

# 4th WORLD CONGRESS OF BASQUE COMMUNITIES

## Document of Conclusions



EUSKAL GIZATALDEEN IV.  
MUNDU-BATZARRA

**ZUBIGINTZAN**

IV. CONGRESO MUNDIAL  
DE COLECTIVIDADES VASCAS



The representatives of the federations and Basque centers in Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Cuba, Chile, Colombia, Spain, El Salvador, the United States, France, Italy, Mexico, Peru, United Kingdom, Dominican Republic, Uruguay and Venezuela gathered at the Palacio Euskalduna in Bilbao, during the 4<sup>th</sup> World Congress of Basque Communities on the 9, 10, 11 and 12 of July 2007, by virtue of the proposal drawn up by the Directorate for Relations with Basque Communities,

AGREE:

- A) Agree on the following Document of Conclusions
- B) This document will be read before the Advisory Board for their consideration for the elaboration of the Four Year Institutional Action Plan, all in accordance with article 13.4 of Law 8/1994

## **OBJECTIVES AND AREAS OF ACTIVITY FOR THE PERIOD COMPRISING 2008-2011**

Five objectives have been proposed for the plan of action which determines the relationships over the next four years between Basque public institutions and Basque communities abroad:

### **1) Develop foreign policy**

Article 1 of Law 8/1994, dated 27 May, stipulates two groups of objectives. The first is to support and reinforce the relationships between Basque society, Euskadi and its institutions and Basque communities and centers abroad; the second group of objectives advocate using these platforms as instruments at the service of Basque foreign policy.

In the same vein, the Strategy for Foreign Action of the Autonomous Community of Euskadi, approved by the Basque Cabinet of Ministers on 8 March 2005, states that "in today's ever-increasing environment of globalization and internationalization among modern societies, the Basque communities can play the role of agents for promoting social, cultural, economic and political relations."

In addition, the Coalition Agreement signed by the political parties comprising the Basque Government in the present seventh legislature reflects a "strong political will from the Public Institutions to attend to the needs of all Basque men and women around the world under equal conditions."

Accordingly, all of the actions implemented and the measures adopted by the Basque public institutions with regard to Basque communities and centers abroad must comply with the general principles governing Euskadi's foreign policy.

### **2) Promote the feeling of belonging to the global Basque community**

Regardless of the place of origin, the reasons for emigrating and the country of destination, it is the feeling of attachment to Euskal Herria, and the Basque culture that unites Basques around the world. Familiarity with the homeland and with other Basque communities abroad is fundamental.

Therefore, all of the actions implemented and the measures adopted by the Basque public institutions with regard to Basque communities and centers abroad should be geared towards promoting Basque identity in the world, in any of its manifestations.

### **3) Promote the internal cohesion and effectiveness of associative actions**

Although the first important historical references to the Basque associative movement date to the 17th (Lima) and eighteenth centuries (Madrid and Mexico), expansion in its present form began over one hundred years ago. Nearly 200 entities are still active today in 21 countries around the world. This institutional framework has had to continually adapt itself to the times. Today's era of new technologies will pose yet another challenge to the survival of our institutions.

Therefore, all of the actions implemented and the measures adopted by the Basque public institutions with regard to Basque communities and centers, and the actions measures and carried out by the Basque centers themselves, shall promote the internal cohesion and effectiveness of associative actions in order to adapt to the new times.

### **4) Raise the profile of Basque centers and communities abroad**

In order to keep Basque associative life alive and well, Basque organizations abroad must open their doors to their communities. Not only in the interests of the regeneration and survival of their institutions, but also to comply with the goal of serving as platforms for promoting an understanding of life in the Basque Country today.

Therefore, reaching out to the local community will be considered one of the priority objectives, particularly with regard to building relationships with other organizations in the environment.

### **5) Participation by women and young people**

The future success of the associative movement depends on its ability to face the cultural change in today's era of globalization and technologization, as a factor determining the competitiveness and, as a result, success in the organization of the associations. It is therefore essential to move forward in the democratization of the organizational structures, ensuring equal rights and responsibilities, and in promoting participation by women and young people in the development of the institutions they belong to and in the development of new projects.

Therefore, all of the actions implemented and the measures adopted by the Basque public institutions with regard to Basque communities and centers, and the actions measures and carried out by the Basque centers themselves, shall take into account the importance of the involvement of young people in the Basque associative movement around the world.

Based on the objectives put forward, the representatives of the Basque Communities present at the 4<sup>th</sup> Congress propose the following areas of activity for 2008-2011 period:

- 1) Social welfare and solidarity with Basques facing situations of extreme poverty
- 2) Basque culture and Euskara
- 3) Exterior image and communication
- 4) Training
- 5) Recovering historic memory

#### **IV.- MEASURES TO BE DEVELOPED IN THE 2008-2011 PERIOD**

1.- Each federation, or in the absence thereof, the Basque center, shall write up a report describing the problems faced by its elderly members and the programs to be developed.

2.- Each federation, or in the absence thereof, the Basque center, shall write up a report describing the work needed to be done on its buildings to make them easily accessible to people with disabilities.

3.- Along these same lines, the announcement for welfare aid will be made, in accordance with Art. 8.3 of Law 8/1994, dated 27 May. The law states that "the General Administration of the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country, within the limits of the available budgetary appropriations and within the framework of the objectives of this law, shall provide aid (...) for the purposes of (...) attending to welfare needs, in particular, cases of extreme poverty. Having that aim in view, the Congress proposes a formula to regulate the announcements for funding activities under the following terms:

- To be absolutely certain of the level of need, if necessary, through a social welfare certification
- Establish a minimum amount of 300€ aid annually and a maximum that does not exceed the Basque Autonomous Community's minimum income level
- Applications will be performed using the country's local currency
- Expand the program to provide welfare coverage to people in old people's homes

4.- The Directorate for Relations with Basque Communities (henceforth, the DRBC) will spearhead an effort to conduct a study on the welfare needs of Basque people living abroad.

5.- The DRBC will take steps to promote the development of regulations governing aid rendered to the members of Basque communities referred to in article 11.2 of the Law, indicating that "in the case of particularly vulnerable persons, the announcement for the allocation of social housing may establish the condition of returnee as a criterion for determining eligibility, or set aside a percentage of social housing units for this group of people."

6.- In the same vein, it shall see to the processing of the regulation governing any "support measures adopted to facilitate their return voyage to the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country for the purpose of establishing residency" (Art. 11.3).

7.- The DRBC will publish a guide on how to reclaim nationality in answer to the numerous inquiries received from members of Basque communities abroad.

- 8.- The DRBC will inform the Basque centers and their federations of the measures directed at Basques abroad in the Basque Plan for Culture and in the programs developed by the Etxepare Institute.
- 9.- The DRBC shall present to the Department of Culture any proposals submitted by the Basque centers and/or their corresponding federations for the development of possible programs to be included in the Basque Plan for Culture.
- 10.- The DRBC shall take the appropriate steps to ensure that Basques residing abroad have equal access to assistance and scholarships for educational and cultural programs.
- 11.- The DRBC will collaborate with the Department of Education to develop the subject of Basque emigration in school curriculum.
- 12.- Euskara classes for adults offered at Basque centers shall be organized in accordance with the regulations laid down by the Department of Culture.
- 13.- The DRBC and the federations, or in the absence thereof, the Basque centers, will agree on funding for intensive courses given by "irakasles" (Euskara teachers), to ensure that Euskara is taught at the Basque centers.
- 14.- The DRBC will provide subsidies for training instructors to lead activities for children in Euskara and for any materials need for this purpose.
- 15.- The DRBC shall work with the Department of Language Policy to provide the possibility for young people from Basque centers with a knowledge of Euskara to practice their language skills with Basque-speaking families in Euskadi.
- 16.- For this same purpose, the DRBC will make efforts to extend the agreement signed between the Boise Ikastola and the Basque Department of Education and the agreement between FEVA and Colegio Euskal Etchea de Llavallol.
- 17.- The DRBC, together with the federations, or in the absence thereof, the Basque centers, will explore a bilingual project, guaranteeing the presence of euskera, for signs in their buildings.

18.- The federations or in the absence thereof, the Basque centers, will place priority on courses on:

- basic courses on Basque culture for the young people at their institutions, in general, and for educating outreach workers, in particular
- management training courses for cultural organizations
- leadership courses and Basque affairs expert courses

With that aim, the DRBC will offer courses and basic Basque culture material and/or information on where to obtain it on their web page. With this same goal, the DRBC shall also provide entertainment and games through the Internet.

19.- The DRBC will sponsor different forums (for debate, suggestions, exchanges, etc) for young people in Basque centers. For this purpose, it will make efforts to collaborate with the Youth Office of the Department of Culture and/or other youth associations.

20.- The DRBC will promote youth exchanges between Basque centers.

21.- The commitment of youth in Basque center tasks will be fostered for the purpose of encouraging their participation in leadership tasks.

22.- Guarantee the presentation of a report on Basque centre youth for the 5<sup>th</sup> World Congress of Basque Communities in 2011.

23.- Activities aimed at incorporating gender policies will also receive priority treatment. In this respect, orientation and support programs on equality that favor a change in attitude in the heart of Basque centers. Likewise, the creation of a network of Basque women who work for gender equality from their Basque centers and local communities is proposed.

24.- The federations, or in the absence thereof, the Basque centers, shall update their information on the Basque dance groups currently in existence and look into the possibility of creating new groups in places that have none. A report shall be submitted to the DRBC no later than 31st December 2007 in order to plan educational activities and allocate funding for the materials needed for advanced classes and/or to expand the repertoire for the 2008-2011 period. The DRBC web site will post the appropriate teaching materials.

25.- The federations, or in the absence thereof, the Basque centers, shall submit to the DRBC a report on the music-related activities pertaining to choirs, musical groups or performers, no later than 31st December, to plan for educational activities and allocate funding.

26.- With regard to music-related activities, priority will be given to funding classes for learning to play Basque musical instruments, especially the txistu, txalaparta and trikitixa.

27.- The DRBC will push for an agreement with Eresbil (Basque Archives of Music) to supply the Basque centers with materials for promoting Basque music.

28.- The Basque centers in different countries that have dance groups and choirs or musical groups will be encouraged to share their experience with groups from other centers. For this purpose, the DRBC will create prizes covering partial travel expenses to Euskadi or to the countries where the Basque centers are located. Each group may only receive the prize once.

29.- The Basque club federations shall create exchange networks for dance groups and musicians, partner institutions and/or professionals interested in Basque culture.

30.- The DRBC web site shall offer information provided by publishing houses, recording companies and/or Basque centers and federations on newly released books or recordings.

31.- The Basque centers shall give priority to the sports activities carried out by the younger members of their organizations. In this sense, during the period comprising 2008-2011 the DRBC shall prioritize financing for training young instructors at Basque centers and for the specific materials needed to carry out the sports activities at the Basque center and/or for participation in local tournaments.

32.- The federations, or in the absence thereof, the Basque centers, shall submit a report to the DRBC, no later than 31st December 2007, on the restaurants associated with their institutions. The report should include restaurant operation (concession, etc.), kitchen condition and equipment, seating capacity and menus. This information will make it possible to present to the Department of Education agreements with the gastronomy schools in Euskadi on student internship positions.

33.- The Basque federations and centers shall provide the DRBC information on the characteristics and addresses of their restaurants for the possible publication of a brochure on Basque restaurants around the world. A form will be sent out so that all of the information gathered will be uniform.

34.- The DRBC will make the effort to develop a scholarship announcement for training in Euskadi according to the following characteristics:

- Scholarships for short-term training in Euskadi, to improve techniques and gain knowledge of materials for the purpose of developing the activities carried out at Basque centers
- Scholarships for periods of under two years, for studies focusing mainly on Basque culture: Euskara, gastronomy, etc.

35.- The DRBC will negotiate 45 scholarships with the University of the Basque Country to pursue a masters program in Euskadi

36.- In accordance with Art. 10.1.d), which regulates benefits for members of Basque communities, the DRBC shall take steps to promote recognition by the University of the Basque Country, in the framework of inter-university cooperation agreements, of degrees awarded at other universities similar to the degrees awarded at the University of the Basque Country”.

37.- The Basque federations and centers will promote research projects on the history of Basque emigration in the universities in their geographical environments that could be submitted for consideration for the Andrés de Irujo Award. For this purpose they shall make any materials they have available at the disposal of the researchers and scholars.

38.- The promotion of the creation of a museum-center to study Basque migration.

39.- The DRBC shall continue studying the destinations of today's Basque emigration for the purpose of better understanding and planning specific programs to fulfill the objectives laid down in Act 8/1994, dated 27 May.

40.- In this same line of action, the Basque federations and centers will collaborate with the DRBC to develop the project "Basques in the American press," begun with General Secretariat for Foreign Action, FEVA, the University of the Basque Country/Euskal Herriko Unibertsitatea and Universidad del Sur in Bahía Blanca.

41.- The DRBC will promote yearly *masters* programs in both English and Spanish, on the Basque diaspora, prioritizing specific subjects that can be incorporated into the Urazandi collection.

42.- To gain a better understanding of the history of first-generation Basque emigration in the twentieth century, the Basque federations and centers shall promote projects on collecting oral and/or written testimonies from Basque emigrants residing outside of Euskadi, and audio recordings of Basque activities carried out in their geographical area.

43.- The annual announcement of the *Gasztemundo* program will, at least, incorporate the following conditions:

- monographic courses on music, dance, media and leadership training
- spaces will be limited to youths who are responsible for such activities in the Basque center
- in exceptional cases, participants over 30 will be admitted

The creation of a network of participants in this program will be promoted, where forums and participation spaces will be provided.

44.- The following communication material is proposed:

- improve the information provided on activities carried out by the Basque Government
- that the EITB group broadcast more Basque diaspora activities
- that a Basque news agency be created
- increase communication between Basque centers
- analyze the creation of an expert committee to promote the dissemination of the Basque people's values

45.- Basque federations and centers shall consider raising the profile of their organizations in the local environment a priority area of action. To this end, funding for radio programs organized by the federations and centers as well as setting-up associations of journalists who are interested in Basque subjects shall be regarded by the DRBC as having particular interest

46.- As part of the efforts aimed at raising the profile abroad, Basque federations and centers, in their respective countries, shall promote strategies for promoting media presence, granting national or local awards for the best feature stories.

47.- The DRBC shall provide any interested federations, or in the absence thereof, Basque centers, with materials for organizing photographic exhibitions on Euskadi.

48.- Modern computer and communication technologies shall be used by the DRBC to develop its policy of communication with the Basque federations and centers and between the centers and federations themselves

49.- The creation of logo representing the Basque diaspora

50.- Participation by Basque centers will be favored when planning and designing missions.

51.- Federations and Basque centers will write their four-year 2008-2011 plans, adapting them to the needs and expectations of today and the current members.

52.- The federations and Basque centers will promote a standardized member identity card.

53.- The DRBC will establish an announcement for subsidies for Basque centers in the following areas of activity:

a) for running costs (accounting caption IV)

- youth
- women
- exterior image and accounting
- recovering historic memory

b) for investment expenses (accounting caption VII)

- repair damages caused by catastrophes
- eliminate architectural barriers for the disabled
- new construction of Basque centre headquarters
- adapt spaces for youth
- introduce new technologies to develop activities geared toward women and young people

54.- The federations and Basque centers commit themselves to work for peace.