

Strasbourg, 21 January 2019

GEC (2018) Report December

**GENDER EQUALITY COMMISSION  
(GEC)**

*14th meeting*

*(5-7 December 2018, Strasbourg, France)*

**REPORT**

## I. Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda

1. The 14th meeting of the Gender Equality Commission (GEC) was opened by the Vice-Chair (Charles Ramsden, United Kingdom) who informed the members that the Chair (Eva Fehringer, Austria) could not attend and had sent her apologies, and that he would chair.
2. The Chair welcomed Daniele Cangemi, the new Head of the Human Dignity and Gender Equality Department, and Caterina Bolognese, the new Head of the Gender Equality Division and Secretary to the GEC, who introduced themselves.
3. The Chair informed participants that, following the suspension of the [Ad Hoc Committee of Experts on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#) (CAHDPH) for budgetary reasons, the Committee of Ministers had decided to mainstream the work in the area of persons with disabilities across the Organisation. As a result, each intergovernmental committee, including the GEC, should “take due account to building cohesive societies and to promoting and protecting rights of persons with disabilities in line with the Council of Europe Disability Strategy 2017-2023 in the performance of its tasks” and its [terms of reference](#) were modified accordingly.
4. The Chair reported back to the members about the first meeting, on 20 September 2018, of the Chairs of intergovernmental committees who subsequently met with the Secretary General. The meeting was aimed at stressing the importance and merits of the work carried out by intergovernmental committees and to try to increase impact and improve working methods through exchange of information with other Chairs. A message from the participants was drawn up and forwarded to the Secretary General. The Chair would inform the GEC of any follow-up.
5. The Secretariat informed the participants that, because the Vice-Chair of the GEC was also the Chair of the Drafting Committee preparing the draft Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to prevent and combat sexism, an Acting GEC Chair should be appointed and replace him during the discussions on this item. It was agreed that Alexandra Adriaenssens (Belgium) would preside as Acting Chair.
6. The draft [agenda](#) was adopted as it appears in Appendix I to this report. The list of participants is attached in Appendix III.
  - *The GEC agreed to appoint Alexandra Adriaenssens (Belgium) as Acting GEC Chair during the discussions on the draft recommendation to prevent and combat sexism; and adopted the draft agenda as it appears in document GEC(2018)OJ2 Revised.*

## II. Election of Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson (January to December 2019)

7. In accordance with Resolution CM/Res(2011)24 on intergovernmental committees and subordinate bodies, their terms of reference and working methods, the GEC elected Charles Ramsden (United Kingdom) as its Chairperson and Kira Appel (Denmark) as its Vice-Chair for one year, by acclamation.
  - *The GEC elected Charles Ramsden (United Kingdom) as Chair and Kira Appel (Denmark) as Vice-Chair for a period of one year commencing 1 January 2019.*

## III. Exchange with Ambassador Keith McBean, Permanent Representative of Ireland to the Council of Europe, Chair of the Rapporteur Group on Human Rights (GR-H)

8. In his presentation, Ambassador Keith McBean confirmed that gender equality is an issue of great relevance for the [Committee of Ministers](#) (CM) and the Organisation as a whole, and that this is shown through the forthcoming Finnish and French CM Presidencies, which both have gender equality high on their priorities. He also mentioned the draft Recommendation on preventing and combating sexism, under preparation by the GEC, which he looked forward to receiving for examination by the GR-H. Ambassador McBean encouraged the GEC members to contact their colleagues in the foreign affairs ministries to ensure that they are well prepared for the discussions on the draft recommendation at the CM. In response to a question regarding the use of gender-sensitive language, such as “*droits humains*” rather than “*droits de l’homme*” at the Council of Europe, Ambassador McBean said he understood the concern and would raise the issue again with his colleagues.
  - *The GEC took note of the exchange of views with Ambassador Keith McBean, Permanent Representative of Ireland to the Council of Europe, Chair of the Rapporteur Group on Human Rights, and agreed to contact colleagues in their Ministries of Foreign Affairs regarding the forthcoming discussion of the draft Recommendation to prevent and combat sexism at the CM level.*

## IV. Council of Europe Transversal Programme on Gender Equality

### 1. Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023

- a. **Draft report of the conference “Gender Equality: Paving the Way”** to launch the Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023 (Copenhagen, 3-4 May 2018)
9. The Chair expressed the GEC’s thanks and appreciation to the Danish authorities for hosting the conference “[Gender Equality: Paving the Way](#)” which took place in Copenhagen (3-4 May 2018) and for their very generous hospitality. The Chair introduced the draft report which had been prepared by the general rapporteur to the conference. The GEC had no amendments to make to the report.

- *The GEC took note of the report of the conference “Gender Equality: Paving the Way” to launch the Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023 (Copenhagen, 3-4 May 2018), instructed the Secretariat to disseminate it and agreed to promote the recommendations contained in it at the national level.*

**b. Draft 2018 annual report on the implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy**

10. The Chair introduced the draft annual report on the implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy (GEC(2018)5). The report draws on information received from the member states about activities undertaken throughout the year (see GEC(2018)6 - Activities and measures in member states towards the achievement of the objectives of the Gender Equality Strategy), as well as activities carried out within the different sectors of the Organisation. The Secretariat informed members of proposed changes to the 2018 annual report, as well as a proposed new format for future reports, aimed at raising the profile of each Strategic Objective and of the Strategy’s impact. Following a discussion among the members, it was agreed that member states would propose one or two main highlights from 2018 to be included in the narrative of the report. The proposed format for future reports was also discussed and agreed upon.

- *The GEC took note of the draft 2018 annual report on the implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy and instructed the Secretariat to amend it on the basis of additions to be proposed by members by 14 December 2018, and to transmit it to the Committee of Ministers.*
- *The GEC discussed proposals as regards the format for future annual strategy implementation reports, and instructed the Secretariat to proceed as from 2019 to prepare the reports on the basis of those discussions.*

**c. Conference “Tackling Gender Stereotypes and Sexism” (Helsinki, 28-29 March 2019)**

11. The Chair informed participants that Finland had invited the GEC to hold a conference in Helsinki on 28 and 29 March 2019, as part of the priorities of its [Presidency of the Committee of Ministers](#). The Secretariat presented the draft programme (GEC(2018)7) and the draft concept paper (GEC(2018)8) and asked members to submit any proposals for speakers on sexism and gender stereotypes, as well as feedback on the thematic panels.

- *The GEC took note of the preparations for the Conference “Tackling Gender Stereotypes and Sexism”, which will take place in Helsinki on 28 and 29 March 2019, and asked members to provide feedback about the proposed thematic panels, and suggest potential speakers on sexism and gender stereotypes, by 20 December 2018.*

#### d. Objective 1 – Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

- Preparation of a draft Committee of Ministers Recommendation to prevent and combat sexism

12. The Acting GEC Chair introduced this item and welcomed the participation of the expert adviser to the Drafting Committee, Christine Chinkin. The Chair of the Drafting Committee informed the members about the discussions that had taken place at the [4th meeting of the Drafting Committee](#) (September 2018) and explained the consultation procedure which had been followed to arrive at the document which was for discussion and decision at this GEC meeting. The Acting Chair proposed to review the draft document paragraph by paragraph, and invited proposals for textual changes or new revisions. Following a lengthy and detailed discussion by the member states, the GEC members agreed on a final draft document for transmission to the Committee of Ministers. The representative of the Russian Federation, while in agreement with most of the draft recommendation, expressed her country's dissenting opinion, the text of which is attached to this report at Appendix II.

➤ *The GEC thanked the Drafting Committee and all those involved in the preparation of the draft Committee of Ministers Recommendation to prevent and combat sexism; adopted the draft text; took note of the dissenting opinion of the Russian Federation, included in the meeting report; and instructed the Secretariat to transmit the draft recommendation to the Committee of Ministers.*

- Implementation of Recommendation (2013)<sup>1</sup> on gender equality and media – joint follow-up by the Gender Equality Commission and the Steering Committee on Media and Information Society (CDMSI)

13. The Head of the Media and Internet Division, Silvia Grundmann, made a [presentation](#) about the work of the division, and in particular the work on Recommendation (2013)<sup>1</sup> of the Committee of Ministers on gender equality and media. A [handbook](#) on the implementation of this recommendation had been prepared as a follow up to the 2013 Amsterdam Conference "[Media and the Image of Women](#)" and the Steering Committee on Media and Information Society (CDMSI) has been working on a [questionnaire](#) to provide an update and follow-up to the handbook through direct inquiries to relevant stakeholders. The questionnaire will be sent out to member States (GEC and CDMSI members – with one co-ordinated response expected from each member State), media organisations, media regulators and press councils early in 2019. GEC members were asked to submit any comments on the questionnaire to the Secretariat by 31 December 2018.

➤ *The GEC took note of the presentation by the representative of the Media and Internet Division and agreed to provide comments on the draft questionnaire to the Secretariat by 31 December 2018.*

**e. Objective 2 - Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence**

- Presentation by Liri Kopaçi-Di Michele, Executive Secretary of the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO) about signatures and ratifications of the Istanbul Convention and other developments/activities in the area of violence against women

14. Liri Kopaçi-Di Michele, Executive Secretary of [GREVIO](#), informed the members that 33 member states have ratified and 13 member States and the European Union, have signed the Istanbul Convention. She added that the increase in ratifications will help harmonise legislation and policies on the issue of violence against women in Europe. Six evaluation reports have been published (Albania, Austria, Denmark, Monaco, Montenegro and Turkey) and two further reports (Portugal and Sweden) are scheduled for publication in January 2019. Ms Kopaçi-Di Michele said that GREVIO was seeing a positive impact in the member States, with laws being changed and services improved. However, there were still many challenges to implementation, such as insufficient shelters, inefficient help-lines, absence of data and insufficient support for victims during legal processes. She referred to the backlash during 2018 as a co-ordinated strategy affecting not only women's rights, but human rights in general. She also shared the new [publication](#) of questions and answers about the Istanbul Convention. Several delegations took the floor to share information about progress towards ratification of the Istanbul Convention and to share experiences about efforts to align their legislation and practice to the Istanbul Convention's requirements.

➤ *The GEC held an exchange with the Executive Secretary of GREVIO and took note of developments in the member States in relation to implementation of the Istanbul Convention and to its ratification.*

- Meeting of international and regional mechanisms to combat violence against women (Strasbourg, 23-24 May 2019)

15. The Chair introduced the next item as an event organised under the auspices of the French Presidency of the Committee of Ministers, referring to the draft programme and concept note (GEC(2018)11). The Executive Secretary of GREVIO explained that the event would be the next in a series of meetings between the [international and regional mechanisms](#) to combat violence against women, in a co-ordination effort introduced by initiative of the UN special rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences. The last meeting had taken place in Colorado (October 2018). It was proposed to hold the meeting in Strasbourg back-to-back with a GEC meeting, thereby allowing for members to participate. As agreed with the other mechanisms, the meeting would consist of one half-day closed meeting of the monitoring mechanisms followed by a full-day conference including all GEC members and invited speakers. The Secretariat added that suggestions from members for the keynote speaker on the subject of "Ending violence against women and girls: a condition and accelerator towards the achievement of sustainable development goals and the 2030 Agenda" would be welcome.

- *The GEC took note that the meeting of international and regional mechanisms to combat violence against women would take place in Strasbourg on 23 and 24 May 2019; agreed that the meeting on 24 May would form part of the next GEC meeting; asked members to send to the Secretariat, by 20 December 2018, proposals for a keynote speaker on “Ending violence against women and girls: a condition and accelerator towards the achievement of sustainable development goals and the 2030 Agenda”.*

- Presentation of co-operation activities in the area of violence against women

16. Marta Becerra, Head of the [Capacity Building and Co-operation Projects](#) Unit presented co-operation work underway on gender equality and violence against women. She explained the systematic approach to planning, implementing and monitoring activities and the types of activities carried out. Co-operation is currently taking place with Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Georgia, Lithuania, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia and Ukraine, and projects are in the pipeline in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Kosovo<sup>[1]</sup>. Ms Becerra said that while the co-operation work to date had concentrated on violence against women and domestic violence, there was an increased interest in working on the other five objectives in the [Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023](#). She thanked those member States which had already contributed to funding co-operation work and invited proposals for further co-operation. Her [presentation](#) is available on the meeting website.

- *The GEC took note of the presentation by the Head of the Capacity Building and Co-operation Projects Unit of ongoing and planned work in the field of violence against women and domestic violence, as well as the invitation for proposals for future co-operation.*

#### **f. Objective 3 - Ensure the equal access of women to justice**

- Partnership for Good Governance project: “Strengthening access to justice for women victims of violence”: Regional Conference on Women’s Access to Justice for women victims of violence (Strasbourg, 18-19 October 2018)

17. The Secretariat informed the members about the developments and achievements related to the Partnership for Good Governance (PGG) project. This included a [Regional Conference on Women’s Access to Justice for women victims of violence](#) (Strasbourg, 18-19 October 2018) which reviewed progress made in the field of women’s access to justice, including in the ratification and implementation of the Istanbul Convention; an online [HELP Court on Women’s Access to Justice](#) for legal practitioners; production of [a guide for legal practitioners on Women’s Access to Justice](#); and translation of tools for legal professionals (Council of Europe standards, case-law and reports, etc.).

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<sup>[1]</sup> All references to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population, in this text shall be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.

- *The GEC took note of the presentation about the Partnership for Good Governance project, including the Regional Conference on Women's Access to Justice and the Istanbul Convention (Strasbourg, October 2018).*

**g. Objective 4 - Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making**

- World Forum for Democracy 2018 "Gender Equality: Whose Battle?" (Strasbourg, 19-21 November 2018)

18. At the invitation of the Chair, Alexandra Adriaenssens (Belgium) informed the members about her participation at the [2018 World Forum for Democracy](#) at which she moderated a lab on "[Is #MeToo the new model for women's rights campaigns?](#)" She referred to reports presented at the Forum which showed a democratic deficit in terms of gender equality. She said that there was a high level of political representation at the Forum, including the French Minister of State for Equality, who talked about the need for women to support one another rather than see other women as rivals. Other participants added, among other things, that the Forum managed to bring together many men as well as women, and showed that there was still a need to talk about gender equality and to offer training in this area.

- *The GEC took note of the report from the Belgian, Georgian and INGO Conference representatives and the Secretariat about the discussions during the 2018 World Forum for Democracy on "Gender Equality: Whose Battle?" (Strasbourg, 19-21 November).*

**h. Objective 5 - Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls**

19. The Chair informed the members that a preliminary draft factsheet on the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls had been prepared by the Secretariat for review by the GEC. The Secretariat said that the document, which had already received initial comments from the [SRSG on Migration and Refugees](#), would be reviewed by two experts in the field of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women. Once revised, the factsheet would be available for discussion and adoption by the GEC at its next meeting.

20. The Secretariat also informed the GEC about an ongoing partnership with students at Sciences Politiques in Strasbourg who are doing research in this area as part of their training and education. The results of their research, which will be available in February 2019, could help to enhance the text of the factsheet.

- *The GEC took note of the preliminary draft factsheet on the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls and instructed the Secretariat to pursue consultations on it and produce a draft for discussion and adoption at the next meeting.*

**i. Objective 6 - Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures**

- Gender mainstreaming in Council of Europe activities

21. The Secretariat updated the members about the work on gender mainstreaming in the Council of Europe since the last meeting. The highlights were the [training for Gender Equality Rapporteurs](#) (October 2018), which was also an opportunity to produce a new version of the [Handbook for Gender Equality Rapporteurs](#), and a [master class on gender-sensitive judgments](#) organised with judges and registrars of the European Court of Human Rights. Other sectors in the Organisation, such as [Penological Co-operation](#); [Legal Co-operation](#); [Major Hazards Agreement](#); [Group of States against Corruption](#); [Media, Sport](#) and [Organ Transplantation](#), have also undertaken gender mainstreaming activities including research, drafting notes on gender equality aspects, following up on existing standards and gathering sex-disaggregated data. A notable example is the "[ALL IN: Towards gender balance in sport](#)" project, which specifically looks at gender mainstreaming in sport. A toolkit on gender mainstreaming in co-operation activities has been produced and launched in the [Directorate General of Programmes](#) for project work. Training on gender mainstreaming, organised by the Human Resources Directorate, will be available for Council of Europe staff in 2019. The Secretariat's [presentation](#) is available on the website.

- *The GEC took note of the presentation made by the Secretariat on progress on gender mainstreaming in the different sectors of the Council of Europe.*

**V. Thematic discussions:**

- i. GenMob mobile phone tool – Margarida Queirós, Institute of Geography and Ornament of the Territory (Portugal)
- ii. Work with perpetrators of violence against women – Sopo Japaridze (Georgia), and Laurence Bouquet and Nadine Conrardy (Luxembourg Red Cross Association)
- iii. Gender-responsive budgeting – Lilia Pascal (Republic of Moldova) and Ljiljana Loncar (Serbia)

22. The GEC members listened with interest to, and thanked, the various speakers for their presentations: Margarida Queirós (Institute of Geography and Ornament of the Territory, Portugal) - [GenMob mobile phone tool](#); Sopo Japaridze (Georgia) and [Laurence Bouquet and Nadine Conrardy \(Luxembourg Red Cross Association\)](#) – working with perpetrators of domestic violence; [Lilia Pascal](#) (Republic of Moldova) and [Ljiljana Loncar](#) (Serbia) – gender-responsive budgeting. Their presentations are available on the GEC meeting website.

- *The GEC took note of the presentations made during the thematic discussions: GenMob mobile phone tool (Portugal); work with perpetrators of violence against women (Georgia and Luxembourg); and gender-responsive budgeting (Republic of Moldova and Serbia).*

## VI. Co-operation with other Council of Europe sectors

- Exchange with Gianluca Esposito, Executive Secretary of the Group of States against Corruption (GRECO)
23. The Chair welcomed Gianluca Esposito, Executive Secretary of [GRECO](#), who informed the participants about the gender dimension of GRECO's country-monitoring work. GRECO is also initiating a study on whether or not gender has an impact on corruptibility, together with the Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures and the Financing of Terrorism ([MONEYVAL](#)). The focus of the study will be on economic crimes ("white collar crimes") and will not include organised crime. In answer to questions about gendered nepotism, Mr Esposito said that while GRECO has looked at nepotism, there is a growing awareness that 'old boys networks' deserve closer analysis.
- *The GEC held an exchange with the Executive Secretary of the Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) about efforts to integrate a gender perspective in their country-monitoring and thematic work. In particular, the GEC looked forward to the results of a study commissioned by GRECO/Moneyval for 2019 on the impact (if any) of gender on corruptibility.*
- Exchange with Sonia Sirtori-Milner, Head of the Secretariat to the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe
24. The Chair introduced Sonia Sirtori-Milner, Head of the Secretariat to the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, who informed the members that whereas the mandate of the [Committee](#) is broad, the issue of gender equality is the one on which the Committee is most active. She spoke about the recent study by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the Parliamentary Assembly which shows that acts of sexism, abuse and violence against women are widespread in parliaments across Europe. Because very few parliaments have mechanisms to deal with this problem, the level of impunity is extremely high. As a result of the report, the PACE President has launched a hashtag [#NotInMyParliament](#). Ms Sirtori-Milner said that, following a proposal from the Chair of the Committee to enforce gender mainstreaming in the PACE work, the President has put forward a change in the rules of the Assembly which would oblige rapporteurs to take into account not only human rights, but also gender equality. Ms Sirtori-Milner also mentioned the [Network Women Free from Violence](#), which mobilises members at national level to support the promotion, ratification and implementation of the Istanbul Convention. She said that the Q&A brochure on the Istanbul Convention (see paragraph 14 above) would be translated into as many languages as possible in order to help give a new momentum to the engagement of PACE members.

25. The GEC Secretary informed the members about the side event to the March 2019 CSW which the Council of Europe was organising together with the Finnish Chair of the Committee of Ministers, the Parliamentary Assembly and the Inter-Parliamentary Union. The event is about violence against women in politics and would include a presentation of work to prepare the Recommendation on sexism. The draft flyer was circulated.

- *The GEC held an exchange with the Head of the Secretariat to the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe about activities of the Committee, including the planned CSW63 side-event organised jointly by PACE/IPU and the GEC.*

## **VII. Co-operation with international/regional organisations**

- Exchange with Dalia Leinarte, Chairperson, United Nations Committee on the elimination of discrimination against women (CEDAW)

26. The Chair welcomed Dalia Leinarte, who presented the work of the [CEDAW Committee](#). She said a significant change in the Committee's work was the new simplified reporting procedure. The Committee's general recommendations are becoming more complex: 36 recommendations had been issued, the one most closely related to the Istanbul Convention being [No. 35](#) of July 2017, which extends the scope of violence against women to gender-based violence and deepens the CEDAW Committee's understanding of this type of violence.

27. CEDAW has begun drafting a new general recommendation on "Trafficking of women and girls in the context of global migration" in the light of the implementation gap in this area. Ms Leinarte said that the recommendation will address the gendered dimensions of trafficking and the risk factors (e.g. disability) which expose women and girls to sexual exploitation and abuse.

28. Ms Leinarte also spoke about the rise in intimidation and reprisals of human rights defenders, as well as CEDAW's recent appointment of two rapporteurs to work on this subject.

- *The GEC held an exchange with the Chairperson of the United Nations Committee on the elimination of discrimination against women (CEDAW), on issues of common concern.*
- Council of the European Union - gender equality agenda:
  - Romanian Presidency (January-June 2019)

29. Andreea Pascu (Romania) informed the participants about the priorities of the Council of the European Union Presidency, which included preventing and combating gender-based violence and emergency measures for the protection and support of victims; increasing the economic independence of women and men by reducing gender discrimination in business and reducing the gap in the female labour market participation; and combating the gender pay gap. Events during the Presidency will include a high level group meeting on gender mainstreaming (18-19 February 2019); high level conferences on the condition of the modern woman (30-31 May 2019) and on the perspectives of the Istanbul Convention (4-6 June 2019). Side events will also be organised during the CSW in New York (11-22 March 2019).

- *The GEC took note of the information provided by the Romanian representative about Romania's gender equality agenda during its presidency in 2019 of the Council of the European Union.*

#### **VIII. Events attended by GEC members, experts and the Secretariat**

30. The Chair informed the members that information about participation at events since the last meeting was contained in document GEC(2018)13 (available on the website).

- *The GEC took note of information concerning events at which members of the GEC and the Secretariat participated since the previous GEC meeting.*

#### **IX. Current and future activities at national and international level**

- Council of Europe gender equality agenda:

- Croatian Presidency (May-November 2018)

31. The representative from Croatia informed the members about the three main activities undertaken: translation of the Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023 into Croatian and presentation of the Strategy in the Croatian Parliament, gathering all relevant stakeholders; the conference on "Women and sport" (25 October 2018, Zagreb) organised jointly by the Council of Europe's [Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport](#) (EPAS), the Central State Office for Sport and the Office for Gender Equality in Croatia, in the context of the Council of Europe's "ALL IN" project on gender equality in sport; and a government stand at a Zagreb book fair from which Council of Europe materials on gender equality were distributed.

- Finnish Presidency (November 2018-May 2019)

32. Henna Kosonen, representing Finland, outlined the three priorities during the [Finnish Presidency](#): strengthening the system of human rights and law in Europe; support for equality and women's rights; and openness and inclusion with a focus on young people and the prevention of radicalisation. Apart from the CSW side event on sexism and violence against women in parliaments, many events will take place in Helsinki, including a round table on Human Rights Defenders organised by the Commissioner for Human Rights (13-14 December 2018), a high-level conference on artificial intelligence, human rights and the rule of law (26-27 February 2019), an expert meeting on Roma issues (21-22 March 2019) and the GEC conference on gender stereotypes and sexism (28-29 March 2019).

- French Presidency (May-November 2019)

33. Alexis Rinckenbach (France) informed the members that gender equality and combating violence against women would be among the priorities of the French Presidency, in line with the priority given to these issues by the French President. France will also host the G7 and will promote the Istanbul Convention during the mandate. The monitoring mechanisms meeting being organised under the auspices of the French Presidency in May will be incorporated into the 15th GEC meeting. A major conference on the rights of the child, to which a representative of the GEC will be invited, will take place in November in Paris.

- *The GEC took note of the reports by the representatives of Croatia, Finland and France about the gender equality agenda during their respective chairs of the Committee of Ministers.*

## **X. Proposals for the agenda of the next meeting**

34. The Secretariat proposed that the terms of reference of the GEC be discussed at the next meeting, which would allow time for inclusion of any amendments they wish to put forward for discussion and decision by the Committee of Ministers.

- *The GEC agreed to discuss its terms of reference for 2020-2021 at its next meeting.*

35. Participants made the following proposals for thematic discussions: Iceland: sexist hate speech; artificial intelligence, big data and algorithms; Finland: report of the 7th international Roma women's conference; Belgium: sexual violence in intimate relationships of young people; Serbia: gender equality and women with disabilities; gender equality backlash; Cyprus: women and peace and security (UN Security Council Resolution 1325); gender mainstreaming.

- *The GEC instructed the GEC members to send further proposals for thematic discussions and items for the agenda to the Secretariat by Friday 14 December 2018; and agreed that the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson would decide on the topics for the next meeting's thematic discussions.*

**XI. Dates of forthcoming meetings**

36. The Chair announced the proposed dates of the future GEC meetings, which were agreed by the GEC.

- *The GEC agreed on the dates of its next meetings: 15th meeting, 22-23-24 May 2019; 16th meeting, 13-14-15 November 2019.*

**XII. Adoption of the abridged report of the 14th GEC meeting (5-7 December 2018)**

- *The GEC adopted the abridged report of the 14th GEC meeting (5-7 December 2018) and agreed to transmit it to the Committee of Ministers (GEC (2018) Abridged Report).*

## Appendix I

### I. Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda

*Draft Agenda*

*GEC(2018)OJ2 Revised*

### II. Election of Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson (January to December 2019)

### III. Exchange with Ambassador Keith McBean, Permanent Representative of Ireland to the Council of Europe, Chair of the Rapporteur Group on Human Rights

### IV. Council of Europe Transversal Programme on Gender Equality

#### 1. Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023

- a. **Draft report of the conference “Gender Equality: Paving the Way”** to launch the Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023 (Copenhagen, 3-4 May 2018)

*GEC(2018)4*

- b. **Draft 2018 annual report on the implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy**

*GEC(2018)5*

*Activities and measures in member states towards the achievement of the objectives of the Gender Equality Strategy*

*GEC(2018)6*

- c. **Conference “Tackling Gender Stereotypes and Sexism”** (*provisional title*) (Helsinki, 28-29 March 2019)

*Draft Programme*

*GEC(2018)7*

*Draft Concept Paper*

*GEC(2018)8*

- d. **Objective 1 – Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism**

- Preparation of a draft Committee of Ministers recommendation to prevent and combat sexism

*Report of the 4th meeting of the Drafting Committee preparing a draft Committee of Ministers recommendation to prevent and combat sexism (Strasbourg, 20-21 September 2018)*

*GEC(2018)9*

*Draft Committee of Ministers recommendation to prevent and combat sexism*

*GEC(2018)10*

- Implementation of Recommendation (2013)1 on gender equality and media – joint follow-up by the Gender Equality Commission and the Steering Committee on Media and Information Society (CDMSI)

*Draft questionnaire*

**e. Objective 2 - Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence**

- Presentation by Liri Kopaçi-Di Michele, Executive Secretary of the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO) about signatures and ratifications of the Istanbul Convention and other developments/activities in the area of violence against women

*Oral presentation*

- Meeting of international and regional mechanisms to combat violence against women (Strasbourg, 23-24 May 2019)

*Draft programme and concept note*

*GEC(2018)11*

- Presentation of co-operation activities in the area of violence against women

*Oral presentation*

**f. Objective 3 - Ensure the equal access of women to justice**

- Partnership for Good Governance project: "Strengthening access to justice for women victims of violence": Regional Conference on Women's Access to Justice and the Istanbul Convention (Strasbourg, 18-19 October 2018)

*Oral Presentation*

*Factsheet on Women's Access to Justice: A Guide for Legal Practitioners*

*Publication*

**g. Objective 4 - Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making**

- World Forum for Democracy 2018 "Gender Equality: Whose Battle?" (Strasbourg, 19-21 November 2018)

*Oral presentation*

**h. Objective 5 - Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls**

*Preliminary draft factsheet on the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls*

*GEC(2018)12*

**i. Objective 6 - Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures**

- Gender mainstreaming in Council of Europe activities

*Oral presentation*

**V. Thematic discussions:**

- i. GenMob mobile phone tool – Margarida Queirós (Portugal)
- ii. Work with perpetrators of violence against women – Sopo Japaridze (Georgia) and Laurence Bouquet (Luxembourg) and Nadine Conrardy (Luxembourg Red Cross)
- iii. Gender-responsive budgeting – Lilia Pascal (Republic of Moldova) and Ljiljana Loncar (Serbia)

**VI. Co-operation with other Council of Europe sectors**

- Exchange with Gianluca Esposito, Executive Secretary of Group of States against Corruption (GRECO)
- Exchange with Sonia Sirtori-Milner, Head of the Secretariat to the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

**VII. Co-operation with international/regional organisations**

- Exchange with Dalia Leinarte, Chairperson, United Nations Committee on the elimination of discrimination against women (CEDAW)
- Council of the European Union - gender equality agenda:
  - o Austrian Presidency (July-December 2018)
  - o Romanian Presidency (January-June 2019)

**VIII. Events attended by GEC members, experts and the Secretariat**

*GEC(2018)13*

**IX. Current and future activities at national level and at international level**

- Council of Europe gender equality agenda:
  - o Croatian Presidency (May-November 2018)
  - o Finnish Presidency (November 2018-May 2019)
  - o French Presidency (May-November 2019)

**X. Other business**

**XI. Proposals for the agenda of the next meeting**

## **XII. Dates of forthcoming meetings**

- *Conference “Tackling Gender Stereotypes and Sexism” (provisional title)  
Helsinki, 28-29 March 2019*
- *15th GEC meeting, Strasbourg, 22-23-24 May 2019 (dates tbc)*
- *16th GEC meeting, Strasbourg 13-14-15 November (dates tbc)*

## **XIII. Adoption of the abridged report of the 14th GEC meeting (5-7 December 2018)**

<h3><b>Calendar of forthcoming events and meetings</b></h3>
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- |   |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>63rd Commission on the Status of Women, New York, 11-22 March 2019</i></li> <li>- <i>Conference “Tackling Gender Stereotypes and Sexism” (provisional title),<br/>Helsinki, 28-29 March 2019</i></li> <li>- <i>15th GEC meeting, Strasbourg, 22-23-24 May 2019 (dates tbc)</i></li> <li>- <i>Meeting of international and regional mechanisms to combat violence against<br/>women, Strasbourg, 23-24 May 2019</i></li> <li>- <i>16th GEC meeting, Strasbourg 13-14-15 November 2019 (dates tbc)</i></li> </ul> |
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## **Appendix II**

### **Dissenting opinion of the Russian Federation on the draft Committee of Ministers Recommendation to prevent and combat sexism**

While the Russian Federation supports main ideas reflected in the recommendation, there are still some of the provisions which are of deep concern and require additional elaboration and concrete amendments.

The Russian delegation actively supported the elaboration of the recommendation hoping to see it as an efficient Council of Europe instrument in the field of combating sexism.

Unfortunately the final text of its Draft contains some points that the Russian delegation cannot agree with:

1. The Russian delegation cannot agree with the presence in the text of the Recommendation of the word “gender”, where it replaces the agreed concept of “sex” in the meaning of being male or female. It is a principal point for the Russian delegation. As the concept of “gender”, which is much wider than the concept of “sex”, does not exist in the legal system of the Russian Federation this Recommendation will contravene its national legislation.
2. The Russian delegation sticks to the opinion that the recommendation shouldn't include mentioning of intersex and trans persons as this goes beyond the scope of the Recommendation. It should be stressed that the terms of reference of GEC do not include these categories of people. It should also be reminded that the Council of Europe has already elaborated a special document aimed at increasing protection of LGBT persons - the Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to member states on measures to combat discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity (CM/Rec(2010)5).
3. The Russian delegation still keeps the opinion that in the 1st paragraph of Chapter “Intersectionality, Situational Vulnerabilities and Aggravating Circumstances” we should use the agreed wording of Article 14 of the European Convention on Human Rights.

## Appendix III

**Representatives/Représentant-e-s****Albania/Albanie**

Etleva SHESHI

**Andorra/Andorre**

Mireia PORRAS GARCIA

**Azerbaijan/Azerbaïdjan**

Ulfat MACHANOV

**Belgium/Belgique**

Alexandra ADRIAENSSENS

**Bosnia and Herzegovina/Bosnie-Herzégovine**

Samra FILIPOVIĆ HADŽIABDIĆ

**Bulgaria/Bulgarie**

Irina IVANOVA

**Croatia/Croatie**

Maja SPORIS

**Cyprus/Chypre**

Andri SAVVA

**Czech Republic/République Tchèque**

Radan SAFARIK

**Denmark/Danemark**

Kira APPEL

**Estonia/Estonie**

Käthlin SANDER

**Finland/Finlande**

Henna KOSONEN

**France**

Alexis RINCKENBACH

**Georgia/Géorgie**

Sopio JAPARIDZE

**Germany/Allemagne**

Marcel ARNDT

**Greece/Grèce**

Georgia PAPAGEORGIOU

**Hungary / Hongrie**

Rita NAGYLAKI

**Iceland/Islande**

Magnea MARINOSDOTTIR

**Ireland/Irlande**

AnnMarie QUARRY

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Michele PALMA

**Latvia/Lettonie**

Agnese GAILE

**Lithuania/Lituanie**

Aurelija MINEIKAITE

**Luxembourg**

Ralph KASS

**Malta/Malte**

Stephanie MAGRO GAZZANO

**Republic of Moldova/République de Moldova**

Lilia PASCAL

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Corinne MAGAIL-BOURDAS

**Netherlands/Pays-Bas**

Sjoerd WARMERDAM

**Norway/Norvège**

Anette HOEL

**Poland/Pologne**

Wiesława KOSTRZEWA-ZORBAS

**Portugal**

Andreia LOURENÇO MARQUES

**Romania/Roumanie**

Andreea PASCU

**Russian Federation/Fédération de Russie**

Olga OPANASENKO

**Serbia/Serbie**

Ljiljana LONCAR

**Slovenia/Slovénie**

Sara SLANA

**Spain/Espagne**

Ana ARRILLAGA ALDAMA

**Sweden/Suède**

Karin BENGTON

**Switzerland/Suisse**

Charlotte GABRIEL

**“The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”/« L'ex-République yougoslave de Macédoine »**

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**Ukraine**

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**United Kingdom/Royaume-Uni**Charles RAMSDEN (Chair/Président)

\* \* \*

**PERMANENT OBSERVERS/OBSERVATEURS****PERMANENTS****Holy See/Saint Siège**

Anne-Julie KERHUEL

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Lorena ALVARADO QUEZADA

\* \* \*

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Najah RHARDISSE

**Tunisia/Tunisie**

Nahed RAJHI

\* \* \*

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