

# COUNCIL OF EUROPE

## COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS

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### RESOLUTION (76) 2

#### ON THE TREATMENT OF LONG-TERM PRISONERS<sup>1</sup>

*(Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 17 February 1976  
at the 254th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies)*

The Committee of Ministers,

Considering that offenders who have committed serious crimes or are recidivists who have repeatedly committed serious crimes are at present condemned to long-term sentences ;

Considering that the enforcement of long-term sentences may have adverse effects on the prisoner and his dependants ;

Considering that the enforcement of long-term sentences and the provision of appropriate rehabilitation is a difficult task for institutions and their staff ;

Considering that on account of numerous other tasks, society is not always ready to devote the necessary attention and financial resources to the enforcement of long-term sentences ;

Taking into account Resolution (73) 5 on the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners,

I. Recommends that the governments of the member states :

1. pursue a criminal policy under which long-term sentences are imposed only if they are necessary for the protection of society ;

2. take the necessary legislative and administrative measures in order to promote appropriate treatment during the enforcement of such sentences ;

3. apply stringent measures of security only in those places where genuinely dangerous prisoners are detained ;

4. provide in prison opportunities for appropriate work and an adequate system of remuneration ;

5. encourage all education and vocational training by providing an adequate system of remuneration for these activities also ;

6. encourage a sense of responsibility in the prisoner by the progressive introduction of systems of participation in all appropriate areas ;

7. reinforce the contacts of the prisoners with the outside world, particularly by encouraging work outside the institution ;

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1. When it was adopted, the Representative of Greece, referring to Article 10.2.c of the Rules of Procedure for the meetings of the Ministers' Deputies, reserved his government's right to comply with the text of the resolution or not.

8. grant periods of leave from prison not as a relief from detention but as an integral part of the programme of treatment ;

9. ensure that the cases of all prisoners will be examined as early as possible to determine whether or not a conditional release can be granted ;

10. grant the prisoner conditional release, subject to the statutory requirements relating to time served, as soon as a favourable prognosis can be formulated ; considerations of general prevention alone should not justify refusal of conditional release ;

11. adapt to life sentences the same principles as apply to long-term sentences ;

12. ensure that a review, as referred to in 9, of the life sentence should take place, if not done before, after eight to fourteen years of detention and be repeated at regular intervals ;

13. improve the training of prison staff of all ranks with reference to the special problems of long-term prisoners and provide staff adequate to ensure deeper understanding, personal contacts and continuity in the treatment of prisoners ;

14. promote studies by multidisciplinary teams, comprising inter alia psychiatrists and psychologists, on the effects of long-term sentences on the prisoner's personality, having particular regard to the effects of diverse prison conditions ;

15. take all steps to ensure a better understanding by the general public of the special problems of long-term prisoners, thereby creating a social climate favourable to their rehabilitation ;

II. Invites the governments of member states to inform the Secretary General of the Council of Europe every five years of the steps they have taken to implement this resolution.