

# INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON ARCHIVES

## HUMAN RIGHTS WORKING GROUP

Minutes of a meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2018

Yaoundé, 14:00-16:00

### Participants:

#### - **Members of the HRWG**

Giulia Barrera, Blanca Bazaco, Gustavo Castaner, Adama Aly Pam, Jens Boel, Perrine Canavaggio, Deborah Jenkins, David Sutton, Karin Van Honacker, Roman Lescano

#### - **Prospective members:**

Caroline Brown (Univ. of Dundee), Katharina Hering (German Historical Institute, Washington DC).

Chair: Giulia Barrera

Minutes: Katharina Hering

### 1. Introductions of participants

2. **Report, by Jens Boel, on reference book on archives and human rights, edited by Perrine Canavaggio, Jens Boel and Antonio Gonzalez Quintana.** The title will be: Archives & Human Rights. In October, 2018, the editors signed a contract with the publisher Routledge. The UK Society of authors supported the project and provided suggestions about the contract. It is going to be the first book-length study on the topic and will be crafted as a teaching tool. It will include chapters by about 15 authors (10 authors have already committed to contribute); it will include case studies from different countries. Editors have prepared guidelines for authors. The first submission deadline is March 1, 2019, the book is expected to come out in 2020, so that there will be enough time to prepare the revisions and translations. David Sutton will serve as English language consultant. It will be necessary to translate chapters from French and Spanish. Editors are concerned that they will get enough support for translations – it will be challenging to find translators who are familiar with both archives and human rights issues.

### 3. **Basic Principles of Archivists and Records Managers in Support of Human Rights.**

Giulia makes a summary of the history and current status of the document. PCOM endorsed it “as a working document” in Seoul in 2016. It was not submitted to the General Assembly, due to lack of support from some ICA sectors. FAN carried out a survey about it among its members but received very few responses. It approved a statement about it (see attachment). In the meantime, the Society of American Archivists, the Association of Latin American Archivists, and other professional associations have endorsed it.

Discussion about next steps: Giulia will approach FAN chair, in order to ascertain whether he is willing to suggest specific changes to the text, in order to make it acceptable to FAN members. The adoption of the Universal Declaration requested a similar process after it was rejected by the GA in Malta in 2009. The group considers the possibility of submitting the Basic Principles to the ICA General Assembly that will be held in 2020, in Abu Dhabi.

#### **4. HRWG website.**

Roman – who also handles social media for the ICA – reports on website use and development in 2018 (his written report was distributed before the meeting).

#### **5. HRWG Newsletter**

Giulia emphasizes that the strength is the monthly newsletter, edited and commented by Trudy Huskamp Peterson, which reaches over 460 subscribers from 37 countries (in addition to those who receive it from the ICA list or directly from Trudy). Italian archival magazine *Il Mondo degli Archivi* manages the subscriptions.

The newsletter –translated into French and Spanish-- gets posted regularly on website. Volunteers regularly translate it into Spanish (Paloma Beneito Arias and Valentina Rojas), and it into French (Myriam Erwin, Remi Dubuisson; from now on Perrine will help translating as well).

A discussion follows on the HRWG communication strategies. The group does not have a Facebook and Twitter presence. Roman volunteers to open a Twitter account. There would be need of volunteers who can, for example, Tweet entries that appear on the newsletter, in different languages (English, French and Spanish).

The HRWG might also start writing Wikipedia entries on different issues relating to archives and human rights.

#### **6. HRWG membership - updated list of members**

The group has currently 28 members. Moreover, several persons who participated at workshops or panels asked to stay in touch and are willing to cooperate occasionally. There is need to keep this wide network alive.

#### **7. HRWG: possible reorganization of the WG.**

There is currently no secretary (Hans has left) and Giulia explains that she needs to step down because of her increased work commitments. Antonio Gonzalez Quintana is suggested as the new chair.

The HRWG is an anomaly within ICA, since it is neither a section nor an expert group. The group deliberately decided not to become section. However, if the HRWG were a section, it would have a budget, and be represented on the executive board. Moreover, currently the HRWG does not have a steering committee.

#### **8. HRWG role in supporting archivists in crisis situation: what kind of action can the HRWG take?**

The HRWG is at times asked to take action regarding crisis situation; for example, it recently wrote a letter regarding the threat to the Historical Archives of the Guatemalan National Police. The group needs to be able to take rapidly initiatives.

The HRWG approves Jens' proposal to establish a small team within the HRWG, who can draft petitions and letters at short notice, and make recommendations to ICA elected officers.

#### **9. Update on HRWG projects**

--The Executive Board of the ICA (International Council on Archives) endorsed "[Guiding Principles for Safe Havens for Archives at Risk](#)".

– ICA has adopted a software for on-line teaching and a first module on the UDA has already been prepared. The HRWG discusses the possibility of using this software to create on line courses on issues relating to archives and human right (for the moment, the project is postponed).

**10. Next meeting:** Attendees think it is unlikely that the group will be able to meet in Adelaide. The idea is to organize a small meeting in Europe in conjunction with another conference or meeting. An option might be to meet when the SIO meets in 2019. Brussels would be a good location. Gustavo will follow up.