2026

Conference of celebration of the 10th anniversary of the Saint-Denis Convention

GRIMALDI FORUM – ROOM CAMILLE BLANC – 3 NOVEMBER 2026, 4 PM

MR LIONEL BEFFRE
GOVERNMENT COUNCILLOR - MINISTER OF INTERIOR, PRINCIPALITY OF MONACO

Mr Secretary General of the Council of Europe,
Madam Director of Security, Integrity and the Rule of Law at the Council of Europe,
Mr Secretary of the Saint-Denis Convention,
Ministers,
Ambassadors,
Representatives of Member States and observer states,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honour and a great pleasure, on behalf of the Principality of Monaco, to welcome you to the celebrations marking the tenth anniversary of the Saint-Denis Convention, which is being held in conjunction with the **19th Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for Sport**.

I would also like to thank you most sincerely for choosing to hold your Committee's meeting in Monaco, which began this morning and will continue tomorrow. I am confident that your discussions and exchanges will be fruitful.

Your presence here reflects a conviction we all share:
sport occupies a special place in our European societies.

- **It brings** people **together** across borders, cultures and differences.
- **It fosters encounters** where dialogue sometimes seems difficult.
- **And it passes** on essential values to new generations: respect for others, a taste for hard work, solidarity, fair play and respect for shared rules.

But these values can only be fully realised if everyone is able to take part in sports events in a **secure, peaceful** environment **that respects their dignity**.

This is the very purpose of the meeting we are opening today to mark the **tenth anniversary of the Saint-Denis Convention**.

Opened for signature on 3 July 2016 in Saint-Denis, France, during the UEFA EURO 2016 football tournament, this Convention is a key benchmark for the Council of Europe's work on safety, security and service at football matches and other sports events.

The Principality of Monaco has been involved in this European initiative from the very outset.

Thus, on 3 July 2016, at the ceremony held at the Stade de France, Monaco was among the **fourteen States that had signed the Convention as soon as it was opened for signature**. This early commitment demonstrated the Principality's determination to play a full part in building a common European framework, based on cooperation, prevention and the protection of all those taking part in sports events.

The Principality reaffirmed this commitment by depositing its instrument of ratification on 2 March 2017, thereby becoming **one of the first three states to ratify the Convention**, alongside France and Poland.

The Convention entered into force in Monaco on 1 November 2017 and subsequently became enforceable on 30 March of the following year.

This timeline demonstrates the Principality's consistent commitment to **safety in sport**:

- to **embrace** a shared ambition from the outset,
- **to-contribute** without delay to the entry into force of this commitment,
- and to **ensure its full implementation** within our national legal system.

Ten years have passed since this Convention was opened for signature.

Today, 33 States are Parties to the Convention and a further six have signed it, which testifies to the strength of the conviction that unites us:

No State can act alone in addressing the challenges associated with major sports events.

The Saint-Denis Convention embodies precisely this ambition.

It calls on us to move beyond an approach focused exclusively on the prevention and response to violence and to adopt a **comprehensive, integrated and coordinated** approach.

Three key dimensions lie at its heart: **safety, security and service**.

- **Safety**, which protects people's physical safety, in particular through suitable infrastructure, effective crowd management, efficient evacuation plans and appropriate emergency response measures.
- **Security**, which helps to prevent and combat violence, criminal behaviour, hooliganism and other disturbances likely to occur during sports events.
- **Service**, which place the spectator at the centre of the event, promoting inclusivity by ensuring a warm welcome, accessibility, ease of movement and well-being.

<u>These three dimensions cannot be separated.</u>

They form a single, integrated whole.

And they reflect a profound shift in the way we approach the management of sports events.

It is no longer simply a matter of managing risks. It is about building the conditions for trust.

This trust is based on cooperation between public authorities, security and emergency services, organisers, sports federations, local authorities and fans.

It also rests on our ability to share our experiences, learn from one another and adapt our responses to constantly evolving threats and practices.

This is precisely why the work carried out by the **Committee on Safety, Security and Service at Sports Events – or the T-S4 Committee** – is so important.

This Committee embodies our shared commitment to putting the Convention into practice.

It provides a key framework for dialogue and cooperation between the States Parties.

As such, it helps to define strategic guidelines and formulate the recommendations necessary for the development and implementation of integrated policies on safety, security and service at sports events. It thus assists the States Parties in their efforts and supports their work to ensure the effective implementation of the Convention.

Within this Committee, the Principality of Monaco is, naturally, fully committed to the activities of this monitoring body.

Indeed, our early participation in the Saint-Denis Convention, followed by its ratification and transposition into Monegasque law, reflects our commitment to a concerted European approach and to finding common responses to the challenges posed by sports events.

The Convention forms part, in particular, of the strengthening of our Legal Framework, with the incorporation into our positive law of provisions designed to prevent and punish violence and discrimination linked to sports events.

It thus helps to underpin a sustainable policy for preventing and combating hooliganism at national, international **and European** levels.

But our responsibility does not end with the adoption of rules.

It also involves putting these principles into practice.

To anticipate;

To cooperate;

To share information;

To educate and train.

And, above all, never losing sight of the fact that behind every security measure there are men and women: athletes, spectators, families, volunteers, professionals and public officials.

Security only makes sense when it allows people the freedom to enjoy the sports event to the full.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Celebrating the tenth anniversary of the Saint-Denis Convention is therefore not just about looking back at how far we have come.

It also means collectively reflecting on the sports world we wish to build over the next ten years.

International sports events are set to continue growing.

They attract ever-larger and more diverse audiences.

They require increasingly complex infrastructure, technology and systems.

And they present us with new challenges.

Our response must be commensurate with these changes.

It must remain grounded in our shared values, such as the rule of law, democracy and human rights, and European cooperation, which is based on fundamental principles: **security and liberty are not contradictory; they reinforce one another when considered together.**

That is precisely the spirit of the Council of Europe.

To put common standards into practice.

Sharing our experiences.

Developing collective responses.

And ensuring that the values that unite us do not remain mere principles, but become a tangible reality for our fellow citizens.

The Principality of Monaco intends to continue playing its full part in this positive development, remaining true to the commitment made in 2016 and to its determination to contribute, alongside its European partners, to sports events that are ever more secure, welcoming and respectful of everyone's rights.

I therefore hope that the discussions which are about to begin today will enable us to continue this joint endeavour and give fresh impetus to European cooperation on safety, security and service at sports events.

On behalf of the Principality of Monaco, I would like to thank you for attending, for your commitment and for your contribution to this collective discussion.

I wish you all an excellent meeting, fruitful discussions and a very pleasant stay in the Principality.

A warm welcome to Monaco.