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# EUROPEAN COMMITTEE ON CRIME PROBLEMS (CDPC)

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MODEL PROVISIONS FOR  
COUNCIL OF EUROPE  
CRIMINAL LAW CONVENTIONS

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Document prepared by the CDPC Secretariat  
Directorate General I – Human Rights and Rule of Law

This document provides “model provisions” for Council of Europe criminal law conventions. The full text is intended to set out a “model convention” and follows in principle the structure of some recent CoE criminal law conventions. Future negotiators of draft criminal law conventions may use this model text as guidance in their work.

Where possible and appropriate, the text contains “standard language” that may be used in future negotiations on any new criminal law convention. Many of these standard provisions can be used by negotiators without adjustments. The model convention also contains articles or paragraphs that are placed in square brackets (e.g. article 2, article 4 paragraph 2 and Article 5 paragraph 3). This indicates that the insertion of that article or paragraph is optional. However, when negotiators choose to do so, they are advised to use the standard language set out in that article/paragraph. In other cases, the model provisions contain certain phrases/words that are placed in square brackets (e.g. article 1 paragraph 1, article 6 paragraph 1). Here, the negotiators will need to decide on the wording to be used.

The necessary provisions for Chapters VI, VII, VIII and IX will be negotiated on the level of the CDPC. Therefore this model text does not provide for any model language or guidelines to be taken into account by negotiators of the draft convention.

The following document also contains explanatory notes (texts contained in the “boxes”), which are intended to offer guidance to the negotiators. These provide some background information and explanation on the proposed model provisions as well as give guidance on necessary adjustments, amendments and decisions on optional clauses of the model provisions.

[Following its adoption by the CDPC at its 70<sup>th</sup> plenary meeting in June 2016, the document has been taken note of by the Committee of Ministers on 29 September 2016. The present text is a slightly revised version, adopted by the CDPC on xxx.](#)

Council of Europe

Convention

On.....

## Preamble

The member States of the Council of Europe and the other signatories to this Convention,

....

....

1 *The Preamble contains typical clauses ("Bearing in mind", "Considering", "Recognising", "Determined" etc.) and should refer to the purpose of the convention, main principles of its implementation (such as reference to the 1950 CoE Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (CETS No. 5) and the principle of Rule of Law) as well as to relevant other CoE conventions, recommendations, decisions and relevant other international legal instruments.*

Have agreed as follows:

Chapter I – Purpose[, principle of non-discrimination, scope, use of terms]

Article 1 – Purpose of the Convention

1 The purpose of this Convention is:

- a) to prevent and combat.....;
- b) [to protect the rights of victims of the offences ~~established under~~referred to in this Convention];
- c) to [facilitate/promote] international co-operation [against ....]

[2 In order to ensure effective implementation of its provisions by the Parties, this Convention sets up a [specific] follow-up mechanism.]

- 2 *Article 1 paragraph 1 serves to briefly describe the purpose of the specific convention. Typically, modern CoE criminal law conventions contain the three elements listed here under lit. a., b. and c. The purpose listed as point b. refers to Articles 13 and 14 of this model text, which provide suggested language for possible provisions on the protection of victims. Negotiators may choose to use these if the specific type(s) of crime to be covered by the draft convention would require special provisions on the protection of victims.*
- 3 *As this model text is intended to be applied for drafting of CoE criminal law conventions, it foresees that the draft convention, in line with the respective Committee of Minister's mandate, will need to include one or more provisions on substantive criminal law (based on Article 4 of this model text, referred to as "articles x, y" in further provisions of the model text), requiring Parties to ensure that a certain type of conduct described therein is criminalized under domestic law. In determining the specific type (scope) and definition of conduct that the Parties to the convention will be required to criminalize, negotiators should consider that criminalization of such conduct should always be seen as a "last resort" and the convention should thus focus on serious cases of conduct that actually require a criminal law response. Criminal law provisions should not be drafted merely with the intent of prescribing another – presumed to be ably particularly effective – means of pursuing political/regulatory aims. Criminal law provisions should only be introduced when they are considered essential in order to sufficiently protect the rights and interests, which the convention intends to address. Negotiators should consider the expected value or effectiveness of criminal law provisions compared to other possible measures, taking into account also the possibilities to effectively investigate and prosecute such crimes. In drafting criminal law provisions, negotiators should take into account how serious and frequent the harmful conduct is and whether it is a serious threat in all or at least many of the CoE member States.*
- 4 *It will be equally important for the negotiators to also address means of prevention of such crimes. Several CoE criminal law conventions contain extensive provisions on prevention (c.f. e.g. CETS No. 210, 201 and 197); others foresee more general, nevertheless important requirements in this respect (c.f. e.g. CETS No. 211). Chapter V of this model text thus also foresees the drafting of provisions on prevention, both, on domestic and on international level. Due to the very different nature of possible prevention measures that may be appropriate considering the purpose and scope of the convention, this model text does not provide any specific suggested wording.*
- 5 *Paragraph 2 is a text that has been used in recent CoE criminal law conventions and*

*refers to the provisions of the convention, setting up a follow-up-mechanism). However, negotiations on a possible follow-up-mechanism as well as other final clauses will be undertaken on the level of the CDPC. The text of paragraph 2 will thus be included when the decision on a follow-up-mechanism has been taken.*

[Article 2 – Principle of non-discrimination

The implementation of the provisions of this Convention by the Parties shall be secured without discrimination on any ground such as sex, race, colour, language, age, religion, political or any other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth, sexual orientation, state of health, disability or other status.]

- 6 *This article is standard language in modern CoE criminal law conventions and prohibits discrimination in Parties' implementation of the convention. It has been designed and used in particular in view of the provisions on measures to protect and promote victims' rights. The meaning of discrimination in Article 2 is identical to that given to it under Article 14 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR).*
- 7 *The list of non-discrimination grounds in Article 2 is based on that in Article 14 ECHR as well as the ECtHR jurisprudence on this provision and the list contained in Article 1 of Protocol No. 12 to the ECHR. However, as in other recent CoE criminal conventions, additional non-discrimination grounds of age, sexual orientation, state of health and disability have been included.*
- 8 *Depending on the subject matter of the convention to be drafted, negotiators may consider whether such a provision on discrimination would not be necessary e.g. where it does not contain specific provisions on the protection of victims (c.f. Articles 13 and 14 of this model text).*

## [Article 3 – Scope and use of terms

- 1 This Convention applies to .... / does not apply to .....
- 2 For the purposes of this Convention:
  - a) the term " .... " shall mean ...
  - b) the term " .... " shall mean ...]

*Paragraph 1 (scope)*

- 9 *Some, but not all CoE criminal law conventions have a specific provision on the scope of the convention. Such a clause is neither intended to duplicate the provision on the purpose of the convention (Article 1) nor intended to summarize the specific content (such as e.g. the different provisions on substantive criminal law). Where appropriate, a convention may include a provision on the scope of the convention, which could serve to clarify or limit the application of the convention on a horizontal level (c.f. e.g. Article 2 of CETS No. 197 and Article 3 of CETS No. 211 or Article 2 (1) of CETS No. 216).*

*Paragraph 2 (definitions)*

- 10 *Typically (but not necessarily), CoE criminal law conventions also include definitions for a certain number of terms used in the convention. This should only be done if a certain term needs to be given a binding interpretation and – as a general rule – only if the term is used on several occasions in the convention. Constituting elements of the description of an offence should preferably be defined in the relevant article in the section on substantive criminal law unless it is a term used in several of these articles.*

## Chapter II – Substantive criminal law

## Article 4 – .... (brief description of criminal offence)

[1] Each Party shall ensure that the following conduct constitutes a criminal offence under its domestic law, when committed intentionally: .....

*Optional reservation clauses, which may be inserted as an additional paragraph 2 to individual criminal law provisions following the model of the standard text of paragraph 1.*

*Paragraph 2, option A*

[~~Any~~ ~~Each~~ State [or the European Union] may, at the time of signature or when depositing its instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession, by a declaration addressed to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, declare that it reserves the right not to apply or to apply only in specific cases or under specific conditions, paragraph 1 [of the present article](#) [as regards/to .....-].]

*Paragraph 2, option B*

[~~Any~~ ~~Each~~ State [or the European Union] may, at the time of signature or when depositing its instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession, by a declaration addressed to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, declare that it reserves the right to provide for non-criminal sanctions, instead of criminal sanctions for the conduct described in paragraph 1 [of the present article](#).]

11 *When drafting provisions on substantive criminal law, negotiators should always consider the appropriateness of requiring Parties to criminalize the specific conduct (c.f. notes on Article 1 of this model text). The criminal law provisions should focus on serious cases of conduct causing actual harm or seriously threatening the rights or essential interest which the draft convention intends to protect. The draft convention should avoid criminalisation of a conduct at an unwarrantably early stage. Conduct which only implies an abstract danger to the protected right or interest should be criminalised only if appropriate considering the particular importance of*



*the right or interest to be protected. The wording to be used in the draft convention should be sufficiently clear in order to be effectively implemented in the domestic legislation of the Parties. On the other hand, the terminology and specific content should offer sufficient flexibility to be implemented by Parties with different legal traditions and concepts of criminalisation.*

- 12 *This model text for an Article 4 should serve as a model for setting out one or more provisions on substantive criminal law (referred to as "Articles x, y" in the following Articles 5 to 15), each of them defining specific conduct in respect of which Parties to the convention shall ensure that it constitutes a criminal offence in accordance with their domestic law. The text of paragraph 1 is standard language that should be used in each of such provisions. Under the conditions described below, when delegations cannot all agree on a strict requirement to criminalize all of the types of conduct, which should fall under the convention, negotiators may consider adding a second paragraph to a particular article, providing for a reservation possibility, using the text of either of the two options for such a paragraph 2 set out above.*

*Paragraph 1 (would be only paragraph where there is no paragraph 2)*

- 13 *This is the standard language to be used for provisions obliging States to ensure that the conduct to be described therein constitutes a criminal offence under their domestic law. It is up to States to decide how this obligation is fulfilled, e.g. by establishing a specific criminalisation for the offence concerned, or by ensuring that the conduct is punishable as a criminal offence by other criminal law provisions. Such provisions of a criminal law convention are always intended to set minimum standards; the domestic legislation thus has to ensure criminalization of the conduct as described, but it may go further e.g. by using a broader definition of the crime. Normally, CoE criminal law conventions require States to ensure that the conduct described therein constitutes a "criminal offence", implying that these will be applied in the course of criminal (court) procedures imposing criminal sanctions (c.f. Article 8 below). The obligation to ensure that the act constitutes a "criminal offence" does not preclude the possibility that member States, in accordance with their legislative practice may in addition foresee administrative proceedings allowing administrative or other non-criminal sanctions to be imposed for cases that are considered to be of a less serious nature and thus do not warrant a criminal sanction. ~~Depending on the subject matter to be covered by the draft convention, it may contain several such articles on substantive criminal law, in each case describing a certain conduct to be criminalised.~~*

14 *CoE conventions typically require criminalisation only in case of intentional conduct. The interpretation of the term “intentionally” is left to the domestic law of the Parties. When drafting the description of the offence in paragraph 1, negotiators will need to decide whether the offence should cover only certain acts or omissions by the offender or also a particular effect this conduct has e.g. on the health or the financial interests of a victim. Since the provision sets only a minimum standard, Parties to the convention will be free to also criminalise non-intentional acts (negligence). In case the negotiators see a need to require criminalisation of certain conduct when committed with negligence, they may choose to add a specific provision to that effect (c.f. e.g. CETS No. 172). This should be done only when this is considered appropriate due to the particular relevance of the right or essential interests to be protected by the convention.*

Optional paragraph 2

15 *Paragraph 2, option A is the standard text for an optional provision allowing Parties to limit the scope of application of paragraph 1. It should only be used where necessary in order to achieve consensus on the text of some substantial criminal law provisions following the model of paragraph 1. Preferably, negotiators should agree on the scope and, if necessary, further qualify the description of the offence in paragraph 1. However, if negotiators cannot agree on the scope of application or other elements of the description of the conduct as set out in paragraph 1, a reservation clause as set out in this paragraph may be included. The text following the words “as regards” would be intended to limit the reservation possibility to those aspects where such a possibility is required by certain States (c.f. e.g. Article 5 paragraph 3 of CETS No. 211 or Articles 20 paragraph 3 and 21 paragraph 2 of CETS No. 201) rather than allowing for an unlimited reservation.*

16 *In other situations, paragraph 2, option B is a possible text for a different type of reservation, which may be used in case negotiators cannot all agree on the obligation to impose criminal sanctions in respect of ~~a particular~~the type of conduct described in a provision following the model of paragraph 1 and thus want to allow Parties to apply other than criminal sanctions instead, however, only provided once that they have made a specific declaration to this effect (c.f. for an example Article 78 paragraph 3 of the Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (CETS No. 210)). However, such a reservation would only be necessary where a Party foresees merely non-criminal sanctions in its legislation for the conduct described in paragraph 1 and thus does not intend to provide for criminal sanctions. A reservation would therefore not be necessary where a Party does foresee criminal sanctions in its legislation for such conduct, but, in addition, also foresees administrative proceedings which allow administrative or other non-criminal sanctions to be imposed instead of criminal sanctions, e.g. in cases of a less serious nature (c.f. note 13).*

17 *While CoE criminal law conventions will always require the criminalisation of certain conduct and thus contain one or more provisions as in paragraph 1 above, it may be appropriate in cases of some other, less serious offences to offer greater flexibility in this respect and allow all Parties,*

without having to revert to a specific reservation possibility, to implement their obligations under the convention by foreseeing only non-criminal sanctions such as “administrative sanctions” to be applied in the course of administrative or other non-criminal proceedings. Examples of different ways to allow for such flexibility may be found in the Medicrime Convention (CETS No. 211), in Article 40 of the Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (CETS No. 210) and in the Convention on Protection of Environment through Criminal Law (CETS No. 172).

18 A possible wording for such a provision would be:

“Each Party shall ensure that the following conduct constitutes a criminal offence under its domestic law, when committed intentionally or that this conduct is subject to non-criminal sanctions in accordance with domestic law: ..... ”

*If negotiators choose to use such a wording for a particular criminal law provision, it would be necessary to take this into account when negotiating general provisions such as those in Articles 5 to 15 of this model text. Those articles should (strictly) be applicable only to “criminal offences”. Thus Articles 5 to 15 should refer to “criminal offences” (and not use the term “offences”) with the understanding that the obligation set out therein does not apply if a Party has opted for non-criminal sanctions.*

19 *Exceptionally, when negotiators cannot agree on a strict obligation to criminalise certain conduct (or at least to impose non-criminal sanctions as foreseen under note 18 above), they may choose to use “softer” language (“shall consider taking...” rather than “shall take...” as in the regular version of Article 4 (1)). This may be the case because the description of the offence given in that article of the convention is considered by some States as being too broad in order to be acceptable as a strict obligation to criminalise. Examples are Articles 4 (4) and 6 of the THO-Convention (CETS No. 216) and Article 19 of the THB-Convention (CETS No 197). Here, as well, negotiators would need to clarify whether and to what extent the general provisions such as those in Articles 1 to 15 of this model text should apply to articles which use such “softer” language.*

20 *To be noted: in view of the rather “weak requirement” of such a provision, this solution would not be suitable for core provisions of a convention on criminal law. This solution may only be taken for additional provisions, which are supplementary to other articles that impose clear obligations to criminalise as in the standard version of Article 4 (1). If most, but not all negotiators can agree on a strict obligation on criminalisation of a certain conduct, they should first consider combining the strict criminalisation approach of Article 4 paragraph 1 with a possibility for a reservation by those States which choose to do so (c.f. paragraph 2 above).*

## Article 5 – Aiding or abetting and attempt

- 1 Each Party shall ensure that the intentional aiding or abetting the commission of a criminal offence referred to in [Articles x and y of ] this Convention ~~also~~ constitutes a criminal offence.
- 2 [Each Party shall ensure that the intentional attempt to commit any of the criminal offences referred to in [Articles x and y of] this Convention ~~also~~ constitutes a criminal offence.]
- 3 [~~Each~~Any State [or the European Union] may, at the time of signature or when depositing its instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession, by a declaration addressed to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, declare that it reserves the right not to apply, or to apply only in specific cases or under specific conditions, paragraph 2 of the present article to criminal offences referred to in [Article x and y of] this Convention.]

- 21 *This article contains standard wording, requiring the criminalisation of acts of “aiding or abetting” (paragraph 1) and “attempt” (paragraph 2) of some or all of the criminal offences described in the convention. The interpretation of these terms is left to the domestic law of the Parties. The negotiators will need to determine if and for which criminal law offences the criminalisation of attempt (paragraph 2) should be foreseen.*
- 22 *Paragraph 1 is worded slightly different than in previous CoE criminal law conventions in order to clarify that criminalisation of aiding and abetting is required only in cases where an offence in accordance with the Convention has been committed. The liability for aiding or abetting thus arises only where a person is intentionally contributing to the commission of a crime (as described in the convention) by another person (c.f. already the clarification in the Explanatory Reports to CETS No. 216, 211, 201 and 197). As CoE criminal law conventions set only minimum rules, this would not exclude the possibility for Parties to extend the criminal liability of persons aiding or abetting a crime beyond what is required by the text in paragraph 1.*
- 23 *As to criminalisation of an attempt to commit certain of the crimes described in the convention (paragraph 2), negotiators should consider the appropriateness of such a*

requirement. They should determine whether it is necessary and appropriate in view of the description of each the offences to also criminalise an attempt to commit such an offence.

- 24 In respect of both, paragraphs 1 and 2, negotiators will have to agree whether the rule shall apply to all "criminal offences referred to in this Convention" or only to certain articles, which could, e.g. in the case of paragraph 1, exclude reference to an article of the convention which allows application of non-criminal sanctions (c.f. as an example – Article 21 of CETS No. 197; on the other hand: Article 41 of CETS No. 210).

- 25 Paragraph 3 may be used to allow for declaring a reservation in the application of paragraph 2 (no reservations should be allowed in respect of paragraph 1). It would, however, always be preferable for negotiators to agree on any required exclusions of certain types of offences from the application of paragraph 2 (thus not requiring States to also criminalise the attempt to commit a certain offence). Only if no agreement can be found, negotiators may apply a broader scope in paragraph 2 and allow specific reservations in respect of certain types of offences.

## Article 6 – Jurisdiction

- 1 Each Party shall take the necessary measures to establish jurisdiction over the criminal offences referred to in [Articles x, y of] this Convention, when the offence is committed:
  - a) in its territory; ~~or~~
  - b) on board a ship flying the flag of that Party; ~~or~~
  - c) on board an aircraft registered under the laws of that Party; [or
  - d) by one of its nationals].
  
- [2 Each Party shall consider taking the necessary measures to establish jurisdiction over any criminal offence referred to in [Articles x, y of] this Convention, where the offence is committed against one of its nationals.]

- 3 [Each Party shall take the necessary measures to establish jurisdiction over any criminal offence referred to in [Articles x, y of] this Convention, when the alleged offender is present in its territory and cannot be extradited to another State, solely on the basis of his or her nationality.]
- 3bis [For the prosecution of criminal offences referred to in Article x of this Convention, each Party shall take the necessary measures to ensure that its jurisdiction as regards paragraph 1.d [of the present article](#) is not subordinated to the condition that the acts are criminalized at the place where they were performed.]
- 3ter [For the prosecution of the criminal offences referred to in [Articles x, y of] this Convention, each Party shall take the necessary measures to ensure that its jurisdiction as regards paragraph 1. d of ~~this~~[the present](#) article is not subordinated to the condition that the prosecution can only be initiated following a report from the victim or the laying of information by the State of the place where the offence was committed.]
- 4 [~~Each~~[Any](#) State [~~or the European Union~~] may, at the time of signature or when depositing its instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession, by a declaration addressed to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, declare that it reserves the right not to apply, or to apply only in specific cases or [under specific](#) conditions, the jurisdiction rules laid down in paragraph 1, sub-paragraph d of ~~this~~[the present](#) article.]
- 5 Where more than one Party claims jurisdiction over ~~an alleged~~[a specific](#) offence in accordance with [Articles x, y of] this Convention, the Parties concerned shall, where appropriate, consult each other with a view to determining the most appropriate jurisdiction for prosecution.
- 6 Without prejudice to the general rules of international law, this Convention shall not exclude any criminal jurisdiction exercised by a Party in accordance with its domestic law.

- 26 *Typically, CoE criminal law conventions include an article on „Jurisdiction“, which specifies a list of criteria for determining the scope of the jurisdiction which the Parties shall foresee in their domestic law. These rules are considered to be “minimum rules”. Thus they only contain an obligation to “at least” criminalize offences and/or foresee a competence for their courts when the offence is committed under the circumstances described in that article on jurisdiction (c.f. paragraph 6). The obligation in this respect is only to make the necessary provisions in their domestic law which allow exercising of jurisdiction in such cases. The provision is not intended to require law enforcement authorities and/or courts to actually exercise (make use of that) statutory jurisdiction in a specific case. The standard “minimum” criteria for establishing jurisdiction are those following from the “territoriality principle”, i.e. those specified in paragraph 1 lit. a., b. and c. of this model text. However, Parties are not prevented by the provisions of the model convention text to extend their jurisdiction also to offences committed abroad.*
- 27 *While it would – in principle – not be necessary to add further criteria on establishing jurisdiction, CoE criminal law conventions typically also include an obligation to foresee jurisdiction in case of an offence committed outside the territory of a Party by one of its nationals (paragraph 1 d). Future negotiators may choose to refrain from including such an obligation. Alternatively, when negotiators largely do agree on including the active nationality principle, they may choose to allow Parties to enter a reservation in respect of this obligation (paragraph 4).*
- 28 *Some CoE conventions also include an obligation to establish jurisdiction in case of an offence committed outside of the territory of the Party against one of its nationals (passive nationality principle; c.f. e.g. Article 31 par 1 lit e. of the Warsaw Convention (CETS No. 197) and Article 10 par. 2 of the Medicrime Convention (CETS No. 211). These Conventions then also include a reservation possibility in respect of this obligation. However, most more recent conventions use the model text proposed here in paragraph 2 (c.f. Article 44 par 2 of the Istanbul Convention (CETS No. 210, Article 25 par 2 of the Lanzarote Convention (CETS No. 201) and Article 10 par 2 of the THO Convention (CETS No. 216)), which imposes no obligation on Parties to establish jurisdiction in such cases but merely to “consider” introducing such a rule in their law (to be noted: these conventions have used the term “endeavour” instead; however, in this case the term “consider” would be more appropriate as the decision is really a policy choice by the Parties and not a question of possible attempts to reach such a goal).*
- 29 *In some cases, CoE conventions also extend the active and/or passive “nationality principle” to persons, who are not nationals but “habitual residents” of the respective State, whereby it is left to the Parties to determine which persons they consider to be*

*habitual residents. The possibilities to enter a reservation in respect of the active and/or passive nationality principle in these cases also apply to the "habitual residents". Since, however, the list of jurisdiction criteria is a minimum list and thus Parties are not prevented by the Convention to exercise jurisdiction also in case of offences committed outside of their territory even if the offence was committed by or against persons other than own nationals (paragraph 6), negotiators should refrain from including this criterion in future conventions.*

- 30 *Typically, CoE criminal law conventions also include an obligation to establish jurisdiction in case of extra-territorial offences, where the alleged offender is present on the territory of that State but cannot be extradited to another Party because of his or her nationality ("aut dedere, aut judicare" – c.f. paragraph 3 of this model text). The text set out in paragraph 3 is optional; however, when negotiators want to include such an obligation, they should use the model text. If the convention does include an obligation to establish jurisdiction in case of own nationals (paragraph 1 d. of the model text), a Party that does not extradite the alleged offender because of his/her nationality will have jurisdiction in this case already on the basis of paragraph 1d. Thus the additional obligation to establish jurisdiction on the basis of the rule in paragraph 3 of this model text could only become relevant if the convention also allows declaring a reservation in respect of paragraph 1 d.*
- 31 *In case of a particular convention it may be appropriate to insert a provision as worded in paragraph 3bis of this model text. Normally CoE criminal law conventions are drafted on the assumption that any obligation of a Party to establish jurisdiction in case of extra-territorial offences does not prevent that State to subordinate its jurisdiction to the condition that the acts are criminalized (also) at the place where they were performed. Here again, any Party may go further in its domestic law and waive such a condition in case of specific crime types in order to be able to investigate and prosecute an offence committed – e.g. by an own national – abroad, even if the conduct is not considered to be a crime in the State where it was performed. In exceptional circumstances, in case of particularly serious crimes, negotiators may consider to include an obligation not to subordinate their jurisdiction to such a dual-criminality requirement (exceptionally this has been done in CETS No. 201 (Article 25 paragraph 4) and CETS No. 210 (Article 44 paragraph 3). If such a rule is required by many delegations but not acceptable to all, negotiators should foresee a reservation possibility such as that in paragraph 4 of this model text which would also allow Parties not to apply the rule in paragraph 3bis. Alternatively negotiators may consider a specific (more limited) reservation possibility on paragraph 3bis (c.f. e.g. Article 25 paragraph 5 of CETS No. 201 and Article 78 paragraph 2 of CETS No. 210).*
- 32 *Several CoE criminal conventions contain a further obligation as worded in paragraph 3ter. Negotiators may opt to include such a provision where it is considered to be necessary to require Parties to establish jurisdiction in respect of paragraph 1 d. even*



*though in a particular case the authorities have not received a (formal) report from the victim or the laying of information by the State of the place where the offence was committed.*

- 33 *Most of the recent CoE criminal law conventions foresee a reservation possibility such as that in paragraph 4 of this model text. Such a clause is necessary only if paragraph 1 also includes the obligation to establish jurisdiction in respect of extra-territorial offences of own nationals (par 1.d). It allows a Party not to apply or to apply only in specific cases or conditions the obligation to establish jurisdiction in case of offences committed by its own nationals abroad. This reservation possibility would also allow to wave or limit the application of either of the rules in paragraph 3bis or 3ter, should the convention include such provisions.*
- 34 *Especially if a CoE convention does require Parties to establish jurisdiction also in case of offences committed abroad (such as in paragraph 1 d. of this model text), it is possible that two or more Parties have jurisdiction over a case. In order to avoid duplication of procedures and unnecessary burden for the alleged offender or inconvenience for witnesses, the affected Parties should be required to consult in order to determine the proper venue for prosecution – as foreseen in paragraph 5 of this model text. In some cases it will be most effective for them to choose a single venue for prosecution; in others it may be best for one country to prosecute some alleged perpetrators, while one or more other countries prosecute others. Either method is permitted under paragraph 5. Finally, the obligation to consult is not absolute; consultation is to take place “where appropriate”. Thus, for example, if one of the Parties knows that consultation is not necessary (e.g. it has received confirmation that the other Party is not planning to take action), or if a Party is of the view that consultation may impair its investigation or proceeding, it may delay or decline consultation.*
- 35 *As explained above, paragraph 6 is intended to clarify that the rules in this Article set only minimum requirements and Parties are not prevented by the convention to exercise jurisdiction also in other situations as determined in their domestic law.*

#### [Article 7 – Liability of legal persons

- 1 Each Party shall ensure that legal persons can be held liable for criminal offences referred to in [Articles x, y of] this Convention, when committed for their benefit by

any natural person, acting either individually or as part of an organ of the legal person, who has a leading position within that legal person, based on:

- a) a power of representation of the legal person;
  - b) an authority to take decisions on behalf of the legal person;
  - c) an authority to exercise control within the legal person.
- 2 Apart from the cases provided for in paragraph 1 ~~of the present article~~, each Party shall ensure that a legal person can be held liable where the lack of supervision or control by a natural person referred to in paragraph 1 ~~of the present article~~ has made possible the commission of a criminal offence referred to in this Convention for the benefit of that legal person by a natural person acting under its authority.
- 3 Subject to the legal principles of the Party, the liability of a legal person may be criminal, civil or administrative.
- 4 Such liability shall be without prejudice to the criminal liability of a natural person who has committed the offence.]

36 *This text follows the standard language of CoE criminal law conventions and is intended to address the different concepts of liability of legal persons for criminal offences, which are applied in different CoE member States. Normally, CoE criminal law conventions should include this article. The intention of this provision is, to make commercial companies, associations and similar legal entities ("legal persons") liable for criminal actions performed – for their benefit – by a natural person. It does not require foreseeing criminal sanctions against the legal entity itself but allows foreseeing civil or administrative liability instead. However, depending on the subject matter (types of crimes), negotiators may choose not to include this article (e.g. the Istanbul Convention CETS No. 210 does not contain such a provision).*

## Article 8 – Sanctions and measures

- 1 Each Party shall ensure that the criminal offences referred to in [Articles x, y of] this Convention, when committed by natural persons, are punishable by effective, proportionate and dissuasive sanctions, which take into account the seriousness of the offence. [These sanctions shall include, for criminal offences ~~in accordance with~~ defined in Articles [x] and [y], penalties involving deprivation of liberty that may give rise to extradition.]
  
- 2 [Each Party shall ensure that legal persons held liable in accordance with Article 7 of this Convention are subject to effective, proportionate and dissuasive sanctions, which shall include criminal or non-criminal monetary sanctions [, and could include other measures, such as:
  - a) [temporary or permanent disqualification from exercising commercial activity;
  - b) exclusion from entitlement to public benefits or aid;
  - c) placing under judicial supervision;
  - d) a judicial winding-up order].]
  
- 3 [Each Party shall take the necessary legislative and other measures, in accordance with domestic law, to permit seizure and confiscation of the:
  - i. instrumentalities used to commit criminal offences referred to in [Articles x, y of] this Convention;
  - ii. proceeds derived from such offences, or property whose value corresponds to such proceeds.]

37 *The text in Article 8 largely follows examples of recent CoE conventions and should be inserted into any new convention, possible with certain variations depending on the specificities of the crimes in question as well as the obligations to criminalize such conduct.*

- 38 *Paragraph 1, first sentence sets out the principle rule, requiring Parties to foresee in their legislation “effective, proportionate and dissuasive sanctions”. This rule applies only to natural persons. The term “sanction” means that Parties may foresee penalties involving deprivation of liberty and/or monetary sanctions. [As explained in notes 13 and 16 above, the obligation to foresee criminal sanctions does not exclude the possibility for Parties to provide for additional administrative or other non-criminal sanctions that may be imposed in the course of administrative proceedings \(e.g. for less serious types of cases\).](#) The second sentence follows typical examples of CoE conventions. While the principle of proportionality should be taken into account in determining the appropriate sanctioning level for certain offence, CoE conventions typically require Parties to foresee in the case of some or all of the offences described, when committed by natural persons, penalties involving deprivation of liberty that may give rise to extradition. The reason is that under Article 2 of the European Convention on Extradition (CETS No. 24), extradition is to be granted in respect of offences punishable under the laws of the requesting and requested Parties by deprivation of liberty or under a detention order for a maximum period of at least one year or by a more severe penalty. The provision here is thus intended to ensure that alleged offenders are extraditable – at least in relation between Parties that are also Parties to CETS No. 24.*
- 39 *Paragraph 2 is a standard text on the liability of legal persons. Some, but not all CoE criminal law conventions contain a list of “other measures” that Parties may want to foresee in their legislation. Obviously, the text contains only a list of examples and Parties may refrain from taking any of these measures or take other measures that are not included in the list. If – due to the specific subject matter (crime types in question) – negotiators opt not to include a provision on corporate liability, there would also be no need to include any of the rules in paragraph 2 of this model text.*
- 40 *Paragraph 3 is a possible model text for additional measures which Parties are obliged to foresee in their legislation. It may not be appropriate to include any such paragraph in a particular convention. Where negotiators opt to do so, the text may have to be adapted to the specific requirements of the fight against the types of crime that are subject to the convention.*

[Article 9 – Aggravating circumstances

Each Party shall ensure that the following circumstances, in so far as they do not already form part of the constituent elements of the offence, may, in conformity with the relevant provisions of domestic law, be taken into consideration as aggravating

circumstances in determining the sanctions in relation to the criminal offences referred to in [Articles x, y of] this Convention:

- a) ..... [....]
- b) [the offence was committed in the framework of a criminal organization;
- c) the perpetrator has previously been convicted of offences referred to established in accordance with this Convention.]

41 *Most recent CoE criminal law conventions contain an Article on „Aggravating circumstances“. Whether that is appropriate, will have to be determined taking into account the subject matter of the convention and the description of the offences. In particular, such an obligation cannot apply to cases where the aggravating circumstances already form part of the constituent elements of the offence as described in the convention and implemented by the Parties.*

42 *The phrase “may be taken into consideration” highlights that the convention places an obligation on Parties to ensure that these aggravating circumstances are available for judges to consider when sentencing offenders, although there is no obligation on judges to apply them. The reference to “in conformity with the relevant provisions of domestic law” is intended to reflect the fact that the various legal systems in Europe have different approaches to address those aggravating circumstances and permits Parties to retain their fundamental legal concepts.*

43 *A list of specific aggravating circumstances will have to be determined considering the types of offences that are subject to the particular convention and only the case of a previous conviction (c.f. lit c. above) could be considered to be universally applicable.*

[Article 10 – Previous sentences passed by another Party

Each Party shall take the necessary measures to provide for the possibility to take into account final sentences passed by another Party in relation to the criminal offences referred to in [Articles x, y of] this Convention when determining the sanctions.]

44 *Traditionally, previous convictions by foreign courts were not necessarily taken into account on the grounds that criminal law is a national matter and that there can be*

*differences of national law. Recent CoE criminal law conventions include a provision as set out above with the intention to ensure that not only own, but also foreign previous sentences will be taken into account. To comply with the provision [in conjunction with the aggravating circumstance described in Article 9 c\) of this model convention](#), Parties may provide in their domestic law that previous convictions by foreign courts are to result in a harsher penalty. They may also provide that, under their general powers to assess the individual's circumstances in setting the sentence, courts should take those convictions into account. This possibility should also include the principle that the offender should not be treated less favourably than he/she would have been treated if the previous conviction had been a national conviction. Considering that it may be difficult in practice to find out whether persons being prosecuted have received final sentences from another Party's courts, negotiators should include such a provision only where the specific subject matter of the draft convention warrants such an obligation.*

### Chapter III – Investigation, prosecution and procedural law

#### [Article 11 – Initiation and continuation of proceedings

Each Party shall take the necessary legislative and other measures to ensure that investigations or prosecution of criminal offences referred to in this Convention should not be subordinate to a complaint and that the proceedings may continue even if the complaint is withdrawn.]

*45 Model text based on some recent CoE criminal law conventions, which negotiators may consider to include in a draft convention, where the specific subject matter of the draft convention warrants such an approach.*

## Article 12 – International co-operation in criminal matters

- 1 The Parties shall co-operate with each other, in accordance with the provisions of this Convention and in pursuance of relevant applicable international and regional instruments and arrangements agreed on the basis of uniform legislation or reciprocity and their domestic law, to the widest extent possible, for the purpose of investigations or proceedings concerning the criminal offences referred to in ~~accordance with~~ this Convention, including seizure and confiscation.
  
- 2 If a Party that makes extradition or mutual legal assistance in criminal matters conditional on the existence of a treaty receives a request for extradition or legal assistance in criminal matters from a Party with which it has no such a treaty, it may, acting in full compliance with its obligations under international law and subject to the conditions provided for by the domestic law of the requested Party, consider this Convention as the legal basis for extradition or mutual legal assistance in criminal matters in respect of the offences referred to in this Convention[ and may apply, *mutatis mutandis*, Articles 16 and 18 of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) to this effect].

- 46 *CoE criminal law conventions typically include an article on international cooperation. Except in the specific case of the Budapest Convention (CETS No. 185), these conventions do not contain any specific rules on mutual legal assistance or extradition but refer – instead – to any relevant other convention or treaty applicable between the parties concerned (paragraph 1 of this model text). In particular, Parties may consider, where applicable, using Articles 16 and 18 of the UNTOC Convention to request judicial cooperation in case of crimes that are subject to the present convention as well as the UNTOC Convention.*
- 47 *In addition, conventions typically foresee a provision allowing Parties to consider the present convention as legal basis for extradition or mutual legal assistance (paragraph 2), that may be used in bilateral relations where no applicable treaty as referred to in paragraph 1 exists. This provision may be of interest because of the possibility provided to third States to sign this convention. The idea is that the requested Party may be able to act on such a request in accordance with the relevant provisions of its domestic law. The possible additional reference to Articles 16 and 18 of the UNTOC Convention in that context would be intended to invite Parties to the present convention to apply these provisions of the UNTOC Convention even in case of types of crime where the UNTOC Convention as such would not be applicable.*
- 48 *Negotiators should follow the example of the text contained in this Article unless the specific subject matter of the convention requires specific additional rules on cross-border judicial cooperation. If negotiators consider using a different text or additional provisions on international cooperation in criminal matter they should first seek an opinion by the Committee of Experts on the operation of European Conventions on co-operation in criminal matters (PC-OC).*

## Chapter IV – Measures for protection

### [Article 13 – Protection of victims

[Each Party shall take the necessary legislative and other measures to protect the rights and interests of victims of criminal offences ~~established~~referred to in ~~accordance with~~ this Convention, in particular by:



- a) ensuring that victims have access to information relevant to their case and which is necessary for the protection of their [rights] [health];
- b) assisting victims in their physical, psychological and social recovery;
- c) providing, in its domestic law, for the right of victims to compensation from the perpetrators.]

[Article 14 – The standing of victims in criminal investigations and proceedings

- 1 Each Party shall take the necessary legislative and other measures to protect the rights and interests of victims at all stages of criminal investigations and proceedings, in particular by:
  - a) informing them of their rights and the services at their disposal and, upon request, the follow-up given to their complaint, the charges retained, the state of the criminal proceedings, unless in exceptional cases the proper handling of the case may be adversely affected by such notification, and their role therein as well as the outcome of their cases;
  - b) enabling them, in a manner consistent with the procedural rules of domestic law, to be heard, to supply evidence and to choose the means of having their views, needs and concerns presented, directly or through an intermediary, and considered;
  - c) providing them with appropriate support services so that their rights and interests are duly presented and taken into account;
  - d) providing effective measures for their safety, as well as that of their families, from intimidation and retaliation.
- 2 Each Party shall ensure that victims have access, as from their first contact with the competent authorities, to information on relevant judicial and administrative proceedings.

- 3 Each Party shall ensure that victims have access to legal aid, in accordance with domestic law and provided free of charge where warranted, when it is possible for them to have the status of parties to criminal proceedings.
- 4 Each Party shall take the necessary legislative and other measures to ensure that victims of an offence ~~established~~referred to in ~~accordance with~~ this Convention committed in the territory of a Party other than the one where they reside can make a complaint before the competent authorities of their State of residence.
- 5 Each Party shall provide, by means of legislative or other measures, in accordance with the conditions provided for by its domestic law, the possibility for groups, foundations, associations or governmental or non-governmental organisations, to assist and/or support the victims with their consent during criminal proceedings concerning the offences ~~established~~referred to in ~~accordance with~~ this Convention.]

*49 Typically, recent CoE criminal law conventions provide for rules on the protection of victims (Article 13) as well as the standing of victims in criminal proceedings (Article 14). Where appropriate, considering the specific subject matter of the convention, the particular interests of the victims and the seriousness of the offences described therein, negotiators may choose to insert such articles in the new convention. Where they decide to do so, they should use the model language set out in Articles 13 and 14.*

[Article 15 – Protection of witnesses

- 1 Each Party shall, within its means and in accordance with the conditions provided for by its domestic law, provide effective protection from potential retaliation or intimidation for witnesses in criminal proceedings, who give testimony concerning offences ~~covered by~~referred to in this Convention and, as appropriate, for their relatives and other persons close to them.

- 2 Paragraph 1 of this article shall also apply to victims insofar as they are witnesses.]

- 50 *Article 15 is inspired by Article 24, paragraph 1 UNTOC Convention It was first introduced as such by the recent CoE THO Convention (CETS No. 216). Some of the other CoE criminal law conventions included more limited language on the protection of witnesses within the concept of protection of victims.*
- 51 *Negotiators may choose to insert an article on protection of witnesses, where considered appropriate, taking into account the specific nature of the crime and the situation of possible witnesses.*

Chapter V – ~~Measures for p~~Preventive ~~on~~ measures and other administrative measures

Article 16 – Measures at domestic level

Article 17 – Measures at international level

- 52 *There is no standard wording proposed for articles 16 and 17. CoE criminal conventions typically include more or less extensive provisions on prevention of the types of crimes that are subject to the convention or on other administrative measures which the Parties shall be obliged or encouraged to take in order to combat such crime. These may include measures that shall be taken by each State Party individually at domestic level. They may also include certain measures of international cooperation for the purpose of prevention or combatting such crimes. The judicial cooperation for the purpose of criminal investigations or prosecutions should be regulated separately (c.f. Article 12 of this model text).*
- 53 *To be noted: when a convention primarily deals with such measures on prevention and administrative cooperation and if addresses substantive criminal law only as a secondary aspect, it may be more suitable to choose a different structure for the convention (c.f. as examples CETS No. 197 and 201).*

Chapter VI – Follow-up mechanism

Chapter VII – Relationship with other international instruments

Chapter VIII – Amendments to the Convention

Chapter IX – Final clauses