



KARMAPA FOUNDATION
EUROPE

Annual Report 2013



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Foreword by the Secretary-General

In 2013, the Karmapa Foundation Europe (KFE) has been further consolidated into an operational Foundation following its successful start in 2012. KFE was engaged in a series of activities and it was entrusted with the responsibility to act as the legal body representing the interests of His Holiness Gyalwang Karmapa (HHGK) in Europe. This development occurred in the context of the proceedings related to the 'Karmapa' trademark issue.

In the course of 2013, KFE launched a number of initiatives with a view to supporting the Visits of HHGK to Europe. It facilitated the dissemination of His Teachings in Europe by launching a Facebook page and through a proactive distribution of the "Karmapa 900 Book" in French.

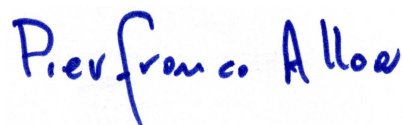
Furthermore, KFE initiated a project aiming at a meeting at Gyuto between HHGK & Young Europeans in August 2014.

The Foundation further reinforced its "Complementarity role" with European Dharma Centres basing itself on the so-called "principle of subsidiarity" and strengthened the available communication channels by promoting the objectives of the Foundation.

It has to be noticed that KFE is a volunteers-based organisation; however, all in all, the Foundation could function adequately in 2013, thanks to the personal commitment and involvement of a rather small number of people.

On 16th September 2013, His Holiness wrote a Message regarding the KFE, outlining its perspectives and specific mandate. The message was published in the KFE website translated in 12 European languages.

KFE would be delighted if HHGK could come to Europe in 2014 for his first visit.



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About the KFE

The Karmapa Foundation Europe (KFE) is an international private foundation whose headquarters are in Brussels. It was established in 2010 by Venerable Ringu Tulku Rinpoche, Official Representative for Europe of His Holiness the 17th Gyalwang Karmapa (HHGK) Ogyen Trinley Dorje, the Supreme Authority of the Karma Kagyu Order of Tibetan Buddhism.

The aim of the Foundation is to provide on a European level and in a European perspective - support for HHGK and his action. The activities of KFE vary from supporting HHGK's visits to Europe, enabling his spiritual teachings to be better known in Europe and sponsoring projects of various nature. The detailed objectives of KFE are listed in Annex I.

The Foundation is currently administered by a Board consisting of eight members, appointed by His Holiness. The annual KFE Board Meeting took place in Brussels on 19th January 2013. Additionally, throughout the year, the KFE Trustees (who are in fact Karmapa's Trustees) have been constantly kept informed by Brussels about all KFE activities and progress in the files liable to be of relevance to the Board. This is done in the fullest transparency.

The functioning of the Foundation is exclusively based on the work of volunteers. It goes without saying that being volunteers-based, the competence and dedication of available volunteers inevitably condition the quality and success in the activities of KFE as well as even the scope itself of the activities. However, on the whole, the KFE Office was able to function adequately in 2013, thanks to the involvement and personal commitment of a rather small number of people.

Activities

The following activities have been carried out by the Office of the Karmapa Foundation Europe (KFE) in the course of 2013:

Initiatives to support the Visits of HHGK to Europe

On behalf of all European disciples and friends of HHGK, and under the direct inspiration and guidance of KFE Chairman Ringu Tulku Rinpoche, the KFE Office has been pursuing a series of initiatives, with due diplomacy, pleading for a rapid authorisation for His Holiness to travel to Europe.

These initiatives include communication with the Indian Ambassador to Brussels, the European Parliament Tibet Inter-Group, the Brussels Office of Tibet, and the French Minister of the Interior. These attempts sought to raise awareness about the HHGK's travel constraints.

On 11th December 2013, the Tibetan Minister for Religion and Culture, Mr Pema Chhinjor, on a journey to Belgium visited some Dharma Centres as well as the KFE Office. On this occasion, KFE reiterated the wish that HHGK be allowed to travel to Europe and that the Central Tibetan Administration uses of its offices to facilitate this. On his level, Mr Pema Chhinjor promised to do the necessary. He was confident that the situation was evolving positively and the problem might be unblocked relatively soon.

Dissemination of HHGK's Teachings

The KFE Facebook Page

The Foundation launched in 2013 a KFE Facebook Page. The Page has several aims, the most important of which is to enable teachings from His Holiness to be better known across the European audience, more particularly among the youth. The KFE Facebook Page is currently reaching up to 3000 people, with tendency to increase.

“Karmapa 900” in French

The KFE had sponsored the translation and publication “Karmapa 900” in French. In 2013, the last invoice was paid, therefore the project can be considered financially closed. This elegant and precious publication was distributed widely and appreciated during the ‘Buddhist Festival’ in Paris (see further below).

Planning of a Meeting between HHGK & Young Europeans

Since April 2013, the project of a dialogue in Gyuto between HHGL and a group of young people from Europe has been going ahead, following a request to HHGK by one KFE Volunteer Ms Anita Pilot. Dates have been set by His Holiness's administration, and in August 2014, 16 young people from 8 different countries in Europe will travel to Gyuto, for a gathering of two weeks during which HHGK will address their particular concerns in an atmosphere of mutual exchange. It is envisaged to publish subsequently a book which will document the discussions with HHGK.

KFE Board Members themselves from different countries have been able to work on the selection of participants from Belgium, France, Germany, Holland and Poland. Additionally, there will be participants from Spain, the UK and Denmark.

Participants will pay for own their travel expenses to India, as well as their food and lodgings.

The KFE Board acted as KFE Financing Committee, under the Chairmanship of Ringu Tulku, for the purpose of approving the 'Meeting between HHGK & Young Europeans' Project.

“Complementarity role” with European Dharma Centres

The complementarity between the KFE and European Kagyu Centres is a topic which was discussed informally within the Foundation on a few occasions [in particular the so-called 'principle of subsidiarity': each one to do what can be done best or more easily at its level]. In his Message of 16 September 2013 concerning the Foundation His Holiness highlights the importance of complementarity and good cooperation between KFE and the Dharma Centres.

In 2013, KFE produced an updated List of European Kagyu Centres spiritually connected with HHGK, which was later published on the KFE website. A number of messages were sent to these Centres including HHGK's letter concerning the Foundation, the announcement of the tragic passing away of Choje Akong Rinpoche (His Holiness's first Representative for Europe) as well as the initial message from the KFE Secretary-General informing the Centres of the existence of the Foundation and giving details for a possible financial support.

Representing the interests of HHGK in Europe

Two legal oppositions to the application for a "Karmapa" trademark by followers of Trinley Thaye Dorje (Karme Dharma Chakra) have been filed in June 2013 with the Office of Harmonization for the Internal Market (OHIM)¹ in Spain, by two lawyers, Mr Emmanuel Cornu 'specialized in this field' and Ms Inès Wouters² 'KFE Trustee', acting respectively on behalf of KFE and HHGK.

Moreover in parallel to these two formal oppositions, KFE filed in August 2013 a memorandum to OHIM on the "absolute grounds for refusal" to the registration of the trademark, insofar as this trademark aims at the appropriation of a religious dimension.

The French Congregation Karme Dharma Chakra did not react to our oppositions before the end of the year 2013 (but did so in January 2014 and their reaction will be reported in the next Annual Report).

Communication actions

The KFE Website

The KFE Website was put on line on 13th March 2013 (the homepage can be found in Annex II). There seems to be a rather unanimous appreciation of the quality of the Website among the general public.

Mr Jean-Pierre Indot took over responsibility as KFE web-developer in March 2013 from Mr Daniele Salemi and continued his work in the same perspective.

Mr Indot being unable to prolong his involvement with the Foundation beyond the end of the year, the KFE Office - having failed to find a competent successor in Belgium- explored possibilities through Dharma Centres in Germany. Following this search procedure, the KFE

¹ The EU Organisation responsible for trademarks.

² From August 2013 it has been decided that Inès Wouters alone ensures the overall legal defense, assisted as necessary by Mr E. Cornu.

Office selected as KFE web-developer Mr Johannes Billing, an IT specialist living south of Frankfurt.

French Buddhist Festival

KFE was present with a stand at the French Buddhist Festival (Paris, 25-26 May 2013). Through this participation KFE managed to make HHGK Ogyen Trinley Dorje better known in France and help clear some misunderstandings concerning the Karmapa's identity.

The Board was briefed about KFE's participation at the Buddhist Festival in Paris, which had been suggested by Akong Rinpoche, and gave advice to the KFE Office on the arrangements for representation at this event. The French Member of the Board arranged for this participation with the organizers and personally supervised the release to be distributed on this occasion

KFE 'Open Day'

On 8 December 2013, KFE organized in Brussels a KFE 'Open Day', a public relations gathering at which we were able to explain the major operational objectives of the Foundation. This event attended by around 40 people proved rather successful. Some participants manifested their availability to help the Foundation.

Financial aspects

During 2013 KFE has not launched any real and sustained fundraising campaign. Nevertheless two individual sponsors made ad hoc donations, one specifically earmarked towards the expenses for HHGK's first visit to Europe, while three kind people are making monthly payments to the Foundation.

As far as the financial situation is concerned, the Foundation disposed at the end 2013 of € 20, 156.71. The major expenditure incurred in 2013 was for the fees for the trademark lawyer and the oppositions to the trademark and the monthly payments of the rent for the KFE small office (€300 per month).

Annex I: KFE Objectives

The aim of the Foundation is to provide support for the activities of the Supreme Authority of the **Karma Kagyu Order** and his successors.

During the lifetime of His Holiness the **17th Gyalwang Karmapa Ogyen Trinley Dorje** and that of his successors, as from their enthronement, the objectives of the Foundation shall be as follows:

- *To **alleviate suffering** in all its forms and to that end to provide both direct and indirect charitable assistance to those in need or to persons afflicted by hardship physical or mental. The Foundation may engage in any activity for the purpose of alleviating or preventing suffering and of encouraging the use of and providing the ways and means whereby to attain freedom from such suffering and more generally for the purpose of bringing about lasting peace and prosperity for all beings.*
- *To **promote education** in the sciences of mind and the philosophy of life, to organise and/or sponsor seminars and other educational programmes, in particular:*
 - *programmes for the purpose of cultivating knowledge of and wisdom of the mind and the study of the philosophy and in particular the ethics of life, with special reference to those which have been developed in Tibet, especially in the writings and teachings of the Karmapas since the 12th century;*
 - *programmes of comparative research into the sciences of mind in relation to contemporary science and philosophies and other philosophical, cultural, spiritual and religious traditions with a view to assisting and promoting all forms of cooperation with such traditions, wherever they are to be found, and to contributing towards the improvement of the condition of mankind and the peace and prosperity of individuals, groups, cultures, nations and of the whole world;*
 - *programmes in which the 17th Gyalwang Karmapa Ogyen Trinley Dorje is involved including the sponsorship of his teaching and lecture tours, seminars, symposia and other activities falling within the aims of this Foundation.*
- *To **protect the environment** and to that end to support initiatives for environmental protection, including the promotion of a balanced approach to the use of resources in relation to the limits of the planet, and to promote the development of awareness of how to treat the environment and to help restore environmental equilibrium, on the basis of knowledge both past, present and still to come.*
- *To **preserve the specific cultural and artistic tradition of Tibet**, so as to provide a stable basis to enable the Tibetans to make their special contribution to the world and at the same time to help other cultural and artistic traditions which reflect the vision embodied in the aims of this Foundation.*
- *To **sponsor and organise educational and cultural activities in the sphere of the science of mind**, both traditional and contemporary, and that of other related disciplines which share the vision embodied in Foundation Statutes, namely:*
- ***Sponsoring institutions** such as **universities, shedra (monastic colleges) and other teaching establishments** with or without legal personality;*
- ***Helping translators** and in general promoting translation from the Tibetan, Sanskrit and other languages for the benefit of those unable to read these texts in their original language; and*
- ***Assisting cultural institutions**, both lay and religious, with or without legal personality, which help communities and/or individuals who share the vision embodied in the Foundation Statutes;*
- *To **publish** in traditional and contemporary media, in particular [by] creating, publishing and disseminating teaching materials and other instruments connected with the aims of this Foundation, whether in writing, graphic or any other medium, including the recording, transcription, translation or adaptation, in any form whatsoever, of lectures, teachings, seminars, etc. which are consistent with the aims of this Foundation, in particular those financed and/or organised by the Foundation.*

Annex II: KFE Website

The home page of the KFE website (as of Jan/2014), <http://www.karmapafoundation.eu/>

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Karmapa Foundation Europe. At the top, there is a logo of the Karmapa and the text "KARMAPA FOUNDATION EUROPE". Below the logo is a navigation menu with links: Home, About the Karmapa, KFE, Donations, Major Activities, Webcasts, Kagyu & Other Links, and KFE Community. The main content area features a prominent article titled "Letter from His Holiness Gyalwang Karmapa Ogyen Trinley Dorje (16 September 2013)". To the right of the text is a portrait of His Holiness Gyalwang Karmapa Ogyen Trinley Dorje. Below the letter text is a signature and the name "17th Karmapa Ogyen Trinley Dorje". Underneath this is a section titled "LATEST NEWS STAY UP TO DATE" with a sub-heading "Passing Away of Dr. Choje Akong Tulku Rinpoche". This section includes a date "9 October 2013 Brussels", a small image of Dr. Choje Akong Tulku Rinpoche, and text announcing his death and the KFE's condolences. At the bottom of the page, there are three columns of messages: "THE 2010 MESSAGE FROM HIS HOLINESS KARMAPA", "MESSAGE FROM THE KFE FOUNDER AND CHAIRMAN", and "MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL". Each message column contains a short excerpt and a "(Read more)" link. The footer of the page includes the text "Karmapa Chenno" flanked by decorative symbols.