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COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Strasbourg, 3 February 2022

CDEF(2021)PV04

Steering Committee for the Rights of the Child (CDEF)

Fourth plenary meeting

Meeting Report

Strasbourg, 13 – 15 October 2021

By videoconference

Prepared by the Children's Rights Division

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Meeting Report

1. Opening of the meeting

1. The Steering Committee for the Rights of the Child (CDENF; “the Committee”) held its fourth plenary meeting by videoconference on 13-15 October 2021. The CDENF Chair, Ms Maria-Andriani Kostopoulou (Greece), who was present in the meeting room, opened the meeting and welcomed CDENF members, participants and observers.

2. Adoption of the agenda and order of business

2. The Committee adopted its agenda and order of business as it appears in Appendix I. The list of participants appears in Appendix II. Further Appendices contain dissenting opinions presented by individual delegations during or following the meeting.

3. Statement by the Chair and the Secretariat

3. The Chair drew attention to the main objective of the meeting, which was to examine and approve the draft Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2022-2027), before its submission to the Committee of Ministers in early 2022, for formal adoption.

4. Ms Regína Jensdóttir, Head of the Children's Rights Division, reminded delegations of the relevance of the new Strategy, not only as a response to topical issues, but also as the result of an inclusive process, involving other Council of Europe bodies, international partner organisations, and more than 220 children from 10 member States. She further expressed her gratitude to the Italian government for their support to the Strategy Launching Conference to be held on 7-8 April 2022 and introduced new staff members in the Secretariat.

4. CDENF’s tasks and activities: review of progress evaluation of completed activities and next steps

5. The Committee approved the updated CDENF workplan for 2021 and took note of the proposed work programme for 2022 (subject to the adoption, by the Committee of Ministers, of the new terms of reference for the CDENF (2022-2025)).

4.1. Implementation of the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2016-2021) (CDENF specific task (i))

7. The Committee decided to adjourn the approval of the final implementation report on the current Strategy (2016-2021) to the next CDENF plenary meeting following in its preparation.

8. The Committee took note of the fact that notably the activities of the Committee of Experts on the rights and the best interests of the child in parental separation and in care proceedings (CJ/ENF-ISE) and of the Working Group on responses to violence against children (CDENF-GT-VAE) would be pursued in 2022.

4.2. Preparation of the Council of Europe draft Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2022-2027) (CDEF specific tasks (ii) + (vi))

4.2.a. Review of the draft Strategy

9. The Committee **examined and revised** the version of the draft Strategy which had previously been validated by the Bureau and included the additions made by children during the child consultation process in ten countries.

10. All content-related comments submitted by CDEF members, participants and observers in advance of the meeting were considered. It was agreed that any comment addressed at one of the previous meetings, and comments to the overall structure, would not be discussed, as they already been agreed upon either during the third plenary meeting (18- 20 May 2021) or the CDEF plenary session dedicated to the review of the draft Strategy (14-15 June 2021).

11. The Committee proceeded with the in-depth consideration of a number of comments made and changes proposed to the draft Strategy and decided to include some of them.

12. The comments and reservations presented by individual delegations were noted. Two Delegations (the Russian Federation and Turkey) sent formal dissenting opinions to the Secretariat during or after the meeting; these are appended to this meeting report in their original language (English only; see Annex III). One Delegations (Hungary) reminded the Secretariat by email of the comments made in advance or during the meeting. All three delegations asked for their positions to be reflected in this meeting report.

Reservations or comments applicable to the entire text / throughout the text:

13. The Committee noted the reservation made by three delegations (Hungary, the Russian Federation and Turkey) regarding any reference to the terms “gender”, “gender-based”, “sexual orientation”, “homophobia”, “transphobia”, or “LGBTI” with specific arguments put forward.

14. One Delegation (Russian Federation) made a reservation regarding the appropriateness to reference legal instruments and policy documents of the European Union.

15. Regarding the boxes “What children suggest”, two Delegations (Hungary and the Russian Federation) expressed reservations on the inclusion of certain words contained in the proposals coming from children. The Russian Federation also expressed concerns about the alleged “misuse” of children during consultations.

Reservations or comments made to individual paragraphs during the examination, which were not retained by the majority of delegations as an actual change to the text:

Introduction

16. Two Delegations (Hungary and the Russian Federation) opposed the reference to the word “commitments” in Paragraph (“Para” here-after) 2 on the ground that it did not reflect the non-binding nature of the text.

17. One Delegation (the Russian Federation) proposed to include “relevant provisions” before the reference to the SG’s Strategic Framework (2021-2025) in Para 4; a second delegation (Hungary) supported this proposal

18. One Delegation (the Russian Federation) proposed to include the following footnote in Para 11: “some of the Council of Europe member States were not ready to accept the Strategy as a whole and integrated text because some of its provisions were not consistent with the European Convention on Human Rights and did not enjoy consensus in the Council of Europe”.

Strategic objectives and action

19. One Delegation (the Russian Federation) proposed to delete the footnote referring to Council of Europe Recommendation on preventing and combatting sexism (CM/Rec(2019)1) from the “In Focus” Box.

20. One Delegation (Norway) proposed to add “parents” amongst the groups to be trained for better child consultation in the Box “What children suggest”. Most delegations rejected this inclusion, and it was generally agreed not to touch any of the specific additions made by children in the designated boxes.

Freedom from violence

21. The Russian Federation proposed to replace the text of point 1.1.9. with the formulation used in the Gender Equality Strategy (“Supporting its member States that request it in their preparation for signature, ratification, and implementation of the Istanbul Convention, including through the provision of technical and legal expertise, with a view to protecting children from all forms of violence.”). This proposal was rejected by a majority of delegations favouring the compromise solution that is reflected in the final draft.

22. The Russian Federation proposed to delete the reference to sex and relationship education in point 1.2.10. The majority of delegations were in favour of replacing it by the wording “comprehensive sexuality education (CSE)”, as used by other international organisations, and in favour of adding the term “age-appropriate” in front; reservations to this point, even in its final formulation, also came from Turkey.

23. Two Delegations (the Russian Federation and Turkey) proposed to delete the table “Key Council of Europe bodies concerned” in this chapter and throughout the text. This proposal was rejected in view of the earlier decision not to touch upon the structure of the draft text.

Equal opportunities

24. The Russian Federation proposed to delete from the objectives (point 2.2.1.) references to Recommendations CM/Rec(2011)12 on young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods, CM/Rec(2015)3 on child-friendly healthcare and Congress Recommendation 253 (2008) on children living and working on the streets.

Safe use of technologies

25. Two Delegations (the Russian Federation and Turkey) proposed to modify the footnote relating to point 3.1.1. in the objectives, by referring to States having committed to relevant Conventions.

26. Following the revision of the draft Strategy, the Committee welcomed the proposal put forward by the French delegation to revise the French version of the draft Strategy.

27. According to the last changes retained, the Committee **approved** the text of the draft Strategy as revised during the meeting and instructed the Secretariat to submit the draft Strategy, as approved, to the Committee of Ministers for adoption during one of its upcoming meetings.

4.2.b. Presentation by children and facilitators on their proposals for a future Council of Europe Strategy

28. Ms Snežana Samardžić-Marković, Director General of Democracy (DGII) of the Council of Europe, greeted all CDENF participants, expressed her strong support to the draft Strategy and welcomed the highly inclusive preparatory process and fruitful outcomes of the child consultations.

29. Ms Elda Moreno, Head of the Head of the Children's Rights and Sport Values Department, underlined the importance of giving children a voice and thanked the children for their valuable input into the Strategy process.

30. In a dedicated, moderated session, the Committee heard video-presentations by children from the ten Council of Europe member States (Belgium, Bulgaria, Finland, France, Greece, Italy, Montenegro, Portugal, Slovak Republic, Spain) having participated in the child consultation process, involving a total of 220 children between March and July 2021, supported by professional facilitators and DCI Italy as an overall coordinator, and held an exchange of views with some of the children present at the meeting.

4.2.c. State of play of the organisation of the Launching conference of the Strategy

31. The Committee took note of the information provided by Mr Alfredo Ferrante (Italy) and the Secretariat on the organisation of the High-level Launching Conference on the new Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2022 to 2027) taking place in Rome, Italy on 7-8 April 2022 under the Italian Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers.

4.3. Work to enhance the implementation of international and Council of Europe standards on the protection of children from violence in member states

34. Ms Simona Florescu, consultant, gave a presentation on the outcomes of the survey on national mechanisms for professionals to report violence against children led amongst all CDEFN delegations in 2021; additional information was provided by the Chair and Secretariat.

35. The Committee took note of the information provided by the Secretariat with regard to the upcoming 2nd and 3rd CDEFN webinars on "Covid-19 and Children's Rights, concerning mental health and intrafamily violence in particular, to be held on 22 November 2021.

4.4. The protection of the best interests of the child in situations of parental separation and in childcare proceedings

36. The Committee took note and discussed the information presented by the Secretariat on the state of play of the Committee of Experts on the protection of the best interest of the child in situations of parental separation and in care proceedings (CJ/ENF-ISE), prepared jointly with the European Committee on Legal Cooperation (CDCJ), and welcomed the upcoming child consultation process.

4.5. The rights of children and children's participation in the decision-making process in the biomedical field (DH-BIO)

37. The Committee took note of the information provided by the Secretariat on the state of play of this activity, notably the constitution of the Drafting Group (BIO/ENF-CP) which would convene for a first meeting on 29 November 2021.

4.6. CDEFN opinions

38. The Committee took note of and discussed the information presented by the Secretariat on the draft opinion prepared through a written procedure on PACE Rec 2206(2021) on "The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on children's rights".

5. Co-operation and synergies with other relevant Council of Europe bodies and committees, international organisations and civil society

39. The Committee heard updates on current activities shared by other relevant Council of Europe bodies and committees, international organisations and civil society:

40. Ms Janna van Wermeskerken, representing the EU delegation, introduced the new legislative proposals related to children's rights and announced that an EU child participation platform would be launched soon (2nd half of 2022). The child-friendly version of the EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child would be made available in all official EU languages.

41. On behalf of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), Mr Jean-Pierre Grin, informed about the Assembly's contribution to the 2021 European Day against child sexual abuse, and drew attention to the upcoming child consultations to contribute to the work of the Assembly on climate change and children's rights, as well as to the first proposal made by children for an Assembly resolution regarding the use of internet.

42. For the European Network of Ombudspersons (ENOC), the new Chairperson, Ms Theoni Koufonikalakou (Greece), insisted on the importance of implementation processes, including by using tools like Child Rights Impact Assessments (CRIA). She introduced Climate Justice as the priority topic for ENOC in the upcoming year.

43. Mr Jean-Michel Grangeat, from the Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe informed that a new thematic committee had been created to address children's rights issues. In addition, he reported on the preparation of a webinar about children rights (separation and migration) for professionals working with children.

44. Mr Jean-Marie Bouverat, representing in this case the European Steering Committee on Youth, reported on the approval of the proposed recommendation about supporting youth civil society and informed about a new campaign ("Youth campaign for revitalising democracy") – youth flagship event in 2022.

45. Mr George Nikolaidis, on behalf of the Lanzarote Committee, explained the current strands of work of the Committee. He informed that two meetings were held in September and October and that the Lanzarote Committee have just ended the follow-up of the monitoring round on children on the move. He reported that there was an agreement in the Committee to address children sexual abuse and exploitation in IT systems during the next three years.

6. Co-operation projects

46. The Committee took note of the information presented by the Secretariat on ongoing co-operation projects in the areas of juvenile justice, on ending online child sexual abuse and exploitation in Europe, and on promoting child participation, including with the support of CDENF delegations. More information about ongoing projects is available via the website of the Children's Rights Division.

7. Working methods and evaluation of activities

47. The Committee took note of the main changes introduced by Resolution CM/Res(2021)3 on intergovernmental committees and subordinate bodies, their terms of reference and working methods, as compared to Resolution CM/Res(2011)24, which it would replace as of 1 January 2022.

8. Election to the Bureau

48. Subject to the adoption of its new terms of reference (2022-2025), the Committee, by secret ballot,

- re-elected Ms Ružica Boškić (Slovenia) and Mr Joost Van Haelst (Belgium) as Bureau members for a second two-years' mandate, starting from 1 January 2022;
- elected Mr Alfredo Ferrante (Italy) as a Bureau member for a first two-years' mandate, starting from 1 January 2022, renewable once.

9. Any other business

49. Participants did not raise any other business.

10. Date and place of next meeting

50. The Committee took note, notably of the following next meetings:

- 1-3 February 2022 (online): Plenary session dedicated to the rights of children in migration;
- 7-8 April 2022 (Rome): High-level Conference to launch the new Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2022-2027);

51. Subject to any last comments presented in writing directly after the present meeting, the Committee also agreed to the proposed calendar for main meetings to be held in 2022.

11. Adoption of the abridged meeting report

52. In order to assure that all comments by delegations are thoroughly reflected in the report, the abridged report was sent to delegations after the meeting, for approval via written procedure.

Appendix I

Agenda

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- 1. Opening of the meeting**

 - 2. Adoption of the agenda and order of business**

 - 3. Statement of the Chair and Secretariat**

 - 4. CDENF's tasks and activities: review of progress evaluation of completed activities and next steps**

 - 4.1. Implementation of the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2016-2021) (CDENF specific task (i))**
 - a. Presentation of and approval of the draft implementation report
 - b. Presentation of the state of play and final tasks ahead

 - 4.2. Preparation of the Council of Europe draft Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2022-2027) (CDENF specific tasks (ii) + (vi))**
 - a. Review of the draft Strategy, as revised:
 - during and following the dedicated Plenary session (14-15 June 2021)
 - based on the results of the child consultations led in ten member states
 - b. Presentation by children and facilitators on their proposals for a future Council of Europe Strategy
 - c. State of play of the organisation of the Launching conference of the Strategy, to be held on 6-8 April 2022 in Rome/Italy

 - 4.3. Work to enhance the implementation of international and Council of Europe standards on the protection of children from violence in member states (CDENF specific task (iii))**
 - a. Consideration of the draft analysis report on national mechanisms for professionals to report violence against children, as prepared by the CDENF-GT-VAE Working Group
 - b. European Day on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (18 November) and CDENF webinar on intrafamily violence and mental health

 - 4.4. The protection of the best interests of the child in situations of parental separation and in childcare proceedings (CDENF specific task (iv) 1))**

State of play of the work process, including the launch of a child consultation process, in the CJ/ENF-ISE Sub-Committee

 - 4.5. The rights of children and children's participation in the decision-making process in the biomedical field (DH-BIO) (CDENF specific tasks (iv) 2 and (vi))**

State of preparations towards the set-up of a joint Drafting group by the CDENF and the Committee on Bioethics (DH-BIO), to prepare a draft guide to good practices concerning the participation of children in the decision-making process on matters regarding their health

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- 4.6. CDENF opinions (if appropriate) (CDENF main task (iv))**
- a. Final draft opinion by the CDENF on PACE Recommendation 2206 (2021) on the Impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on children's rights
 - b. Final response by the Committee of Ministers to the Parliamentary Assembly on PACE Recommendation 2196 (2021) on the Impact of labour migration on left-behind children
-
- 5. Co-operation and synergies with other relevant Council of Europe bodies and committees, international organisations and civil society (CDENF specific task (ix))**
- a. European Union's priorities according to the EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child (2021-2024)
 - b. Oral updates by other international organisations, Council of Europe bodies and committees, and civil society organisations
-
- 6. Co-operation projects**
-
- 7. Working methods and evaluation of activities (CDENF main task (xi))**
- a. New Committee of Minister's Resolution on intergovernmental committees and their working methods as of 2022
-
- 8. Election to the Bureau**
-
- 9. Any other business**
-
- 10. Date and place of next meetings**
-
- 11. Approval of the abridged meeting report**
-
- 12. Closing**
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Appendix II

List of participants

MEMBERS / MEMBERS

ALBANIA/ALBANIE

Ms Alma Tandili
Director of the State Agency for the Protection of Children's Rights

Ms Arda Hoxha
Head of Sector and Protection and Monitoring of Child Rights
Ministry of Health and Social Protection

ARMENIA/ARMÉNIE

Ms Ivetta Shahbazyan
Head of Children Rights Protection Unit
Staff of the Human Rights Defender of the Republic of Armenia

AUSTRIA/AUTRICHE

Mr Ewald Filler
Head of Department for Family Law and Children's Rights
Ombudsman for Children's Rights

AZERBAIJAN/AZERBAÏDJAN

Ms Raida Amirbayova
The State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs

BELGIUM/BELGIQUE

Mme Valérie Gengoux
Federal public Service Justice
Service for criminal policy

Ms Christel de Craim
Head of Service
Federal Public Service Justice
Service for criminal policy

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA/ BOSNIE ET HERZÉGOVINE

Ms Irena Penc Puzic
Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees

BULGARIA/BULGARIE

Ms Eleonora Lilova
Chairperson of the State Agency for Child Protection

CROATIA/CROATIE

Ms Anica Ježić
Head of Sector for International Cooperation
Ministry of Labour, Pensions System, Family and Social Policy

Ms Tatjana Katkić Stanić
Ministry of Labour, Pensions System, Family and Social Policy

CYPRUS/CHYPRE

Ms Despo Michaelidou
Cypriot Commissioner for Children's Rights

CZECH REPUBLIC/RÉPUBLIQUE TCHÈQUE

Ms Diana Šmídová
Lawyer and Children's Rights Committee's Secretary
Department of Human Rights and Protection of Minorities
Office of the Government of the Czech Republic

DENMARK/DANEMARK

Ms Amalie Taarup Kroon
Head of Section
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Ministry of Social Affairs and the Interior

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Ms Marjo Malja
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Legal Officer
Unit for Human Rights Courts and Conventions
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Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Ms Laura Saarinen
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Direction Générale de la Cohésion sociale
Ministère des Solidarités et de la santé

Mme Stefania Chiru
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Bureau des affaires européennes et internationales
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Ms Maka Peradze
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Administration of the Government of Georgia

Ms Ketevan Tatuashvili
Specialist
Human Rights Secretariat
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Ms Maria-Andriani Kostopoulou
Attorney at Law, Supreme Court

Ms Panagiota Margaroni
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Department of Relations with International Organisations
Directorate of International Relations
Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs

Ms Nadia Romanidou
Head of Juvenile Probation Service Greek
Ministry of Justice

Ms Gelly Aroni
Special Secretariat for the Protection of Unaccompanied Minors
Ministry of Migration & Asylum

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Ministry of Social Affairs

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Mr Peter Szlovak
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Ms Ether Di Napoli
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Ms Filomena Menna
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Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport

Ms Dimitra Tuijtelaars,
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Ministry of Justice and Security

Mr Sebastiaan Rood
Policy Officer
Ministry of Justice and Security

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Ms Solvor Bäcklund
Senior Advisor
The Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs

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Judge Paweł Kaczor
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PORTUGAL

Ms Rosário Farmhouse
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Ms Célia Chamiça
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Ms Sónia Lourenço Rosa
Coordinator of the International Relations Unit
National Commission for the Promotion of Rights and the Protection of Children and Young People

ROMANIA/ROUMANIE

Ms Florica Cherecheș
President of National Authority for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Children and Adoptions (N.A.R.P.D.C.A)
Secretary of State

RUSSIAN FEDERATION/FEDERATION DE RUSSIE

Ms Olga Opanasenko
Expert
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Ms Giulia Santi
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SWITZERLAND/SUISSE

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Mrs Nasim Clark
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**OBSERVER STATES TO THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE /
ETATS OBSERVATEURS AUPRÈS DU CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE**

Mexico / Mexique

Ms Lorena Alvarado Quezada
Deputy to the Permanent Representative of Mexico to the Council of Europe / Adjointe au
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NON-MEMBER STATES WITH THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE HAS A NEIGHBOURHOOD PARTNERSHIP /
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VOISINAGE

Morocco / Maroc

Ms Lamia Beghuel
Cheffe de service de la protection des enfants en situation difficile
Ministère de la Solidarité, du Développement Social, de l'Égalité et de la Famille

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European Asylum Support Office / Bureau Européen d'appui en matière d'asile

Ms Nilde Robotti
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Legal Affairs Trainee – EU Delegation to the Council of Europe

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Missing Children Europe

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Secretary General

SOS Children Villages International

Ms Rosana Martinelli
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Mr Pippo Costella
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**Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) / Assemblée Parlementaire du
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Mr Jean-Pierre Grin
Member of the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development / Membre de la
Commission des questions sociales, de la santé et du développement durable

**Committee of the Parties to the Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual
Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote Committee) / Comité des Parties à la Convention du
Conseil de l'Europe sur la protection des enfants contre l'exploitation et les abus sexuels
(Comité Lanzarote)**

Mr George Nikolaidis
Representative of Lanzarote Committee
Psychiatrist
Research Director of Department of Mental Health & Social Welfare
Institute of Child Health, Greece

**European Committee on Legal Co-operation (CDCJ) / Comité européen de coopération
juridique (CDCJ)**

Mr Werner Schütz
Member (Austria)

Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe / Conférence des ONG du Conseil de l'Europe

Mr Michel Grangeat
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Chair of the Civil Society Committee on the Rights of the Child (CSC-RC) of the INGO Conference (Council of Europe)

SECRETARIAT / SECRETARIAT

Secretariat of the Parliamentary Assembly / Secrétariat de l'Assemblée parlementaire

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Appendix III

Dissenting opinion of the Delegation of the Russian Federation on the draft Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2022-2027): “Children’s Rights in Action: from continuous implementation to joint innovation”

The delegation of the Russian Federation appreciates the work that has already been done by the Secretariat providing the Draft Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2022-2027): “Children’s Rights in Action: from continuous implementation to joint innovation”. We also thank the Secretariat for taking into account some of our comments made at the previous CDENF meetings.

The Russian Federation attaches great importance to the issue of children's rights. We are therefore deeply concerned about the long-term effects of the Strategy for the Rights of the Child. We still keep to the point that the new Strategy should make a significant contribution towards improving the lives and protecting the rights of all children without any exclusion and that while elaborating this document the best interests of all children without any exclusion should be a primary consideration. And it is impossible without respecting national legislation of all the CoE member States.

Taking into account the best interests of children the delegation of the Russian Federation respects a plurality of views that forms the basis of our unity within the Council of Europe as well as the right of every country to fulfill its national policy in accordance with its national legislation. We therefore were trying to find a common solution to all sensitive points of the draft Strategy. We suggested compromise proposals and alternative wording and we were open to unbiased discussion.

And we are disappointed with the position of some delegations that prefer to ignore our compromise arguments and try to impose an ideology that is not shared by all the CoE member states to the detriment of the best interests of all children existing throughout the whole space of the Council of Europe.

As a result, while the Russian side supports the main goals and objectives reflected in the Draft Strategy, the final text of the document contains a number of provisions upon which the Russian Federation cannot agree, in particular:

1. The delegation of the Russian Federation cannot be satisfied with provisions related to the promotion of LGBTI issues since it creates a basis for the further promotion of non-traditional sexual relationships among adolescents in a way which doesn't comply with our national legislation.

The issues of so-called "LGBTI children and families" are not well elaborated and are not confirmed in the text by any scientific research at the pan-European level. It is not a consensual topic.

We still keep to the point that in order not to miss any situation or any characteristic of a child and not to prioritize some vulnerable groups over others we should avoid any particularization and should not enumerate specific groups of children in vulnerable situations in our new Strategy.

On the other hand, it is for the national authorities, based on national legislation and international obligations, to effectively identify on a case-by-case basis the vulnerabilities of children.

2. There is no definition of the “social sex” in the Russian Federation, as well as in many other legal systems in which the feature of the biological sex is fixed by law. The Russian legislation therefore does not contain the concept of "gender" and there is no commonly or universally accepted definition of the word "gender" at the international level.

During the drafting of this Strategy the Delegation of the Russian Federation consistently opposed the use of the word "gender" in the documents of the Council of Europe. Therefore the Russian Federation understands the word "gender" if it stay in this draft Strategy as a complete analogue of the word "sex", the word combination “gender-based violence” as “violence against women” etc.

The terms "woman" and "man" should thus be applied in their literal meaning, and cannot be construed to unnaturally include “persons” other than women and men respectively.

Taking this into account we still kindly ask the Secretariat to reflect the position of the Russian Federation relating to the word “gender” after its first mentioning (as a separate word or in a wording) in the text of the Strategy in a footnote, reading:

“The Russian Federation expresses its position that in this document any reference to “gender” as a separate word and in all wordings as “gender-based, gender-sensitive” etc. should be considered as a sex-based concept”.

3. The position of the Russian Federation on the Istanbul Convention and the Budapest Convention is well known. Russia neither supports these conventions nor considers the possibility to join them. The Russian Federation therefore has no obligation and commitments with regard to these Conventions. In this regard we do not consider as relevant the references to these documents in the draft Strategy.

4. The delegation of the Russian Federation holds the view that it is counterproductive to quote informal documents, such as the Strategic Framework (paragraph 3 of Chapter 1.1), in the draft Strategy that do not reflect the vision of all the CoE member States.

We also keep to the point that it is necessary to insert after the 1st mentioning of the Strategic Framework a footnote, reading:

“The CoE Strategic Framework for 2021-2025 is an information document. It was appreciated but not adopted in its entirety at the 131st Session of the Committee of Ministers (Hamburg (videoconference), 21 May 2021).

The wording of this chapter reflects the vision of the Secretary General and in no way reflects the opinion of all the 47 CoE member states”.

5. The delegation of the Russian Federation stresses that we shouldn't make references in the new Strategy to the documents of other regional organisations. Not all of the CoE member States are members of the European Union. They were not involved in the drafting of the EU documents. They may not be aware of the contents of these documents, and therefore they may not share some of the ideas of the EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child and of other EU documents.

6. We consider that the table “Key Council of Europe bodies concerned/Other Council of Europe units concerned” is superfluous for the reason that all the CoE bodies and units are more or less concerned in achieving all six strategic objectives so there is no need to list some of them and to try to divide them into key and other categories.

7. While the delegation of the Russian Federation supports the mainstreaming of proposals and changes made by participation of the children in consultations, some of the proposals made by them, that were highlighted in the draft Strategy include words and word combinations (gender, gender-based, sexual orientation, homophobia, transphobia, sexual education, to embrace diversity etc.) that create a basis for the promotion of non-traditional sexual relationships among children and adolescents and propaganda of a corresponding way of life that is not shared unanimously in Europe. The dissemination of such information, propaganda and agitation damages health, morals and the spiritual development of children, that is prohibited by the legislation of the Russian Federation (Federal laws № 124-FZ "On Basic Guarantees of the Rights of the Child" and № 436-FZ "On Protection of Children from Information Harmful to Their Health and Development").

We are therefore not satisfied with these words and word combinations in the Strategy, as well as concerned by the misuse of children in the consultations.

8. The delegation of the Russian Federation doesn't consider it necessary to develop "further standards to support States in developing comprehensive and age-appropriate sexuality education" as it is formulated in point 1.2.10 of the draft Strategy.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation also reiterates all its comments sent to the Secretariat before the 4 CDENF meeting.

The Delegation of the Russian Federation kindly asks the Secretariat to reflect its position in the final report of the 4 CDENF meeting.

Appendix IV**Reservations Regarding Draft Council of Europe Strategy
for the Rights of the Child (2022-2027)**

1. Turkey is against all forms of discrimination and acknowledge the right to equal protection in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Turkey believes that all people, as human beings, have the right to benefit from all services provided by the State. However, Turkey states its reservation in regards to any reference to the acronym LGBT, particularly in the context of children. Turkey would like it to be reflected in the report.
2. Turkey states its reservation in regards to the usage of the word gender, due to lack of internationally agreed upon definition. We consider that using language that are understood in the same way by all in international texts is important for clarity and effectiveness of the documents. Turkey would like it to be reflected in the report