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**COMMITTEE OF THE PARTIES
COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONVENTION ON ACTION AGAINST
TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS**

27th meeting of the Committee of the Parties

(Strasbourg, 4 December 2020)

MEETING REPORT

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Agenda item 1: Opening of the meeting

1. The Committee of the Parties to the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (hereinafter referred to respectively as "the Committee" and "the Convention") held its 27th meeting on 4 December 2020 in Strasbourg. Due to the social distancing measures and travel restrictions in the context of the COVID-19 outbreak, the meeting was a hybrid event, with 47 participants being physically present and 53 joining by conference call. La Strada International followed the meeting online as an observer, in accordance with Rule 2(c) of the Committee's Rules of Procedure.

Agenda item 2: Adoption of the draft agenda

2. The Chair invited the Committee to adopt the draft agenda of the meeting. The agenda, as adopted by the Committee, is set out in Appendix I. The list of participants is set out in Appendix II.

Agenda item 3: Exchange of views with the President of GRETA

3. The Chair invited Mr Davor Derenčinović, President of the Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA), to take the floor for the periodic exchange of views with the Committee of the Parties.

4. The President of GRETA began by noting that the four-year strategic framework recently announced by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe includes the fight against human trafficking among the priorities for the Organisation's longer-term mission. He informed the Committee of the recently organised meeting of National Anti-Trafficking Co-ordinators and Rapporteurs, with participants from 50 countries, which focused on the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic to anti-trafficking responses, as well as solutions and promising practices

5. Mr Derenčinović indicated that since the last exchange with the Committee, GRETA had held three hybrid plenary meetings, adopting six final and two draft reports. GRETA had managed to carry out an evaluation visit to Malta at the end of September 2020, but the plans made for several other visits had failed due to last-minute changes in the sanitary and travel restrictions related to the pandemic. Mindful of the importance of proceeding with the third evaluation of the United Kingdom without further delay, GRETA had held a series of online meetings with stakeholders from 28 September to 5 October 2020. GRETA had rescheduled its calendar of visits, postponing the rest of the evaluations envisaged for 2020 to 2021.

6. Further, the President of GRETA informed the Committee of the Parties that in the course of 2020, GRETA had produced three documents which can assist State Parties in meeting their obligations under the Convention. The first one was a Guidance Note on the entitlement of victims of trafficking, and persons at risk of being trafficked, to international protection. GRETA had also prepared a Compendium of good practices in addressing trafficking in human beings for the purpose of labour exploitation, and a Guidance Note on combating trafficking in human beings for the purpose of labour exploitation. The latter two documents are related to the implementation of the Roadmap of the Secretary General on strengthening action against trafficking in human beings for the purposes of labour exploitation (see paragraphs 24-27).

7. Mr Derenčinović closed by stating that this was the last meeting of the Committee of the Parties which he attended in his role of President of GRETA, and expressed his gratitude to the Committee of the Parties and particularly to the Chair, Ambassador Călugăru, for supporting GRETA. Mr Derenčinović's statement is reproduced in full in Appendix III.

8. The Chair thanked Mr Derenčinović for the informative account of GRETA's activities and opened the floor to members and participants of the Committee for questions or comments concerning GRETA's work.

9. In response to a question by the Chair about the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic to the fight against trafficking in human beings, Mr Derenčinović noted that there had been delays in the identification of victims, as well as the provision of assistance. Confinement conditions and lockdown in many countries have worsened the victims' position and living conditions. Due to prioritisation, certain activities of the police and labour inspections have been suspended. Children have been increasingly at risk of being subjected to sexual exploitation through online platforms.

10. Ms Elena Arzumanyan of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia, who joined the meeting online, noted that trafficking in human beings remained a priority for the Armenian Government. She noted that the Government continued to undertake measures to ensure the continuity of the fight against trafficking even in emergency situations, such as the armed conflict around Nagorno-Karabakh, and called on GRETA to monitor the situation in the region closely. Ms Arzumanyan's statement is reproduced in full in Appendix IV.

11. Mr Andrei Ursu, Deputy to the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Moldova, thanked the President of GRETA for his work and asked him to share his views on the co-operation between GRETA and the Lanzarote Committee. Mr Derenčinović noted the existing overlap between child sexual abuse and human trafficking and the need for GRETA and the Lanzarote Committee to continue to exchange on this issue.

12. Mr Andreas Bilgeri, Deputy to the Permanent Representative of Austria, also thanked the President of GRETA for his involvement in the fight against trafficking in human beings in the past eight years. He asked him to share his views about future co-operation with Belarus, the only Party to the Convention which is not a Council of Europe member State, as well as with Tunisia, which had been invited by the Committee of Ministers to accede to the Convention. Mr Derenčinović drew a parallel with the Cybercrime (Budapest) Convention, which has been ratified by many non-Council of Europe states, and noted the added value of the Council of Europe Anti-Trafficking Convention compared to the Palermo Protocol, expressing the hope that more countries will join the Convention.

13. The Chair thanked Mr Derenčinović for his commitment and contribution to the promotion of the standards of the Convention.

Agenda item 4: Examination of GRETA's reports on the implementation of the Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings by Albania, Croatia and the Republic of Moldova (third evaluation round) and adoption of recommendations in respect of these Parties

14. The Vice-Chair of the Committee, Ambassador Meuwly, noted that GRETA had adopted three more final reports under the third evaluation round of implementation of the Convention, concerning Albania, Croatia and the Republic of Moldova. These reports had been sent to the national authorities for final comments and, following the receipt of the comments, two of the reports have been made public (concerning Croatia and the Republic of Moldova), while the third one (on Albania) was expected to be published soon. The three draft recommendations based on these reports had been made available to the Committee on 11 September 2020 and members of the Committee had been invited to send any proposals for amendments by 30 November 2020. The Secretariat had not received any proposals for amendments to the draft recommendations in advance of this meeting. The Vice-Chair noted that the three draft recommendations followed the model of recommendations under the third evaluation round, setting a two-year deadline for informing the Committee of the Parties of the measures taken.

4.1 Draft recommendation to be adopted in respect of Albania

15. The Vice-Chair invited the Committee to consider the draft recommendation concerning Albania.

16. Ambassador Albana Dautllari, Permanent Representative of Albania, thanked Mr Derenčinović for his work in his capacity as President of GRETA and explained that the delays in the publication of the report were due to the change in the contact person on the side of Albanian authorities. She welcomed the continued dialogue between GRETA and the Albanian authorities and noted that Albania had made progress and was committed to translating the recommendations into future action. Ambassador Dautllari's statement is reproduced in full in Appendix V.

17. The Committee adopted the recommendation in respect of Albania and decided to request that the Albanian Government inform it of measures taken to comply with this recommendation by 4 December 2022.

4.2 Draft recommendation to be adopted in respect of Croatia

18. The Vice-Chair invited the Committee to consider the draft recommendation concerning Croatia.

19. Ms Narcisa Bećirević, Deputy to the Permanent Representative of Croatia, thanked Mr Derenčinović for his efforts as President of GRETA. She stated that the Croatian authorities had already provided comments to GRETA's report and did not have any proposals for amending the draft recommendation.

20. The Committee adopted the recommendation in respect of Croatia and decided to request that the Croatian Government inform it of measures taken to comply with this recommendation by 4 December 2022.

4.3 Draft recommendation to be adopted in respect of the Republic of Moldova

21. The Vice-Chair invited the Committee to consider the draft recommendation concerning the Republic of Moldova.

22. Mr Andrei Ursu, Deputy to the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Moldova, welcomed the dialogue with GRETA in the preparation of the third round report, and noted that the report and the Committee's recommendations were important for guiding the future work on fighting trafficking in human beings.

23. The Committee adopted the recommendation in respect of the Republic of Moldova and decided to request that the Moldovan Government inform it of measures taken to comply with this recommendation by 4 December 2022.

Agenda Item 5 – Implementation of the Secretary General's Roadmap on strengthening action against trafficking in human beings for the purpose of labour exploitation

24. The Chair recalled that in November 2019, the Council of Europe Secretary General had announced a Roadmap on strengthening action against trafficking in human beings for the purpose of labour exploitation. At the end of October 2020, the Secretary General had reported to the Ministers' Deputies on the interim progress in the implementation of this Roadmap. As part of the implementation of the Roadmap, GRETA had prepared two documents: a Compendium of good practices, and a Guidance Note on preventing and combating trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation. The Chair invited the Executive Secretary to present these documents and to inform the Committee of the Parties of other work planned in relation to the implementation of the Roadmap.

25. The Executive Secretary noted that the Guidance Note covered a range of issues, including the concept of “exploitation” within the criminalisation of human trafficking, the role of labour inspections, targeted prevention for at-risk groups, the identification of victims, and their access to assistance and effective remedies. Particular attention was paid to measures to discourage demand, including through public-private partnerships, public procurement and supply chain reporting requirements. Further, guidance was provided on how to build criminal cases of trafficking for labour exploitation. A synopsis of recommended actions appeared at the end of the Guidance Note.

26. The Chair welcomed GRETA’s investment in promoting better understanding of the ways to prevent and combat trafficking for labour exploitation, and opened the floor for questions or comments. Mr Andrei Ursu, Deputy to the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Moldova, welcomed the efforts of GRETA and the Secretariat and stated that the Guidance Note demonstrated the need to supplement the existing legally binding instruments (in particular the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings) with a Committee of Ministers recommendation to all member states.

27. The Committee of the Parties agreed to propose to the Committee of Ministers that the Guidance Note be put on the agenda of the GR-H meeting in February 2021, with a view to deciding on the modalities for the preparation of a draft Committee of Ministers recommendation.

Agenda item 6: Opinion on the draft resolution on financial arrangements for the participation of non-member States in the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings

28. The Chair recalled that the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings is open to accession by non-member States of the Council of Europe, upon invitation by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe and by unanimous vote of the representatives of the Parties entitled to sit on the Committee of Ministers. The Convention does not contain specific provisions concerning the financial contribution of non-member States acceding to it, and therefore the Resolutions adopted by the Committee of Ministers concerning the financial arrangements for the participation of non-member States in Council of Europe conventions (CM/Res(2015)1 and CM/Res(2020)6) cannot be applied to this Convention. She noted that the monitoring mechanism of the Convention generates costs for the Organisation, notably in connection with the holding of the meetings of the Committee of the Parties and the periodic evaluations by GRETA, which involve country visits.

29. The Chair recalled that the Rapporteur Group on Programme, Budget and Administration (GR-PBA) has been asked to examine the possible adoption of a “general” resolution applicable to all Council of Europe conventions not containing a clause on the financial participation of non-member States, but this might take some time, and in the meantime, it is important to have a resolution applying to the Anti-Trafficking Convention, before any new countries accede to it. With this in mind, the Chair invited the Committee to consider a draft Opinion on a draft Resolution on financial arrangements for the participation of non-member States in the Convention, which is very similar to Resolution CM/Res(2019)3 on financial arrangements for the participation of non-member States in the Istanbul Convention, adopted by the Ministers’ Deputies in May 2019. The draft Resolution indicates that the commitment by a non-member State to provide an annual financial contribution would be set out in the Committee of Ministers’ decision to invite the State to accede to the Convention. Belarus, which is already a party to the Convention, could be encouraged to contribute on a voluntary basis.

30. Mr Andrei Ursu, Deputy to the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Moldova, spoke in favour of the draft Opinion and stated that it would ensure synchronisation with the Istanbul Convention mechanism.

31. The Committee approved the draft Opinion on a draft Resolution on financial arrangements for the participation of non-member States in the Convention (see Appendix VI).

Agenda item 7: Government reports submitted in reply to Committee of the Parties recommendations

32. The Chair noted that, since the previous meeting of the Committee, the governments of Estonia (as part of the first evaluation round of the Convention) and Andorra, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Lithuania and Switzerland (as part of the second evaluation round) had submitted reports in response to recommendations issued by the Committee of the Parties. At its last plenary meeting, in November, GRETA had examined these seven reports and the extent to which they address the main proposals for action contained in GRETA's reports, which provided the basis for the Committee of the Parties' recommendations.

33. The Chair invited the representatives of the countries concerned to take the floor concerning their authorities' replies to the Committee of the Parties' recommendations and the President of GRETA to share GRETA's assessment after each intervention by a national representative.

7.1. Estonia

34. Ms Anu Leps from the Ministry of Justice of Estonia, who joined the meeting online, highlighted two major improvements related to the recommendations, namely, the criminalisation of buying sex from victims of trafficking, and the amendment of definition of trafficking in human beings in the Penal Code. She noted that Estonia was in the process of preparing a new national strategy on combating violence, which would cover trafficking in human beings, and referred to the recently issued guidelines to the media on how to report on human trafficking cases.

35. GRETA's President noted that the report submitted by the Estonian authorities was quite detailed and informative. According to it, a great deal of training activities had taken place in the last two years, including multi-disciplinary training and training for judges. Further, a national victim support hotline was created in 2019, and the regulations of private recruitment and temporary work agencies were revised and their monitoring strengthened. As regards children, the opening of three children's houses (following the "Barnahus" model) was another welcome development. However, while the Penal Code had been amended in 2019, the component of "action" was still not part of the national definition of trafficking in human beings. Further, there was still no dedicated national action plan or strategy for combating human trafficking, and there was no indication that a formalised national referral mechanism had been set up. No concrete progress had been made on the issues of compensation and the non-punishment provision.

7.2. Andorra

36. Ambassador Joan Forner Rovira, Permanent Representative of Andorra, noted that there had been no cases of human trafficking in Andorra. Nevertheless, he stressed that the national authorities had taken steps in the area of capacity building and had set up a working group to reflect on legislative and policy measures. He noted that there had been an error in the translation of the authorities' reply and the intention was to work on a strategic orientation document on trafficking rather than a specific action plan and to include as well a section on combating trafficking in human beings in the national action plan on children and adolescents, currently being drafted by the authorities.

37. The President of GRETA noted the awareness raising and training activities organised annually on the occasion of the World Anti-trafficking Day, 30 July, as well as the setting of a working group. He stressed that legislative measures remained to be taken in respect of the recommendation to transcribe all the purposes of trafficking set out in the Convention in domestic law, in particular trafficking for the purpose of forced labour or services.

7.3 Finland

38. Ms Satu Sistonen from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland, who joined the meeting online, highlighted several points made in the Finnish Government's report, in particular the appointment of a co-ordinator of action against trafficking in human beings and the setting up of an inter-administrative working group tasked with drafting a national action plan against trafficking. Further, a high-level steering group had been set up to oversee the work of the working group. Another inter-administrative working group was drafting new legislation on the assistance to victims of trafficking. Furthermore, a national network of trafficking specialists has been set up by the Police. The statement of Ms Sistonen is reproduced in full in Appendix VII.

39. The President of GRETA noted that the report submitted by the Finnish authorities referred to both accomplished and planned activities. A number of the recommendations would reportedly be addressed as part of the new action plan. When it comes to the recommendations related to the prevention of child trafficking, the report referred to an updated private accommodation model for unaccompanied children, as well as an updated initial health check model. Further, the Immigration Service was reportedly finalising the drafting of guidelines for reception centres on assisting victims of trafficking. The creation of a National Referral Mechanism was also planned as part of the new national action plan.

7.4 Germany

40. In the absence of comments from the representatives of Germany, the President of GRETA stated that the report submitted by the German Government was detailed and informative, consisting of a part prepared by the Federal Government and another part with submissions by federal states. The three federal working groups (on trafficking, trafficking for labour exploitation, and combating sexual violence and exploitation of children) had continued their work and have also had a joint forum. A lot of work has been carried out in the area of combating labour exploitation, including as part of the National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights. However, Germany still did not have a national action plan against human trafficking. New legislation had been adopted to combat unlawful employment and benefit fraud, which gives labour inspectors powers to conduct investigations in the area of human trafficking, and additional training had been provided to labour inspectors. Combating child trafficking had been another priority and the actions reported by the German authorities addressed the recommendations made. Further, to address the specific needs of male victims, helplines and online counselling for men had been introduced. The Crime Victims Compensation Act had been amended in 2019, removing the restrictions based on the victims' residence status.

7.5 Hungary

41. Mr Áron Tési from the Ministry of the Interior of Hungary, who joined the meeting online, noted that the recommendations of the Committee had served as a basis for the new strategy adopted earlier in the year. Despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Hungarian authorities had continued with training and other activities, implementing two projects, and opening a new shelter for victims of trafficking operated by the NGO Hungarian Baptist Aid. In 2020, Hungary had adopted a set of legislative amendments based on GRETA's recommendations, which introduced protection measures for all victims of trafficking under the age of 18. Moreover, changes had been made to the Criminal Code, criminalising the knowing use of services of victims of trafficking. The statement of Mr Tési is reproduced in full in Appendix VIII.

42. The President of GRETA noted that the Hungarian authorities' report was detailed and provided information on a number of legislative developments. On data collection, the authorities reported that the EKAT data base was being used by all bodies entitled to identify victims of trafficking, including NGOs. Training activities had been conducted, in particular for immigration and asylum authorities, as well as for child protection professionals. A new form of victim support had been established in 2020, the so-called crisis intervention home. Legislative amendments made in 2020 made it clear that persons under the age of 18 offering sexual services

are victims of prostitution and deserve protection in this regard. However, there was no indication of steps to improve the identification of victims of trafficking among asylum seekers and irregular migrants.

7.6 Lithuania

43. Ms Sonata Mickutė from the Ministry of the Interior of Lithuania, who joined the meeting online, stated that GRETA's recommendations had been reflected in the new national action plan for the fight against human trafficking for the period 2020-2022. The implementation of the previous action plan had undergone an independent evaluation. Moreover, a network of police officers had been established, and an agreement on victim assistance had been signed with almost all municipalities. The statement of Ms Mickutė is reproduced in full in Appendix IX.

44. The President of GRETA welcomed the increase in the funding provided to NGOs for anti-trafficking activities, as well as the adoption of the new national action plan. The Lithuanian authorities' report referred to a number of training activities to address trafficking for labour exploitation, and it was positive to note that training had also been provided to judges. A pilot expert group on preventing trafficking for forced labour had been set up in 2020. However, the procedure for granting the recovery and reflection period remained to be reviewed. Further, the state compensation scheme had not been changed, but a draft amendment to the relevant law was reportedly in preparation.

7.7 Switzerland

45. Ms Anna Begemann, Deputy to the Permanent Representative of Switzerland, noted that Switzerland had implemented an awareness-raising campaign for labour inspectors with a view to combating labour exploitation, and had introduced a new instrument of reference for cantons concerning the identification of victims, which had been incorporated into training activities. In the coming months, the authorities will elaborate an instrument dealing with the identification of victims of trafficking who have been identified in Switzerland but the trafficking of whom started abroad. An evaluation of the national action plan was expected to take place in the first half of 2021 and its outcome would serve as a guide for future measures. The statement of Ms Begemann is reproduced in full in Appendix X.

46. The President of GRETA noted that progress had been made on combating trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation, through awareness raising and training. There also appeared to have been progress towards formalising the victim identification procedure across Switzerland. The federal police had published new trafficking indicators, including specific indicators for children. A guide on the uniform application of federal law instruments on human trafficking in the cantons was due to be published in 2021. GRETA's President referred to a recent communication from the Swiss NGO Platform against Trafficking, which concerned in particular one of the recommendations: "to ensure that all victims, including asylum seekers and persons exploited abroad but identified in Switzerland, benefit from assistance measures in accordance with Article 12, paragraph 1, of the Convention". According to this communication, victims of trafficking were treated as all other asylum seekers and did not benefit from specialised support and assistance, in particular appropriate accommodation and counselling. Concerns were also raised about the procedure for interviewing presumed victims of trafficking by the State Secretariat of Migration, without any input from a specialised victim organisation. Other issues raised related to the capacity of the cantonal and municipal authorities to provide specialised assistance to identified victims of trafficking.

Agenda item 8: Information on activities aimed at strengthening the implementation of GRETA's conclusions and the Committee of the Parties' recommendations

47. The Chair gave the floor to the Executive Secretary to update the Committee on co-operation activities.

48. The Executive Secretary referred to the implementation of four co-operation projects under the Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey, respectively in Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey. The HELP online course on combating trafficking in human beings had been translated and piloted in several countries. A new module, on trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation, was in the process of development. Further, a study of online and technology-facilitated human trafficking had been launched, involving a targeted questionnaire expected to be sent to State Parties in early 2021.

49. Further, on 3-4 November 2020, the Council of Europe and the OSCE had co-organised a meeting of National Anti-Trafficking Co-ordinators and Rapporteurs, which focused on challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic to anti-trafficking responses. Participants had shared promising practices in the prevention of human trafficking, the protection of victims, and the prosecution of traffickers amid the pandemic. In July, the Anti-Trafficking Division had launched a call for proposals by civil society organisations to prevent trafficking in human beings and assist and protect victims of trafficking in the specific context of the COVID-19 pandemic. A total of 35 NGOs from 20 member states applied, and four projects were selected for grants (from Bulgaria, France, Germany and Serbia).

50. The Chair thanked the Executive Secretary and her team for the efforts made to develop co-operation activities with a view to strengthening the implementation of the Convention.

Agenda item 9: Information on the anti-trafficking activities of other international organisations of interest to the Committee of the Parties

51. The Chair invited the Executive Secretary to present information concerning activities of other international organisations in the area of combating trafficking in human beings.

52. The Executive Secretary updated the Committee on the activities of the Inter-Agency Co-ordination Group against Trafficking in Persons (ICAT), and in particular the forthcoming meeting of Principals of ICAT member and partner organisations (15 December 2020, online), which was expected to result in the endorsement of ICAT's strategic priorities. She noted that the priority areas identified by ICAT were reflected in the activities of the Council of Europe (e.g. building the evidence base, ensuring a rights-based approach, strengthening the criminal justice response). Further, the Executive Secretary informed the Committee that the European Commission had published its third report on the progress made in the fight against trafficking in human beings, and had launched a targeted consultation on the new EU Strategy towards the eradication of trafficking in human beings.

53. Ms Iris Muth from the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth of Germany, who joined the meeting online, referred to the recent meeting of the network of EU anti-trafficking national rapporteurs and equivalent mechanisms, co-organised by Germany and the Office of the EU Anti-Trafficking Coordinator, at which the Executive Secretary of the Convention had made a presentation. Ms Muth also informed the Committee of the forthcoming organisation of a conference on combating child trafficking (on 4-5 May 2021), during the German Presidency of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.

Agenda item 10: State of signatures and ratifications of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings

54. The Chair noted that no new signatures and/or ratifications had been submitted since the last meeting of the Committee of the Parties, and consequently the number of Parties to the Convention continued to stand at 47. She recalled that there were prospects of two non-member States of the Council of Europe, Tunisia and Israel, acceding to the Convention. The Chair reiterated the importance of all Council of Europe member States joining the Convention.

Agenda item 11: Election of members of the Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA)

55. The Chair recalled that the terms of office of eight of the 15 members of GRETA expired on 31 December 2020. Taking into account that no two members of GRETA may be nationals of the same State (Article 36, paragraph 3, sub-paragraph c, of the Convention), 40 Parties to the Convention¹ had the right to nominate candidates for GRETA membership. The remaining seven Parties to the Convention continued to have nationals among the GRETA members whose mandates run until the end of 2022.

11.1. Admissibility of the candidatures (rule 8, rule 9, paragraph 1, and rule 11 of CM/Res(2013)28)

56. Before proceeding with the election, the Chair invited the Committee to consider the admissibility of the candidatures for GRETA membership, taking into account Rules 10, 11 and 12 of the Rules on the election procedure of the members of GRETA. The deadline for submitting candidatures had been set at 11 September 2020. This date had been chosen back in March 2020, prior to having fixed the date of the meeting at which the elections would take place, on the assumption that that meeting would take place in the course of November. By the deadline of 11 September 2020, 17 States Parties had proposed candidates for the election of GRETA members: Armenia, Belarus, Belgium, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Lithuania, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Serbia, Sweden, Switzerland and Turkey. In addition, Denmark had submitted candidates on 2 October, after the deadline of 11 September, but nonetheless more than two months before the election date (i.e. 4 December), which was in compliance with Rule 12 of the Rules on the election procedure of the members of GRETA (CM/Res(2013)28). Armenia had subsequently withdrawn two of its candidates, and Montenegro had withdrawn one of its candidates. As a result, a total of 18 States Parties had submitted a total of 27 candidates. Three of the candidates (proposed by Germany, Norway and Switzerland) had been nominated for a second term of office.

57. Further, the Chair recalled that Rule 11 of the Rules on the election procedure of the members of GRETA provided that "each Party shall ensure that the national selection procedure leading to the nomination of candidates for GRETA is in accordance with published national guidelines or otherwise transparent and designed to lead to the nomination of the most qualified candidates". Even though Parties had not been asked specifically to provide information on their national selection procedures, the Chair stressed that it was important that this rule be followed through the publication of public calls of interest and a transparent selection procedure.

¹ Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, the Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine and United Kingdom.

11.2. Assessment of whether the candidates nominated meet the requirements for membership of GRETA (rule 9, paragraph 4 of CM/Res(2013)28)

58. The Chair recalled the requirements which should be taken into account when electing members of GRETA. She stressed that the cornerstone of an effective monitoring system is the competence, independence, integrity and professionalism of the experts to whom the task is entrusted.

59. The Chair noted that civil society organisations had addressed letters to the Committee, expressing their support for different candidates (document THB-CP(2020)03).

11.3. Election of eight members of GRETA

60. The Chair referred to the Explanatory note on the procedure to be followed to elect GRETA members, which had been prepared by the Secretariat (THB-CP(2018)17) and summarised the rules for the election of GRETA members contained in Resolution CM/Res(2013)28.

61. A matrix had been prepared by the Secretariat, providing an overview of the professional expertise and educational background of the candidates for election (document THB-CP(2020)02), and another matrix provided an overview of the professional expertise and educational background of the current GRETA members whose mandates continue for another two years.

62. Following an invitation from the Chair, representatives of Parties which had proposed more than one candidate for GRETA indicated their preferences for particular candidates.

63. The Chair informed the Committee that equipment for electronic voting had been provided for the meeting, which ensured the secrecy of the ballot and calculated the results of the voting. Following an introduction of the electronic voting system by Mr Dominique Rouillé, representative of the company providing the equipment, members of the Committee ran a test vote.

64. The Committee proceeded with the election of eight members of GRETA by secret ballot. Following 10 rounds of voting, the Committee elected the following members of GRETA:

- Mr Thomas Ahlstrand (Swedish) – first term of office
- Ms Helga Gayer (German) – second term of office
- Mr Sergey Ghazinyan (Armenian) – first term of office
- Mr Aurelijus Gutauskas (Lithuanian) – first term of office
- Ms Conny Rijken (Dutch) – first term of office
- Mr Peter Van Hauwermeiren (Belgian) – first term of office
- Mr Georgios Vanikiotis (Greek) – first term of office
- Ms Dorothea Winkler (Swiss) – second term of office.

65. The Committee congratulated the elected candidates and wished them success in their endeavours to monitor the implementation of the Convention.

Agenda item 12: Dates of future meetings

66. The Committee decided to hold its next meeting on either 11 or 18 June 2021.

Agenda item 13: Other business

Agenda item 14: Adoption of the list of decisions taken

67. The Committee approved the decisions taken at the meeting.

Appendix I

Agenda

- 1. Opening of the meeting**
- 2. Adoption of the draft agenda**
- 3. Exchange of views with the President of GRETA**
- 4. Examination of GRETA's reports on the implementation of the Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings by Albania, Croatia and the Republic of Moldova (third evaluation round) and adoption of recommendations in respect of these Parties**
 - 4.1 Albania
 - 4.2 Croatia
 - 4.3 Republic of Moldova
- 5. Implementation of the Secretary General's Roadmap on strengthening action against trafficking in human beings for the purpose of labour exploitation**
- 6. Opinion on the draft resolution on financial arrangements for the participation of non-member States in the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings**
- 7. Government reports submitted in reply to Committee of the Parties recommendations**

First evaluation round

 - 7.1 Estonia

Second evaluation round

 - 7.2 Andorra
 - 7.3 Finland
 - 7.4 Germany
 - 7.5 Hungary
 - 7.6 Lithuania
 - 7.7 Switzerland
- 8. Information on activities aimed at strengthening the implementation of GRETA's conclusions and the Committee of the Parties' recommendations**
- 9. Information on the anti-trafficking activities of other international organisations of interest to the Committee of the Parties**
- 10. State of signatures and ratifications of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings**
- 11. Election of members of the Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA)**
 - 11.1. Admissibility of the candidatures (rule 8, rule 9, paragraph 1, and rule 11 of CM/Res(2013)28)
 - 11.2. Assessment of whether the candidates nominated meet the requirements for membership of GRETA (rule 9, paragraph 4 of CM/Res(2013)28)
 - 11.3. Election of eight members of GRETA
- 12. Dates of future meetings**
- 13. Other business**
- 14. Adoption of the list of decisions taken**

Appendix II

List of participants / Liste de participants

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Appendix III

Statement by Mr Davor Derenčinović, President of GRETA

Ms Chair, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The **four-year strategic framework** recently announced by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe includes the fight against human trafficking among the **priorities** for the Organisation's longer-term mission. As noted in this document, a growing number of people fall victim to the crime of human trafficking and the COVID-19 pandemic, with its potentially long-term socio-economic impact, creates a heightened risk of exploitation of vulnerable groups. The reinforced prevention of human trafficking is related to some of the other priorities included in the strategic framework, namely fighting social inequalities and poverty, non-discrimination and ensuring the protection of vulnerable groups (including combating all forms of violence against women). More generally, reinforced implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings contributes to preventing violations of the European Convention on Human Rights.

The challenges posed by the **COVID-19 pandemic** to anti-trafficking responses, as well as solutions and promising practices, were discussed at a recent meeting of National Anti-Trafficking Co-ordinators and Rapporteurs, which was co-organised by the Council of Europe and OSCE, with participants from 50 countries. The pandemic has created more favourable conditions for traffickers by exacerbating pre-existing vulnerabilities and creating new ones, pushing people in difficult economic circumstances into risky and exploitative situations. Lockdown measures and movement restrictions have contributed to a surge in some forms of exploitation, particularly online child exploitation and so-called "webcam exploitation". These forms of exploitation make victims increasingly "invisible" to the law enforcement systems and harder to reach with support services. I must stress once again that leaders of State Parties to our Convention have a legal and moral obligation not to cut corners on the rights and protection of the most vulnerable, including victims of human trafficking.

Since my last exchange of views with you in June this year, GRETA has held **three plenary meetings**, in early July, October and November. These meetings were all "hybrid" events, due to the sanitary and travel restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic. This inevitably created challenges and required adaptations to the meeting agendas. Despite the challenges, I am happy to report that GRETA managed to adopt **six final reports**, as part of the third round of evaluation of the Convention, concerning Albania, Croatia, Bulgaria, Denmark, Georgia and the Republic of Moldova, as well as **two draft reports**, concerning Montenegro and Romania. The reports on Croatia and the Republic of Moldova have recently been published, and together with the report on Albania, they have been submitted to you for consideration and the adoption of recommendations at today's meeting. I would like to briefly refer to some of the main findings of GRETA from these three reports.

The focus of the third evaluation round of the Convention being on trafficking victims' **access to justice and effective remedies**, the reports analyse in detail the implementation of provisions of the Convention establishing substantive and procedural obligations relevant to this topic.

In all three countries, there are important barriers preventing victims of trafficking from effective **access to compensation**. The national authorities should take steps to facilitate and guarantee access to compensation for victims of trafficking, including by collecting evidence about the harm the victims have suffered and the financial gain from their exploitation, as part of the criminal investigations, and reviewing the legislative framework for state compensation, including the eligibility criteria and other conditions. Access to legal aid is crucial in this respect, as is the provision of training to legal professionals.

GRETA is also concerned by the **low number of convictions** for human trafficking in **Albania and Croatia**, and urges the national authorities to take additional measures to ensure that human trafficking cases are investigated proactively, regardless of whether a complaint regarding the crime has been submitted, that they are not re-qualified as other offences which carry lighter penalties, and that they lead to effective, proportionate and dissuasive sanctions.

In the **Republic of Moldova**, GRETA is concerned by the negative effect of lengthy trials on the victims and the outcome of prosecution and urges the authorities to ensure that the length of court proceedings in human trafficking cases is reasonable.

The reports also examine **progress** made on the implementation of previous GRETA recommendations on selected topics and notes a range of positive legislative and policy developments. Nevertheless, in **Albania**, GRETA is concerned by the low number of identifications of human trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation and urges the authorities to increase their efforts to proactively detect victims, including by training labour inspectors and other relevant professionals. In the report on **Croatia**, GRETA calls for additional steps to identify victims of trafficking, including among asylum seekers, migrants and unaccompanied children, as well as to pay particular attention to at-risk sectors, such as agriculture, construction and hospitality. In the **Republic of Moldova**, GRETA notes the increasing number of trafficking cases of children and young adults communicating via social networks, and urges the authorities to strengthen their efforts to improve the prevention of child trafficking and the identification of, and assistance to, child victims.

GRETA managed to carry out an **evaluation visit to Malta** at the end of September 2020, but the plans made for several other visits in the autumn failed due to last-minute changes in the sanitary and travel restrictions. Mindful of the importance of proceeding with the third evaluation of the **United Kingdom** without further delay, GRETA decided to hold a series of online meetings with stakeholders across the United Kingdom from 28 September to 5 October. The fact that there was no need for interpretation made the holding of these meetings easier, but there were other challenges. GRETA has reserved itself the possibility of organising a targeted physical visit to the UK whenever this becomes possible. GRETA has had to postpone to rest of the evaluations scheduled to take place in 2020 (concerning Armenia, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, France, Latvia, Norway, Portugal) to 2021. This has resulted in an important **rescheduling of the calendar of visits** and an updated calendar has been published on our website.

I understand that the Committee of Ministers is discussing the possibility of **relocating part of the 2020 unspent budget** of monitoring bodies to the next biennium (2022-2023), as well as temporarily reinforcing the secretariat. This would be a welcome step as it will enable GRETA and other monitoring bodies to catch up on their visit programme. While a lot of activities have (more or less successfully) moved online, GRETA remains convinced that **physical visits** are indispensable for a proper evaluation of the situation.

The lockdown measures and impossibility to travel did not prevent GRETA from carrying out other important work, and I am pleased to announce that in the course of 2020, GRETA produced three documents which can assist State Parties in meeting their obligations under the Convention. The first one is a **Guidance Note on the entitlement of victims of trafficking, and persons at risk of being trafficked, to international protection**, which analyses the application of the principles of international protection in the context of human trafficking, building upon earlier UNHCR guidelines.

GRETA also prepared a **Compendium of good practices in addressing trafficking in human beings for the purpose of labour exploitation**, which highlights effective measures taken by States Parties to the Convention to prevent and combat trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation, providing food for thought and direction in their future efforts. Further, at its most recent meeting, GRETA adopted a **Guidance Note on combating trafficking in human beings for the purpose of labour exploitation**. The latter two documents are related to the implementation of the Roadmap of the Secretary General on strengthening action against trafficking in human beings for the purposes of labour exploitation and will be the subject of a separate agenda item later today.

This is the last meeting of the Committee of the Parties which I attend in my role as President of GRETA – a role that I have had the privilege to play for two out of the eight years that I spent as a member of GRETA. These eight years have been both challenging and gratifying, and I am grateful to all the past and present GRETA colleagues and Secretariat for the amazing commitment and team spirit that they have demonstrated. The second terms of office of four GRETA members, including myself, will expire at the end of this year, but there are three GRETA members who are standing for a second term of office. I would like to underline the importance of ensuring a degree of continuity in GRETA's membership, which is always a benefit, but is particularly important in the context of the pandemic, due to the postponement of many evaluations. An effective monitoring system relies on the professionalism, availability, dedication and independence of the experts to whom the task is entrusted.

I am also grateful to the Committee of the Parties, to all its members and particularly to the Chair, Ambassador Călugăru, for supporting GRETA. I also wish you many years of successful further collaboration with GRETA in monitoring the implementation of the Convention, one of the most important human rights legal instruments of our time.

Thank you for your attention.

Appendix IV

Statement by Ms Elen Arzumanyan, Acting Head of Co-operation with Monitoring Bodies, Department of Human Rights and Humanitarian Issues, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia

Madam Chair,

Distinguished Colleagues,

The fight against human trafficking has always been in the centre of the Armenian government's attention. The proof is the fact that over the years the systemic mechanisms for combating trafficking have been established in the concerned areas.

Six three-year national strategic programmes of relevant measures have been implemented by the Government since 2002. The recent programme was approved despite the severe conditions of the COVID-19 pandemic. Another devastating factor, as you are aware, is the latest war instigated by Azerbaijan against the Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh with the aim to solve the conflict by force. We alert the Committee on the violations of human rights and international humanitarian law committed by Azerbaijan and call GRETA to monitor the situation in the region closely.

Our Government continues to undertake the measures even in emergency situations to ensure the continuity of the fight against trafficking.

The Anti-Trafficking Commission has been functioning in Armenia since 2002. In 2007, the Human Trafficking Council was established, which is currently headed by the Deputy Prime Minister. In order to bring Armenia's legislation in conformity with the requirements of the Palermo Protocol, the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings and other international commitments, the Law on "Identification and Support to Persons Subjected to Trafficking in Human Beings and Exploitation" was adopted, as well as seven by-laws aiming to ensure its implementation.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of Armenia has a Commission for the Identification of Victims of Human Trafficking and Exploitation to allocate monetary compensation to victims of trafficking. Each year, the government finances programmes aimed at the social and psychological rehabilitation of victims of trafficking.

Being strongly concerned that trafficking in persons is a serious crime and a grave violation of human rights, the Republic of Armenia highly values the indisputable role of GRETA at a frontline for combatting human trafficking. Having this in mind, the Government of Armenia has presented the candidacy of Mr Sergey Ghazinyan, currently Legal Adviser to the Human Rights Defender of Armenia, who, if elected, would bring added value to further promoting GRETA and insure more engagement with such independent institution as the Ombudsman. Generally, in Armenia the fight against trafficking is one of the best examples of co-operation between the state and non-governmental organisations. Multi-agency approach is a key of our success on all levels and all stages of victim identification, referral, assistance and reintegration as well as in case of organising victims' repatriation and safe return. Victims' needs and interests are the bases for the protection, whereas the restoration and protection of their rights are the main goals of this co-operation.

Thank you.

Appendix V

Statement by Ms Albana Dautllari, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Representative of Albania to the Council of Europe

Dear Vice-chair,

I would like to thank GRETA's President Derenčinović for his presentation and also for the work he has done, and wish him well.

Concerning the delay of the publication of the report, I would like to inform the Committee that was due to some delays from our side, and also the change of the contact point. We hope it can be published very soon.

Going back to our report, Albania expresses its gratitude to GRETA for drafting this report and also to GRETA's Secretariat for the effective co-operation.

My country attaches great importance to the work of GRETA and I want to emphasize the importance that Albania pays to its work and recommendations.

There is a continuous and constructive dialogue between the Albanian authorities and GRETA throughout the monitoring cycles, including this one.

The experts of the relevant institutions have helped in the drafting of this report, with detailed contribution in 2019 and additional contributions in 2020.

In this regard, the Government of Albania have adopted and amended a number of laws and regulations in order to further improve the policy framework for action against human trafficking. The Law on Foreigners was one of them, also mentioned in GRETA's report.

The implementation of the Convention continues to be a priority for the work of the Ministry of Interior and all other institutions involved.

It is clear that Albania has progressed quite a lot since the first evaluation round, although as mentioned by GRETA's President, it seems there are still some problems, as regards access to compensation, legal aid, low number of convictions, and low identification of labour exploitations cases.

I can assure the Committee that my authorities are committed to deal with these issues, and they are already doing so, although the pandemic has complicated the work for all of us.

I would take this opportunity to highlight some updates made in the last month with a view in rising awareness for the prevention of trafficking in human beings:

- A number of awareness-raising activities for the prevention of trafficking in human beings were organised during the month of October in the context of the European Anti-trafficking day (18 October), such as forums and discussion groups with professionals, students and community representatives, awareness meetings on the prevention of trafficking in persons and irregular migration;
- In the framework of the IOM project "Prevention of Unsafe Migration from Albania to the European Union", information meetings on the topic of migration were held in the 12 regions of the country. In these meetings participated representatives of the various institutions, such as the state social service, child protection, employment offices, sports health, migration, education, state police, border police, etc.

These events were widely reflected throughout the social media as well.

Furthermore, I am pleased to inform you that all the recommendations of the expert group will be translated into action plans and addressed by all state and non-state anti-trafficking structures.

GRETA's recommendations will also be included in the new National Action Plan that will be drafted next year.

I have a comment to make also when it comes to the scope of the report. I think it should be narrowed in the future because to my view it is very wide, and sometime deals with issues that are addressed by other bodies of Council of Europe.

In concluding, I want to reiterate that the Albanian Government attaches utmost importance to GRETA and we have and will take into full consideration the recommendations in the report, and I am sure the report can be published very soon.

Thank you.

Appendix VI

Draft Opinion on financial arrangements for the participation of non-member States in the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings

1. The Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (CETS No. 197), in its Article 43, that “[a]fter the entry into force of this Convention, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe may, after consultation of the Parties to this Convention and obtaining their unanimous consent, invite any non-member State of the Council of Europe, which has not participated in the elaboration of the Convention, to accede to this Convention by a decision taken by the majority provided for in Article 20.d of the Statute of the Council of Europe, and by unanimous vote of the representatives of the Parties entitled to sit on the Committee of Ministers.”

2. The Committee of Ministers, pursuant to Articles 15.a, 38 and 39 of the Statute the Council of Europe (ETS No. 1), has already adopted three resolutions concerning the financial arrangements for the participation of non-member States in Council of Europe conventions, namely Resolution [CM/Res\(2013\)7](#), which was later repealed and replaced by Resolution [CM/Res\(2015\)1](#) and, lastly, by Resolution [CM/Res\(2020\)6](#).

3. Resolution CM/Res(2020)6 applies solely to Council of Europe conventions providing for a financial contribution to their monitoring mechanism by Parties not members of the Council of Europe. The Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings does not contain specific provisions concerning the financial contribution of non-member States acceding to it, and therefore the previously mentioned Resolution cannot be applied to this Convention. It is recalled that on 1 July 2020, at their 1380th meeting, the Ministers’ Deputies decided to invite the Rapporteur Group on Programme, Budget and Administration (GR-PBA) to further examine the possible adoption of a “general” resolution applicable to all Council of Europe conventions not containing a clause on the financial participation of non-member States, as set out in Appendix 1 to document [CM\(2020\)21](#).

4. In recent years, a growing number of non-member States have shown an interest in acceding to Convention CETS No. 197. Belarus is already a party to it since 2014. Capacity-building activities have been carried out notably in Tunisia and Morocco to progressively ensure the compatibility of the legislative and policy frameworks of these countries with the convention. Tunisia has been invited to accede to the Convention by the Committee of Ministers in 2018², and the Moroccan authorities have also expressed their interest in a future accession. Israel has recently transmitted to the Secretary General a request to be invited to accede to the Convention. Perspectives of accession have also been discussed, with different degrees of feasibility, with other states. The monitoring mechanism of the Convention generates costs for the Organisation, notably in connection with the holding of the meetings of the Committee of the Parties and the periodic evaluations by the Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA), which involve country visits. In the absence of specific provisions, these costs are borne by the member States alone. It is therefore necessary to consider provisions ensuring the financial sustainability of the monitoring mechanism set up by the Convention also in the event of accession of non-member States.

5. On 29 May 2019, the Ministers’ Deputies adopted Resolution CM/Res(2019)3 on financial arrangements for the participation of non-member States in the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (CETS No. 210, Istanbul Convention). The situation of Convention CETS No. 197 is not too dissimilar from the one of the Istanbul Convention, both in terms of interest in acceding to it by non-member States and of the need to ensure the financial sustainability of the monitoring mechanism. With the sole exception of Belarus, which could

² CM/Del/Dec(2018)1306/10.9

however be encouraged to contribute on a voluntary basis, the adoption of financial arrangements for the participation of non-member States in the Convention would not create any disparity of treatment between non-member States. The adoption of such specific arrangements for Convention CETS No. 197, justified by this particular situation, would in any event be without prejudice to the possible adoption of a "general" resolution applicable to all Council of Europe conventions not containing a clause on the financial participation of non-member States.

6. The proposed draft Resolution presented in the Appendix, largely based on Resolution CM/Res(2019)3, indicates that the commitment by a non-member State to provide an annual financial contribution would be set out in the Committee of Ministers' decision to invite the State to accede to the Convention. The draft resolution also provides that, during any prior contacts, the Secretariat will inform the applicant State's authorities of the budgetary implications of accession. Attention should be drawn in particular to the resolution itself.

7. The calculation method proposed is based on a percentage which is calculated for the State in question in accordance with Resolution [Res\(94\)31](#) on the method of calculating the scale of member States' contributions to Council of Europe budgets and then applied to an amount corresponding to the budgetary cost of the convention concerned, to which 27% for administrative costs is added. The 27% figure corresponds to the percentage of the support pillar (governing bodies and general services) in the Ordinary Budget. The same percentage was applied in Resolution CM/Res(2019)3 and in Resolution CM/Res(2020)6 concerning financial arrangements for the participation of non-member States in Council of Europe conventions which contain a specific financial clause. A minimum annual contribution of €7 500, calculated on the basis of an estimation of the cost of participation of a representative in the periodical meetings of the Committee of the Parties and of one country visit for each monitoring cycle, is proposed. Since the contribution calculation method provided for in Resolution [Res\(94\)31](#) is applicable and this method includes a maximum rate of contribution, there is no need to determine a maximum contribution.

**Draft Resolution CM/Res(2020)...
concerning financial arrangements for the participation of non-member States in the Council
of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (CETS No. 197)**

(Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on ..., at the ... meeting of the Ministers' Deputies)

The Committee of Ministers, pursuant to Articles 15.a, 38 and 39 of the Statute the Council of Europe (ETS No. 1),

Having regard to the Financial Regulations of the Council of Europe;

Having regard to Resolution CM/Res(2020)6 concerning financial arrangements for the participation of non-member States in Council of Europe conventions;

Considering that Resolution CM/Res(2020)6 only applies to Council of Europe conventions that contain a clause on the financial participation of non-member States;

Noting that the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (CETS No. 197, "the Convention") does not contain such a clause;

Noting that the Convention is open to the participation of non-member States and the European Union, either through ratification or accession;³

³ The Convention is open to signature and ratification by Canada, the Holy See, Japan, Mexico, Tunisia, the United States of America and by the European Union, and it is open to accession by any other non-member State.

In view of the costs that the accession of a non-member State or the European Union to the Convention would entail for the Organisation, in particular in relation to the follow-up mechanism of the Convention, and that these costs are covered by the Organisation's budgets;

Considering the need to introduce a mechanism for covering such costs by establishing a legal framework governing the financial conditions for non-member States' participation in the follow-up mechanism of the Convention,

Resolves as follows:

I. The following provisions shall apply to the European Union and to non-member States of the Council of Europe which, after the date of adoption of the present Resolution, become parties to the Convention.⁴

1. Any Party to the Convention referred to in Paragraph I above shall contribute to the financing of the Convention, in keeping with the arrangements laid down in this Resolution, when it participates, as of right, in the follow-up mechanism of the convention.

2. During any prior contacts, the Secretariat shall inform the authorities of the applicant State of the budgetary implications of possible accession to the Convention. Their attention shall be drawn in particular to the relevant provisions of the present Resolution.

3. The Committee of Ministers' decision to invite a State which is not a member of the Council of Europe to accede to the Convention shall refer to the commitment by the State in question to provide an annual financial contribution in accordance with the present Resolution.

4. The amount of the contribution that all Contracting Parties to the Convention which are not members of the Council of Europe must make to the Organisation each year shall be calculated in accordance with the method set out in the appendix to this Resolution. A minimum contribution of €7 500 will be required. This amount will be adjusted annually based on the annual inflation rate in the host country of the Organisation as at 28 February of the previous year.

5. Unless the Committee of Ministers decides otherwise, the contribution shall be allocated to the General Budget.

6. Every year the Secretary General shall notify the governments of the parties concerned of the amount of their contribution and, unless the Committee of Ministers decides otherwise, shall ask them to proceed to payment. The provisions of Article 10 of the Financial Regulations shall apply *mutatis mutandis* to the contribution of any Contracting Party to the Convention which is not a member of the Council of Europe.

7. The present Resolution shall remain in force until the adoption of a resolution applicable to all Council of Europe conventions not containing a clause on the financial participation of non-member states.

II. The following provision shall apply to any non-member state of the Council of Europe which, at the date of adoption of the present Resolution⁵, is a party to the Convention.

8. Any Party to the Convention referred to in Paragraph II above and participating as of right in its follow-up mechanism, is encouraged to contribute to its financing in keeping with the arrangements laid down in paragraphs 4 and 5 of the present Resolution.

⁴ Including States which have already been invited to become a party to the Convention.

⁵ At the date of adoption of the present Resolution, the only non-member State of the Council of Europe which is a party to the Convention is Belarus.

*Appendix to Resolution CM/Res(2020)...***Calculation method**

The calculation method retained consists in:

- a) identifying the budgetary cost of the Convention concerned (staff and operational costs) (A),
- b) adding administrative costs (27%)⁶ (B) = 27%*A
- c) applying the Ordinary Budget scale, with the addition of the non-member State which wishes to accede to the Convention and as resulting from the Committee of Ministers Resolution [Res\(94\)31](#) on the method of calculating the scale of member States' contributions to Council of Europe budgets, to the estimated cost of the Convention (A+B).

⁶ Calculation method agreed in Resolution CM/Res(2019)3 and CM/Res(2020)6.

Appendix VII

Statement by Ms Satu Sistonen, Legal Counsellor, Unit for Human Rights Courts and Conventions, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Finland

Thank you, Madame Chair.

I would like to begin by saying that it is always an honour to be able to address this Committee of the Parties concerning the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings by Finland.

I also want to reiterate our appreciation to GRETA and its Secretariat for their work and good co-operation in conducting the second evaluation round on Finland. We truly appreciate the dialogue and we truly feel that GRETA is here for us supporting our work in implementing the Convention.

Following the recommendation of this Committee on the implementation of the Convention by Finland and the request to report to the Committee on the measures taken to address the issues for immediate action identified in GRETA's report by 18 October this year, my Government submitted its report on 16 October, and would now like to briefly highlight the following.

The Government would like to emphasise that the current Programme of Prime Minister Sanna Marin's Government includes various measures to directly improve the status of victims of trafficking in human beings. In order to carry out these measures, the Government has appointed a joint government co-ordinator against trafficking in human beings who co-ordinates an inter-administrative working group set by the Ministry of Justice. The aim of the group is to draft a National Action Plan against trafficking in human beings. The preparations for the Action Plan are currently underway.

Moreover, a high-level steering group has been appointed to oversee the working group.

The steering group oversees also the work of another cross-administrative working group in charge of drawing up a proposal for a new act to assist victims of trafficking, which is run by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. The aim of the new act is essentially to strengthen the focus on victims and to weaken the link between the provision of assistance and the criminal procedure.

GRETA's proposals are strongly integrated in the work of the working groups and proposals concerning, for example, a National Referral Mechanism, and are discussed in the work concerning the National Action Plan. The Action Plan is intended to have a strong focus on mainstreaming action against trafficking in human beings, also into areas of, for example, promotion of gender equality, eliminating violence against women, action against the grey economy and protection of the rights of the child.

The police have also already made considerable efforts to continue to train its personnel and ensure that trafficking is included in all levels of police training. Furthermore, a national network of trafficking specialists have been set up. The Police has also adopted a decision to create a specialists' group focusing entirely on trafficking cases. The group will work together with all other stakeholders in order to detect and investigate trafficking.

Furthermore, the report submitted in October shows several measures already taken to address the special circumstances and needs of child victims.

Let me finish by thanking GRETA and the Secretariat once again and stating that we look forward to continuing the constructive dialogue with the Convention's monitoring mechanism.

Thank you.

Appendix VIII

Statement by Mr Áron Tési, Department of European Cooperation, Ministry of the Interior, Hungary

Chair, Dear Colleagues,

First of all, I would like to thank GRETA, since their important work and the recommendations adopted in Hungary's second round evaluation served as a basis when we drafted Hungary's national anti-trafficking strategy for the period between 2020 and 2023.

We have achieved several important developments since we received these recommendations in October 2019. The national anti-trafficking strategy and its two-year implementing Action Plan were adopted by the Government in February 2020. As a result, new legislative amendments were adopted in early 2020 that introduced a general protection measure for (presumed) victims of trafficking under the age of 18. For the sake of the practical implementation, a working group was set up in September, where all the stakeholders participate (Police, childcare institutions, Ministry of Human Capacities, Ministry of the Interior etc.). At the same time, the institutions are developing the necessary environment in terms of human capacities, know-how and infrastructure. As another step forward, two additional special children's homes will be operative next year in Eastern Hungary so as to have a better and geographically balanced coverage.

These changes also contained amendments of the Criminal Code; one of these means that knowingly using the services or other activities of victims of human trafficking and forced labour is now punishable by law.

A new shelter was opened in September providing 12 places for victims. The shelter is operated by the Hungarian Baptist Aid. The organisation also operates a crisis apartment for the short-term placement of victims until they receive the form of assistance they require. Further plans include the opening of a new half-way house connected to the newly opened shelter.

We have continued the joint training of criminal investigators, prosecutors and judges. The next event in the series of trainings is going to take place on October 21. Unfortunately, the current situation does not allow holding the trainings in person, but we have made sure that we can provide a satisfying experience for participants online.

Two new projects are being implemented with the funding of the Internal Security Fund; the Budapest office of IOM is organising a nationwide awareness campaign, while the Ministry of Justice and the Hungarian Baptist Aid are working on a comprehensive assistance programme for victims of trafficking.

The Ministry of Interior also published a call for proposals in June 2020. Considering that female victims have been more in the forefront so far, we are aiming to map the most suitable and effective victim support services for male victims. The research is wholly financed by the Ministry's annual budget. The research team has already been selected.

This is just a short summary of what we have achieved so far, we will continue our work in the field, and we are looking forward to continuing our co-operation with GRETA.

Appendix IX

Statement by Ms Sonata Mickutė, Senior Adviser, Public Security Policy Group, Ministry of the Interior, Lithuania

Madam Chair, thank you for giving me the floor.

Lithuania would like to express appreciation of GRETA's report on the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention in Action against Trafficking in Human Beings.

GRETA's recommendations for our country are very significant and treated as roadmap for further improvement.

Lithuania continues to strengthen its efforts in fight against human trafficking and some examples of significant work implemented in 2020 are as follows:

- In June, a new Action plan for the fight human trafficking was adopted. The plan is inter-ministerial and inter-institutional and consists of 47 different activities in total for the period 2020-2022. Mainly, it is aimed at prevention, training of professionals, co-ordination and victim protection. It should be noted that some of the important GRETA'S recommendations were reflected in the Action plan.
- The previous Action plan for the period 2017-2019 underwent an independent evaluation and the results are expected in mid-December. Accordingly, the recommendations for improvement received will be considered and adjusted to the new Action plan.
- A network of prevention ambassadors (police officers) was established, responsible for the prevention activities in 10 Lithuanian counties.
- Since 2016, the funding for NGOs increased from 80 thousand to 245 thousand EUR per year; it is foreseen to increase funding for the years 2021-2022 as well.
- Agreements on victim assistance were signed almost with all municipalities of Lithuania in order to provide uniform service to victims of human trafficking and strengthen national referral mechanism.

Once again, we thank for GRETA for the co-operation.

Appendix X

Statement by Ms Anne Begemann, Deputy to the Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the Council of Europe

We would like to thank the Committee of the Parties for this opportunity to present the measures taken by Switzerland to implement GRETA's recommendations.

For full information, please refer to our report submitted in October 2020.

With regard to **combating labour exploitation**, Switzerland launched an awareness-raising campaign aimed at labour and labour market inspectors which included an information booklet published in July 2020. This is to be followed by a number of training events.

As regards **identifying victims of trafficking**, the federal authorities published a new instrument of reference for cantons which has already been incorporated into their training activities. This instrument was developed in close co-operation with NGOs specialised in this field and takes into account the different types of exploitation.

With regard to **assistance measures for victims of trafficking exploited abroad but identified in Switzerland**, the competent cantonal authorities are currently drafting a proposal to harmonise the application of federal laws which should be finalised and approved in the coming months.

In the first half of 2021, Switzerland will be conducting an evaluation of the implementation of its National Action Plan on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings. The outcome of this evaluation will help to both identify areas in which action is required and serve as a guide for future measures.