

# **Committee of the Parties**



## **Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention)**

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### **Report of the 9<sup>th</sup> meeting**

**Strasbourg, 15 December 2020**

IC-CP/Inf(2020)RAP9

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## **Agenda item 1. Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda**

1. The Committee of the Parties to the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (hereinafter referred to respectively as “the Committee” and “the Convention”) held its 9<sup>th</sup> meeting on 15 December 2020 in Strasbourg, by virtual means. It adopted the draft agenda of the meeting as it appears in document IC-CP(2020)OJ9 and which is set out in Appendix I. The list of participants is set out in Appendix II.

## **Agenda item 2. Administrative and budgetary Information**

2. The Executive Secretary informed the Committee about the latest developments regarding staff changes in the Secretariat. A new administrator, Elif Sariaydin, had joined the Secretariat in June 2020, while a long-serving administrator, Christina Olsen, had been promoted to new functions.

## **Agenda item 3. State of signatures and ratifications of the Istanbul Convention**

- a) Action taken by member States of the Council of Europe towards ratification of the Istanbul Convention

The Executive Secretary informed the Committee of promising developments regarding steps taken towards ratification by Liechtenstein. Moreover, Ambassador Jānis Kārklīņš, Permanent Representative of Latvia to the Council of Europe, shared information regarding the ratification process under way. In addition, the Executive Secretary shared information regarding the amendments to the Constitution adopted by the National Assembly of Kosovo\* in September 2020 that gives direct effect to the Istanbul Convention.

- b) Action taken by the European Union towards signature and ratification of the Istanbul Convention

The Chair invited the Deputy Head of the EU Delegation to take the floor, who reiterated the EU's commitment to combating violence against women and domestic violence of which EU accession to the Istanbul Convention was a central element. The legal opinion requested from the European Court of Justice expected for spring 2021 will inform the next steps in this process. In addition, she informed the Committee that a package of legislation on gender-based violence in line with the scope of the Istanbul Convention will be tabled, which is to contribute to the EU's implementation of this Convention should its accession have been concluded.

- c) Declarations and reservations

The Executive Secretary informed the Committee that over the past months, several state parties had been asked by the Treaty Office regarding their intention to renew their reservations to the Istanbul Convention, which most did. She thanked those state parties which provided an explanation to GREVIO as to the grounds that justify the renewal of or request for a reservation in conformity with Article 79 paragraph 3 of the Istanbul Convention, which will be transmitted to GREVIO.

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\*\*\*“All references to Kosovo, whether the territory, institutions or population, in this text shall be understood in full compliance with United Nation's Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo”

#### **Agenda item 4. Supervising the implementation of recommendations issued by the Committee of the Parties:**

3. The Chair recalled that the Rules of Procedure task the Committee of the Parties with the supervision of the implementation of its recommendations addressed to states parties. In order to give meaning to this monitoring role and define its terms, the Bureau proposed a supervisory framework and a standardised reporting form. The proposed framework aims to guide states parties and facilitate their reporting duties, while enhancing exchange among parties. The Chair underlined the urgent need to offer guidance to states parties whose reporting deadline was initially set at the end of January 2021.

4. Several delegations took the floor to express their support for a strong supervisory framework on the implementation of recommendations issued by the Committee of the Parties. Some delegations also shared their questions and concerns on issues such as the role of GREVIO members in this process, the involvement of civil society and NGOs, the use of working groups, the workload such a process entails for the Committee and its Secretariat as well as the publicity to be given to the different steps and documents that were to form part of the supervision process. In addition, the Committee discussed modifications to the proposed standardised reporting form.

5. In order to facilitate the reporting to the Committee on measures taken in implementation of the recommendations issued, the Committee decided to use the standardised reporting form with the modifications agreed on during the meeting, while offering its members the possibility to provide further comments in writing. The Committee also decided to continue its exchanges of views on the draft framework for supervising the implementation of the recommendations addressed to state parties with a view to adoption at its next meeting.

#### **Agenda item 5. Recommendations on the implementation of the Istanbul Convention by Andorra, Belgium, Malta and Spain:**

- **Andorra** [IC-CP(2020)7 prov]
- **Belgium** [IC-CP(2020)8 prov]
- **Malta** [IC-CP(2020)9 prov]
- **Spain** [IC-CP(2020)10 prov]

6. The Chair recalled the discussions held during the 4th meeting of the Committee of the Parties which took place in Strasbourg on 30 January 2018 on the adoption of Recommendations by the Committee of the Parties in light of GREVIO's reports and proposals/suggestions (IC-CP(2018)6). During that meeting, the Committee agreed to adopt a standard approach to recommendations in light of GREVIO's reports and proposals/suggestions, namely:

- a) to endorse GREVIO's report in its entirety and,
- b) to issue recommendations combined with a request to the state party concerned to report back after a period of three years with respect to those proposals/suggestions in the report which are either qualified by an "urge" or, as regards Chapters I and II, by a "strongly encourage".

7. In the exchange that ensued, the delegate of **Andorra** thanked GREVIO for the open discussion on the implementation of the Convention in Andorra and informed the Committee of several steps taken in response thereto, notably the creation of a co-ordinating body. The GREVIO evaluation report had also been translated into Catalan and transmitted not only to parliament but also to the press. The delegate of Belgium welcomed the publication of GREVIO's report on **Belgium** and drew attention to progress made in particular as regards the drafting of a new national action plan and data collection. Similarly, the delegate of **Malta** provided information regarding measures taken in implementing several of GREVIO's findings, such as the setting up of a specialist unit with law enforcement for victims of gender-based violence, and the drafting of a new action plan which was to include some of GREVIO's findings. The delegate of **Spain** praised GREVIO's assessment and informed the Committee that the Spanish authorities took note of all of the findings made, expressing their commitment to prevent and

combat violence against women and provided information about the forthcoming regulations and public policies currently in process in Spain for the treatment of all forms of violence against women, like the Draft Organic Law on the comprehensive guarantee of sexual freedom. The report had been translated in Spanish to ensure its dissemination among all stakeholders.

8. The Committee adopted the draft recommendations for Andorra, Belgium, Malta and Spain based on the standard approach agreed during the 4th meeting of the Committee of the Parties which took place in Strasbourg on 30 January 2018 on the adoption of Recommendations by the Committee of the Parties in light of GREVIO's reports and proposals/suggestions (IC-CP(2018)6).

#### **Agenda item 6. Proposals for future action**

9. The Chair recalled that in response to the challenges which the COVID 19 pandemic and spring lockdowns in 2020 presented to state parties to the Istanbul Convention, the Committee had issued in April 2020, jointly with the Gender Equality Commission, a call for submissions on information on national measures taken to implement this important convention. This information has been made available on a dedicated website of the Council of Europe under the name of [Women's Rights and the COVID 19 pandemic](#).

10. The information provided had now been analysed in the framework of work commissioned by the Secretariat in order to provide a contextualised report, which the Chair invited the Committee to take note of. This report, entitled "The prolonged pandemic and its impact on women: the Istanbul Convention as a tool to ensure transformative change" [IC-CP(2020)11 prov] sets out the role of the Istanbul Convention as a tool to ensure transformative change as the pandemic comes to an end. It also proposes concrete activities for the Committee, which it endorsed. These include the adoption of a declaration in view of the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the adoption of the Istanbul Convention in order to present the Istanbul Convention as a vital tool in building back better after the COVID-19 pandemic. They also included close interaction with GREVIO around post-pandemic efforts to prevent and combat violence against women and any other issues which challenge the full implementation of the Istanbul Convention (resources, scope of implementation of the Convention and the calling into question of the added value of this convention and/or its fundamental premises) and, lastly, the organisation of a one-day meeting in the fall of 2021 of all national co-ordinating bodies established under the Istanbul Convention, hosted by the Finnish authorities. The date for this first meeting of its kind was set at 14 October 2021 in Helsinki.

#### **Agenda item 7. Date of next meeting**

11. The Committee decided to hold its next meeting on 13 April 2021 in Strasbourg.

#### **Agenda item 8. Election of Bureau members**

12. In accordance with Rule 4 of its Rules of Procedure, the Committee declared

- Ms Nina NORDSTRÖM, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Representative of Finland, re-elected as Chair;
- Mr Breifne O'REILLY, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Representative of Ireland, re-elected as First Vice-Chair; and
- Ms Albana DAUTLLARI, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Representative of Albania, re-elected as Second Vice-Chair;

for a term of office of one year starting on 1 February 2021.

**Agenda item 9. Other business**

13. The Committee decided to postpone the designation of a Gender Equality Rapporteur to its next meeting. The Chair invited all members to consider serving in this function.

**Agenda item 10. Adoption of the list of decisions taken**

14. The Committee adopted the list of decisions as set out in document IC-CP/Inf(2020)LD9.

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## **Appendix I**

### **Agenda**

- 1. Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda**
- 2. Administrative and budgetary Information**
- 3. State of signatures and ratifications of the Istanbul Convention**
  - a) Action taken by member States of the Council of Europe towards ratification of the Istanbul Convention
  - b) Action taken by the European Union towards signature and ratification of the Istanbul Convention
  - c) Declarations and reservations
- 4. Supervising the implementation of recommendations issued by the Committee of the Parties:**
  - a) Draft framework for supervising the implementation of the recommendations addressed to state parties [IC-CP(2020)6 prov]
  - b) Draft reporting form on the implementation of the recommendations addressed to state parties [IC-CP(2020)12 prov]
- 5. Recommendations on the implementation of the Istanbul Convention by:**
  - **Andorra** [IC-CP(2020)7 prov]
  - **Belgium** [IC-CP(2020)8 prov]
  - **Malta** [IC-CP(2020)9 prov]
  - **Spain** [IC-CP(2020)10 prov]
- 6. Proposals for future action**
  - a) The prolonged pandemic and its impact on women: the Istanbul Convention as a tool to ensure transformative change, Report and proposals for future action [IC-CP(2020)11 prov]
- 7. Date of next meeting**
- 8. Election of Bureau members** [[Rules of procedure](#)]
- 9. Other business**
- 10. Adoption of the list of decisions taken**

## **Appendix II**

### **List of attendees**

#### **BUREAU**

Ms Nina NORDSTRÖM  
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary  
Permanent Representative of Finland, Chair

Mr Breifne O'REILLY  
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary  
Permanent Representative of Ireland  
First Vice-Chair; and

Ms Albana DAUTLLARI  
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary  
Permanent Representative of Albania  
Second Vice-Chair

#### **MEMBERS / MEMBRES**

##### **ALBANIA / ALBANIE**

Ms Albana DAUTLLARI  
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary  
Permanent Representative of Albania to the Council of Europe

Ms Merita XHAFAJ  
Adviser to the Minister of Youth and Social Welfare

Ms Sidita GJIPALI  
Deputy to the Permanent Representative of Albania to the Council of Europe

##### **ANDORRA / ANDORRE**

M. Joan FORNER ROVIRA  
Ambassadeur Extraordinaire et Plénipotentiaire  
Représentant Permanent de l'Andorre auprès du Conseil de l'Europe

Ms Mireia V. PORRAS GARCIA  
Cap d'Àrea de Polítiques d'Igualtat  
Ministeri d'Afers Socials, Habitatge i Joventut

Mme Geraldine SASPLUGAS REQUENA  
Représentante Permanente Adjointe de l'Andorre auprès du Conseil de l'Europe

##### **AUSTRIA / AUTRICHE**



Ms Marie Theres PRANTNER  
Austrian Federal Ministry of Education and Women's Affairs  
IV/4 – Violence against Women and women-specific legislation

Mr Andreas BILGERI  
Deputy to the Permanent Representative of Austria to the Council of Europe

Ms. Barbara ZELIKOVICS  
Austrian Federal Ministry of Education and Women's Affairs  
IV/4 – Violence against Women and women-specific legislation

## **BELGIUM**

Ms Marijke WEEWAUTERS  
Institut pour l'Egalité des femmes et des hommes

Mr Nicolas BELKACEMI  
Attaché  
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## **BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA / BOSNIE-HERZEGOVINE**

Ms Samra HADZIABDIC  
Director  
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Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees Bosnia and Herzegovina

Ms Tajma KAPIC  
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## **CROATIA / CROATIE**

Ms Sandra BATLAK  
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Mrs Tajana KRSTONOŠIĆ  
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Minister Plenipotentiary  
Deputy to the Permanent Representative of Croatia

## **CYPRUS**

Mr Kostas PSEVDIOTIS  
Deputy Permanent Representative

**DENMARK / DANEMARK**

Ms Rebekka BORMANN THORN  
Ministry of Justice of Denmark

Ms Helène FESTER  
Permanent Representation of Denmark  
To the Council of Europe

Mr Christian BRUSELIUS

**ESTONIA**

Ms Anne KRUUSEMENT  
Adviser  
Penal Law and Procedure Division  
Estonian Ministry of Justice

Ms Kerli TIIK  
Deputy to the Permanent Representative

**FINLAND / FINLANDE**

Ms Satu SISTONEN  
Legal Counsellor  
Unit for Human Rights Courts and Conventions  
Legal Service  
Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland

Ms Taina RISKI  
The Secretary General of our Coordination Body (NAPE)

Mr Toni SANDELL

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Mme Marie FONTANEL  
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Représentante Permanente de la France auprès du Conseil de l'Europe

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M. Léopold STEFANINI  
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## **GEORGIA / GÉORGIE**

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Administration of Government of Georgia

## **GERMANY / ALLEMAGNE**

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Protection of Women from Violence, Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth.

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## **GREECE / GRÈCE**

Ms Angeliki Papazoglou  
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General secretariat for Family Policy and Gender Equality  
Ministry of Labour and Social Policy

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Ms. Hildur Sunna Pálmadóttir  
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Ms Urður Ásta EIRIKSDOTTIR

## **IRELAND / IRLANDE**

Mr Breifne O'REILLY  
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Mme Cordialina COPPOLA

## **LUXEMBOURG**

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**MALTA / MALTE**

Ms Renee Laiviera  
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**Ms Katya Unah**

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Senior policy advisor  
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Mr Loek TEN HAGEN  
Deputy Permanent Representative

**NORTH MACEDONIA**

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*Chargé d'Affaires a.i.*  
Deputy Permanent Representative of North Macedonia to the Council of Europe

Ms Jasmin.Hasanovikj

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## **NORWAY / NORVEGE**

Ms Hilde Marit KNOTTEN  
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Ms Iwona Rzymowska  
Social Welfare and Integration Department  
Ministry of Family and Social Policy

Ms Joanna Maciejewska  
International Co-operation Department  
Ministry of Family and Social Policy

Ms Agnieszka.Matysek  
Ministry of Family and Social Policy

## **PORTUGAL**

Ms Marta SILVA  
Head of the Domestic Violence / Gender Violence Unit at the Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality of Portugal

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Ministry of Employment

Ms Karin BENGTON  
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Division for Gender Equality)

Ms Anna COLLINS-FALK  
International Coordinator  
Swedish Gender Equality Agency

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Deputy to the Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the Council of Europe

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Ms Luzia Siegrist  
Ms Nesrine Ghulam

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Ms Hatice KARAKUŞ  
Assistant expert  
Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services

Mr Onur DİNÇER  
Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services

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## **PARTICIPANTS**

### **STATES WHICH HAVE SIGNED BUT THE BUT NOT YET RATIFIED THE CONVENTION**

#### **ARMENIA**

Ms Lena Terzikyan  
Représentante Permanente Adjointe de l'Arménie  
Au Conseil de l'Europe

#### **BULGARIA/BULGARIE**

#### **CZECH REPUBLIC/RÉPUBLIQUE TCHÈQUE**

Mr Jan ŠKERŮ  
Deputy to the Permanent Representative

#### **HUNGARY/HONGRIE**

#### **LATVIA/LETTONIE**

Jānis Kārkliņš  
Ambassador  
Permanent Mission of Latvia to the Council of Europe

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#### **LITHUANIA/LITUANIE**

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#### **SLOVAK REPUBLIC/RÉPUBLIQUE SLOVAQUE**

#### **UNITED KINGDOM/ROYAUME-UNI**

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### **OTHER COUNCIL OF EUROPE BODIES / AUTRES INSTANCES DU CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE**

#### **European Union / Union européenne**

Ms Valeria STURLA  
Delegation of the European Union to the Council of Europe

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

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**Secretariat of the monitoring mechanism of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence / Secrétariat du mécanisme de suivi de la Convention du Conseil de l'Europe sur la prévention et la lutte contre la violence à l'égard des femmes et la violence domestique**

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Head of the Violence against Women Division / Cheffe de la Division Violence à l'égard des femmes

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