

OMCT Europe

The European Union (EU) is a major political and economical actor on the international scene. The entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty in December 2009 provides for a new institutional framework to work with, including the legally binding integration of the Charter of Fundamental Rights into EU law. The EU reiterated its commitment to respect of human rights, democracy and the rule of law, which translates not only into political capital, but also into the allocation of the funds required to finance the activities of the EU and of NGOs in the field. Despite this, efforts must regularly be made to reduce the gap between discourse and practice. Human rights are still not adequately taken into account alongside political, economic and security considerations.

OMCT Europe's main goal is to appeal for a more coherent and effective European human rights policy. At the internal level, it advocates for the EU to integrate the various international human rights norms into its legislation. At the external level, OMCT Europe appeals for the creation of a control mechanism on Union activities and the measures it adopts. This double requirement aims to ensure a real coherence in the EU's external policy so that respect for human rights is recognised as an essential element for peace and security, and that it becomes incontrovertible at all levels of the EU's foreign policy.

Main activities :

OMCT Europe maintains regular contact between European institutions and OMCT's International Secretariat :

- It ensures a continuous and reliable connection between its members worldwide and the EU institutions in Brussels
- It informs members of European institutions [1] of the human rights situation in Europe and in the world, and engages with them to improve EU human rights strategy.
- It analyses European strategies and decisions that could have an impact on the respect for and the promotion of human rights.
- It informs OMCT's International Secretariat and members of the SOS-Torture Network of the evolution of the EU's strategy in this area. It ensures direct access to European institutions and their main collaborators.
- It also informs European institutions of the human rights implications of their policy by diffusing their decisions and press releases, and by participating in different European forums on the issue in close cooperation with other NGOs active in Brussels.

OMCT Europe assists the International Secretariat in its search for funding:

- It regularly informs OMCT on financing opportunities offered by the EU to NGOs working on human rights issues, and examines their compatibility with OMCT's mandate and the needs of the SOS-Torture Network.
- It contributes to removing the practical and administrative obstacles that the people responsible for OMCT's various programmes could encounter when submitting a project to the EU.

OMCT Europe assists in developing OMCT's mandate in Europe:

- It contributes to reinforcing the SOS-Torture Network through networking in Europe
- It attends the forums of the Council of Europe; especially those organised by NGOs that enjoy a consultative status, and participates in the various events related to OMCT's mandate.
- It attends consultations with the Fundamental Rights Agency of the EU, and monitors the development of FRA's activities relevant to OMCT's mandate

[1] Such as European representatives, commissioners, officials of the Commission or the Council, etc.
