Gouvernement Princier
PRINCIPAUTÉ DE MONACO

COUNCIL OF EUROPE
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Speech by Hanne Juncher, Director of Safety, Integrity and the Rule of Law, Council of Europe

Opening of the conference celebrating the 10th anniversary of the Saint-Denis Convention

THE SAINT-DENIS CONVENTION: A FIRST DECADE OF SUCCESS AND NEW OPPORTUNITIES

3 November 2026 (4:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.)
Grimaldi Forum, Camille Blanc Auditorium

Minister of Interior of the Principality of Monaco,

Excellencies,

Members of the Saint-Denis Committee,

Dear Colleagues,

I would like first of all to thank most warmly the Monegasque authorities for hosting and co-organising this conference. Likewise, thank you for hosting the meetings of the Saint-Denis Committee, the PACE round table, and of course the Ministerial Conference.

All these events are taking place in the context of the Monegasque Presidency of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.

l would also like to congratulate the Saint-Denis Committee, the previous and current Chairs, its Advisory and Ad hoc Groups, and all its delegates and observers.

You have carried out remarkable work over this first decade of the Saint-Denis Convention.

It is fair to highlight the importance of the Convention and its added value. The Saint Denis Convention is really a groundbreaking treaty.

Benefiting from the legacy of three decades of the European Convention on Spectator Violence from 1985, the successor Saint-Denis Convention was adopted in 2016.

It innovated by advocating a balanced multi-agency integrated approach on safety, security and service.

On the one hand, we have the Security pillar which should be balanced with the Safety and the Service pillar.

On the other hand, we see clearly that all key stakeholders have to work in partnership rather than isolation.

This is true in particular as regards Ministries of Sport and Interior, sports authorities, police, municipalities, and supporters' representatives. The sport world is a complex one when it comes to the actors involved, but also a very rich one.

The approach I just described is the best one for organising successful sports events, and no other international treaty provides the same high levels of safety, security and service principles and standards for sports events in Europe and across the world.

We know how powerful sport is as a tool for promoting the Council of Europe's values - human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

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In this regard, the priorities set by Monaco for its Committee of Ministers Presidency are particularly timely.

The Saint-Denis Convention is based on and driven by human rights. All those taking part should be offered the conditions to enjoy sports events in a safe, secure, welcoming, respectful and inclusive environment.

Since this is an anniversary event, allow me to underline some of the most important achievements over this first decade of the Convention and five years of activity of its Committee of the Parties.

The Saint-Denis Committee is a worldwide platform and unique in its field. Counting the 33 Parties, 20 Observer States and 14 non-State Observers, a total of 67 delegations are represented.

Seven monitoring visits have already been carried out - four of them in the context of the preparation for major football tournaments. Respective action plans are being implemented by the countries concerned.

Topical reports are prepared to promote the legacy of major events, like the Olympics, FIFA World Cups and UEFA Euros.

The Committee has adopted seven recommendations, covering topics such as the use of collective bans, the possession and use of pyrotechnics, and guidance on safety and service.

Regarding international co-operation, partnerships have been developed with relevant inter-governmental organisations, such as the European Union and the United Nations.

The Committee also works closely with sports organisations, like FIFA and UEFA.

In the field of technical assistance, the European Union has co-financed joint projects during this first decade to support the effective implementation of the Convention.

With these milestones successfully achieved, the way ahead for the Committee is both promising and challenging, and I would like to leave something for the Committee to consider in terms of opportunities for the second decade:

First and foremost, we should work to ensure the effective implementation of the Convention by states. This might qualify as both an opportunity and a challenge. We should measure its impact on the quality of life of our citizens. And we should invest in expanding the Convention beyond Europe, cooperating with global and regional organisations. Non-European States could be invited to join the Convention and bridges can be built bridges with other continents in the process.

New topical areas could also be addressed. This might include preventive work and the empowerment of the new generations of fans. It could be about accessibility and inclusion, and it could be about the risks and opportunities of AI.

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Dear colleagues,

The success of the Convention depends on the commitment and partnership between our state parties, sports and civil society organisations.

We count on your continued engagement to promoting safer, more secure, and more welcoming sports events for all.

In closing, I would like to congratulate once again the delegates and observers of the Saint-Denis Committee for the remarkable achievements made across the first decade of the Convention. Let’s continue to work together to make the second decade equally successful.

Thank you.