not change the valuation of assets and liabilities. It only effects the presentation. The figures of 2015 have been changed accordingly. Under these directive the financial year equals a calendar year. Amounts are stated in euro.

Principles of valuation

Assets and liabilities are stated at face value unless indicated otherwise, and based on the principle of continuity of the organisation. Please see the report of the Board for a more detailed explanation.

Continuity reserve

The purpose of the continuity reserve is:

1. to ensure the continuity of the organisation in case the income in a year is less than the expenditure;
2. to finance investments that contribute to the continuity of the organisation;
3. to pre-finance activities which will be compensated by the donor later;
4. to reserve sufficient financial resources to be able to meet ongoing obligations, in the event of a loss of activities or even the termination of the activities. These obligations include:
 - cancelling permanent labour contracts in accordance with a magistrate's or CIW ruling.
 - cancelling temporary employment contracts in accordance with the agreed deadline up to the maximum of one year.
 - honouring obligations arising from the implementation of the Supplementary Fund. For this purpose, the maximum amount of 118.000 EUR is reserved.
 - cancelling ongoing contracts for example the office rent, the rent of various office facilities, insurance contracts in accordance with the agreed deadline.

The NHC seeks an operating result of 15.000 per year. The result is added (or deducted) from the continuity reserve. The desired seize of the continuity reserve equals the total of the personnel, housing and organizational costs for a calendar year. The total staffing, accommodation and organizational costs for 2016 amounts to € 705.001. The continuity reserve per 31.12.2016 amounts to € 158.472.

Current liabilities projects

The NHC receives funding on a project basis. Many subsidies have a longer maturity period as one calendar year. The difference between the advance payment by the funder and the project expenditure in the same year are stated in the balance as current liabilities on projects.

Advances provided to local partner organisations

Part of the subsidy received by the NHC has been received for projects with partners. The NHC advances the local partners on there expenditures. Since 2008 the amount paid in advance to the partner is accounted for as spending in the year the advance is paid.

Salary obligations

In the balance, salary obligations are taken under the accruals when it is an obligation and in receivables and prepayments when it is a claim.

Determining the result

The result is determined by taking the income and expenditures of the activities that took place during the year. Also grant revenues are recognised as income in proportion of the progress of the project. The costs are based on historic cost.

Other information

Chamber of Commerce

The Netherlands Helsinki Committee is registered at the Chamber of Commerce in The Hague under number 41182679. Its legal form is a foundation under Dutch law and its statutory name is: Stichting Nederlands Helsinki Comité. The NHC is statutory and actually located in The Hague.

Control

The accounts for the year 2016 as well as the annual report were audited by HLB-Blömer accountants & adviseurs based in Nieuwegein. The auditor statement is added to this report. Inspections by the Tax and Business Association have occurred in 1996 and 2000.

Pension

The foundation has a pension savings plan for its employees. This is an allocated pension contribution scheme. The foundation has no pension liabilities apart from those stated in the balance sheet.

Insurance

On 31 December 2016, the following insurances apply (with insured values in Euro):

Inventory	€ 40.000
Liability insurance: per event	€ 2.500.000
Liability insurance: maximum per year	€ 5.000.000
Board member liability insurance: per event/per year	€ 500.000
Sick leave Insurance Plan, insured salary costs 31-12-2016	€ 465.941
Travel Insurance for all staff and experts travelling abroad for the company	

Explanatory notes to the Balance Sheet Statement

ASSETS	31 dec 16	31 dec 15
1 Fixed Assets		
Bookvalue January 1st	€ 1.892	€ 2.001
Investments	€ 2.142	€ 1.400
Divestments	€ -1.017	
Depreciation	€ -1.818	€ -1.509
Depreciation on divestments	€ 1.017	
Bookvalue December 31st	€ 2.216	€ 1.892
Total investments	€ 36.403	€ 35.279
Total depreciation	€ -34.187	€ -33.387
Bookvalue December 31st	€ 2.216	€ 1.892

The tangible fixed assets are valued at cost minus depreciation. The depreciation rate for computers is 33.3% per year, for office equipment and accounting software 20% per year.

CURRENT ASSETS

2 Receivables & Accruals		
Prepaid expenses and insurances	€ 21.809	€ 18.200
Receivable VAT	€ 12.526	€ 15.327
Debtors	€ 3.323	€ 8.960
Other receivables	€ 6.926	€ 12.793
	€ 44.583	€ 55.280
3 Cash & Cash equivalents		
ING bank	€ 689.276	€ 565.126
ABN AMRO bank	€ 2.949	€ 1.273
ASN spaarrekening	€ 201.716	€ 505.323
Cash Euro	€ 1.026	€ 3.730
	€ 894.967	€ 1.075.452

Explanatory notes to the Balance Sheet Statement - sequel

RESERVES AND LIABILITIES		31 dec 16	31 dec 15
4 Continuity Reserve			
Balance 1st of January	€	255.654	€ 264.988
Result bookyear	€	-97.182	€ -9.334
Balance 31st of December	€	<u>158.472</u>	€ <u>255.654</u>
5 Current liabilities projects			
Grant advance payments	€	2.139.023	€ 1.307.258
To be settled with partners	€	40.872	€ 65.610
Reserves for reports not yet approved	€	40.609	€ 49.500
Interest to settle with funders	€	36.753	€ 34.702
Project expenditures to be reported	€	-1.722.722	€ -883.253
	€	<u>533.536</u>	€ <u>573.817</u>
6 Payables and Accruals			
Accrued liabilities regarding employees	€	50.958	€ 38.691
Creditors	€	64.649	€ 85.537
Invoices to be received	€	96.659	€ 136.208
Other accruals	€	18.302	€ 31.236
	€	<u>229.569</u>	€ <u>290.671</u>
7 Taxes			
Income tax december	€	<u>20.191</u>	€ <u>12.484</u>

Rights, liabilities and risks not in the balance statement

- Projects** - The remaining grant amounts for the duration of the project after the financial year are not included in the balance statement. However, these rights are listed in Annex 1. Specification projects column "remaining next years". It amounts to a total of € 3.817.388.
- Housing** - The foundation is located at het Nutshuis, Riviervismarkt 5 in The Hague. There is a rent contract for the period 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2020 with the Stichting het Nutshuis.
- Copier machine** - there is a 6 year lease contract for a Samsung copier machine. The term started October 1st 2016 and ends September 30th 2022. Costs are € 1.260,- per year.

Explanatory notes to the Statement of Income and Expenditures

EXPENDITURES	2016 Realisation	2016 Budget	2015 Realisation
Spent on programmes and projects			
- Spent by local partners	€ 595.119	€ 540.000	€ 522.093
- Direct costs spent by NHC	€ 720.139	€ 771.000	€ 859.705
- Staff and organisational costs	€ 368.715	€ 380.000	€ 361.569
	€ 1.683.973	€ 1.691.000	€ 1.743.367
Spent on obtaining funds			
- Direct costs spent by NHC	€ 10.509	€ 5.200	€ 6.549
- Staff and organisational costs	€ 65.785	€ 40.060	€ 21.609
	€ 76.294	€ 45.260	€ 28.158
Management and administration	€ 270.501	€ 250.000	€ 227.895
Total expenditures	€ 2.030.767	€ 1.986.260	€ 1.999.420
<i>Specification staff and organisational costs</i>			
Staff costs			
Gross Salary	€ 475.587	€ 442.600	€ 412.999
Social security and pension plan	€ 93.096	€ 90.900	€ 78.166
Other	€ 48.406	€ 47.200	€ 35.544
	€ 617.090	€ 580.700	€ 526.709
Housing costs			
Rent	€ 31.961	€ 32.300	€ 31.764
Other housing costs	€ 1.169	€ 1.800	€ 1.341
	€ 33.130	€ 34.100	€ 33.105
Office and general expenses			
Travel	€ 3.113	€ 4.000	€ 1.646
Goods and services	€ 29.550	€ 24.700	€ 33.400
Operational costs	€ 20.301	€ 22.500	€ 14.704
	€ 52.964	€ 51.200	€ 49.750
Depreciation	€ 1.818	€ 4.060	€ 1.509
Total staff and organisational costs	€ 705.001	€ 670.060	€ 611.073

The staff and organisational costs are charged to the programme and projects, project development and management and administration on the basis of time spend on the subjects:

Spent on programmes and projects	€ 368.715	€ 380.000	€ 361.569
Spent on obtaining funds	€ 65.785	€ 40.060	€ 21.609
Management and administration	€ 270.501	€ 250.000	€ 227.895
	€ 705.001	€ 670.060	€ 611.073

Other information

Average Full Time Equivalent	9,0	9,0	8,6
Number of employees per 31 december (incl. man.dir)	13	-	9

Remuneration of top employees

1a. Managerial top - employees

amounts x € 1	P. Gerrits	H.K. Hummel
Job information	Executive director	Associate Policy Director
Period	1/1 - 31/12	1/1 - 31/12
Full time equivalent	1,0	1,0
Former top employee	nee	ja
Fictional employment	nee	nee
Individual WNT-maximum	€ 168.000	€ 168.000
Gross salary	€ 78.875	€ 76.078
Gross expense allowance	-	-
Rewards payable in due course	-	-
Subtotal	€ 78.875	€ 76.078
-/- Payments without entitlement	-	-
Total remuneration	€ 78.875	€ 76.078
Information 2015		
Period	1/1 - 31/12	
Full time equivalent	1,0	
Gross salary	€ 76.093	
Gross expense allowance	-	
Rewards payable in due course	-	
Total remuneration 2015	€ 76.093	

1c. Supervisory board

bedragen x € 1	I. M. de Jong	A.K. Meijknecht	A. Kaptein	G. Visser	E.A. Marseille
Job information	chairman	member	member	member	member
Period	1/1 - 31/12	1/1 - 31/12	1/1 - 31/12	1/1 - 23/6	23/6 - 31/12
Individual WNT-maximum	€ 25.200	€ 16.800	€ 16.800	€ 7.963	€ 8.837
Gross salary	-	-	-	-	-
Gross expense allowance	-	-	-	-	-
Rewards payable in due course	-	-	-	-	-
Subtotal	€ -	€ -	€ -	€ -	€ -
-/- Payments without entitlement	-	-	-	-	-
Total remuneration	€ -	€ -	€ -	€ -	€ -
Information 2015					
Period	1/1 - 31/12	1/1 - 31/12	1/1 - 31/12	1/1 - 31/12	
Gross salary	-	-	-	-	-
Gross expense allowance	-	-	-	-	-
Rewards payable in due course	-	-	-	-	-
Total remuneration 2015	0	0	0		

Specification projects

Project	Funder	End of project	Total fund	Spent up to bookyear	Remaining next years	Income projects 201b	Expenditures reported on projects 201b	Balance NHC 201b
Tadqiqat Lab. Human Rights Fund 2011 final settlement	Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs	2015	€ 900.020	€ 878.228	closed	€ 11.130	€ 0	€ 11.130
Conference on 40 years / OVSE	Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs	2016	€ 37.328	€ 1.300	closed	€ 1.300	€ 1.300	€ 0
Supporting Human Rights Defenders MRF	Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs	2017	€ 1.924.471	€ 1.351.789	€ 572.682	€ 638.638	€ 638.638	€ 0
Legal support of affected persons in Belarus, Georgia and Ukraine	European Commission	2016	€ 701.216	€ 649.322	closed	€ 7.485	€ 7.485	€ 0
Trafficking in Alb & BH Matra CopROL	Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs	2017	€ 964.300	€ 818.550	€ 145.750	€ 265.161	€ 265.161	€ 0
Increasing access to legal aid for victims of Human Trafficking	Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs	2017	€ 73.370	€ 38.547	€ 34.823	€ 38.547	€ 38.547	€ 0
Reclasseringsproject Matr CopROL	Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs	2017	€ 807.645	€ 618.215	€ 189.470	€ 313.741	€ 313.741	€ 0
OSCE related activities	Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs	2017	€ 168.000	€ 154.556	€ 13.444	€ 55.205	€ 55.205	€ 0
Prison Reform Alb, Mac, Kos Matra CopROL	Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs	2017	€ 1.476.500	€ 1.299.814	€ 176.686	€ 337.392	€ 337.392	€ 0
Rule of Law training programme	Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs	2018	€ 2.431.380	€ 11.009	€ 2.420.371	€ 11.009	€ 11.009	€ 0
Security & Human Rights 2015	Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs	2015	€ 28.000	€ 28.000	€ 0	€ 4.456	€ 7.809	€ -3.353
Security & Human Rights 2016	Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Germany, Liechtenstein, Austria	2016	€ 53.462	€ 47.279	€ 6.183	€ 47.279	€ 47.289	€ -10
Cot conference of lawyers	Council of Europe	2016	€ 4.500	€ 4.500	closed	€ 4.500	€ 4.545	€ -145
Subtotal (governmental grants)			€ 9.570.232	€ 5.901.110	€ 3.599.408	€ 1.735.843	€ 1.728.222	€ 7.621
Bread for the World project		ongoing	€ 25.000	€ 22.737	€ 46.000	€ 22.737	€ 22.737	€ 0
Book Criminal Law on Hate Crime		2016	€ 5.451	€ 3.758	closed	€ 5.451	€ 3.758	€ 1.693
Europe's Finance		ongoing	€ 11.000	€ 11.927	€ 11.000	€ 11.927	€ 11.927	€ 0
Transborder corruption Open Call project		2017	€ 29.970	€ 25.211	€ 4.759	€ 25.211	€ 25.211	€ 0
Accountability judiciary Azerbaijan		2017	€ 133.184	€ 38.893	€ 94.301	€ 38.893	€ 38.893	€ 0
Support prison system Moldova		2017	€ 191.400	€ 133.498	€ 57.902	€ 74.342	€ 75.211	€ -869
OSCE related activities		2017	€ 80.800	€ 59.955	closed	€ -739	€ 0	€ -739
Prison renovation Latvia		2017	€ 30.000	€ 3.756	€ 26.244	€ 3.756	€ 3.756	€ 0
Transborder corruption		2017	€ 87.525	€ 12.752	€ 74.773	€ 12.752	€ 12.783	€ -31
Subtotal Income from non governmental/non-profit organisations			€ 574.340	€ 312.487	€ 257.979	€ 194.331	€ 194.276	€ 55
Non-project income and expenditures						€ 3.411	€ 108.269	€ -104.859
			€ 10.144.572	€ 6.213.598	€ 3.817.388	€ 1.933.585	€ 2.030.767	€ -97.182

Annex: Auditors report

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To: To the Supervisory Board of Stichting Nederlands Helsinki Comité

A. Report on the audit of the financial statements 2016 included in the annual report

Our opinion

We have audited the financial statements 2016 of Stichting Nederlands Helsinki Comité, based in Den Haag.

In our opinion the accompanying financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial position of Stichting Nederlands Helsinki Comité as at 31 December 2016 and of its result for 2016 in accordance with the accounting principles Rjk C1 “Kleine Organisaties-zonder-winststreven” as explained in the general notes to the financial statements and the policy regulations for the application of the law on the normalisation of salaries for top officials in the (semi)public sector (WNT).

The financial statements comprise:

- 1 the balance sheet as at 31 December 2016;
- 2 the profit and loss account for 2016; and
- 3 the notes comprising a summary of the accounting policies and other explanatory information.

Basis for our opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Dutch law, including the Dutch Standards on Auditing and the audit protocol WNT. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the ‘Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements’ section of our report.

We are independent of Stichting Nederlands Helsinki Comité in accordance with the Verordening inzake de onafhankelijkheid van accountants bij assurance-opdrachten (ViO, Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants, a regulation with respect to independence) and other relevant independence regulations in the Netherlands. Furthermore we have complied with the Verordening gedrags- en beroepsregels accountants (VGBA, Dutch Code of Ethics).

We believe the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Emphasis of an uncertainty in the financial statements with respect to continuity

We draw attention to the General Notes to the financial statements of 2016, and specific the Principles of valuation, which describes the annual accounts are based on the principle of continuity of the organization, with a reference to the report of the board for a detailed explanation. In this report of the board it is mentioned additional funding for the period 2017-2020 is necessary for Stichting Nederlands Helsinki Comité in order to provide the organization with a minimal base to continue its operations and

the further role-out of the fundraising strategy. However, for 2017 no shortcoming of liquidity is expected, as well as a first large programme from the Matra Fund is secured. Therefore, the annual accounts are based on the principle of continuity of the organization. Our opinion is not qualified in respect of this matter.

B. Report on the other information included in the annual report

In addition to the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon, the annual report contains other information that consists of:

- The management board's report;

Based on the following procedures performed, we conclude that the other information:

- is consistent with the financial statements and does not contain material misstatements;
- contains the information as required by Rjk C1 "Kleine Organisaties-zonder-winststreven".

We have read the other information. Based on our knowledge and understanding obtained through our audit of the financial statements or otherwise, we have considered whether the other information contains material misstatements.

By performing these procedures, we comply with the requirements of Dutch Standard 720. The scope of the procedures performed is substantially less than the scope of those performed in our audit of the financial statements.

Management is responsible for the preparation of the management board's report in accordance with Rjk C1 "Kleine Organisaties-zonder-winststreven".

C. Description of responsibilities regarding the financial statements

Responsibilities of management for the financial statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with the accounting principles as explained in the general notes to the financial statements and the policy regulations for the application of the law on the normalisation of salaries for top officials in the (semi)public sector (WNT). Furthermore, management is responsible for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

As part of the preparation of the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the company's ability to continue as a going concern. Based on the financial reporting framework mentioned, management should prepare the financial statements using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the company or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Management should disclose events and circumstances that may cast significant doubt on the company's ability to continue as a going concern in the financial statements.

Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objective is to plan and perform the audit assignment in a manner that allows us to obtain sufficient and appropriate audit evidence for our opinion.

Our audit has been performed with a high, but not absolute, level of assurance, which means we may not detect all material errors and fraud during our audit.

Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements. The materiality affects the nature, timing and extent of our audit procedures and the evaluation of the effect of identified misstatements on our opinion.

We have exercised professional judgement and have maintained professional skepticism throughout the audit, in accordance with Dutch Standards on Auditing, ethical requirements and independence requirements. Our audit included e.g.:

- Identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, designing and performing audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtaining audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control;
- Obtaining an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the company's internal control;
- Evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management;
- Concluding on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting, and based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the company's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause a company to cease to continue as a going concern;
- Evaluating the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures; and

- Evaluating whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with the Supervisory Board regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant findings in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Nieuwegein, 1 June 2017

HLB Blömer accountants en adviseurs B.V.

drs. J.N. Witteveen RA

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