

Statement by Ambassador Christian Meuwly, Permanent Representative of Switzerland
to the Council of Europe

25 March 2021

Madam Secretary General,

On behalf of the Federal Council of the Swiss Confederation, it is my honour to hand over to you the instrument of ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism and its Additional Protocol. These instruments will thus enter into force for Switzerland on 1 July 2021. The Federal Office of Police, which is subject to the Federal Department of Justice and Police, is the contact point available 24/7, as provided for in the Protocol.

The Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism is one of the most successful conventions that the Council of Europe has presented since the beginning of the 21st century, and Switzerland, by becoming the 42nd contracting party, is only underlining the need to which it responds, all the more so with its Additional Protocol.

Europe continues to be ravaged by the scourge of terrorism. The Convention and its Protocol broaden the scope of the fight against this phenomenon and strengthen international cooperation to this end. In preparing to ratify the Convention and its Protocol, Switzerland has adapted its criminal law standards to the current challenges and has developed its capacity to cooperate with other states.

In the fight against organised crime and terrorist organisations, the Swiss authorities face even greater challenges than those resulting from the implementation of the obligations contained in the two treaties. This is the reason why cooperation within the Council of Europe and in particular within the CDCT is particularly useful, and why Switzerland is fully committed to it: by focusing on the need to protect member States' common values, the Council of Europe bears the duty to seek ever more advanced responses to the evolution of threats and attacks against these values. The CDCT is an example of this: in the near future, the Ministers' Deputies will take note of the guidelines on the links between terrorism and transnational organised crime. The work of the CDCT on bioterrorism, emerging terrorist threats, or measures aimed at protecting adolescents against radicalisation for the purpose of terrorism is particularly topical.

Switzerland is looking forward to the international conference on the role of women and children in terrorism, initially scheduled for December 2020. The issue of the return of children and minors from regions that have been hotbeds of Islamist terrorism, as well

as the issue of preventive measures which can be imposed on minors in a way that is compatible with the guarantee of their rights, are of particular interest to us.

In conclusion, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Secretariat of the CDCT for its great commitment in support of intergovernmental activities.