COUNCIL OF EUROPE

CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

CDDH(2026)R_EXTRA
Strasbourg, 15 January 2026

STEERING COMMITTEE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS (CDDH)

MEETING REPORT

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Extraordinary meeting

Strasbourg, 13 – 15 January 2026

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SUMMARY

Information on the meeting

The Steering Committee for Human Rights (CDDH) held an extraordinary meeting in Strasbourg from 13 to 15 January 2026, with Tonje MEINICH (Norway) in the Chair.
The agenda of the meeting appears in appendix.

Items for information of the Committee of Ministers

- The CDDH began work to prepare elements for a political declaration reaffirming the obligation to ensure the effective enjoyment of the rights and freedoms guaranteed by the European Convention on Human Rights (the Convention) to everyone within the jurisdiction of member States in the context of the contemporary challenges posed both by irregular migration and by the situation of foreigners convicted of serious offences, taking duly into account in particular governments' fundamental responsibility to ensure national security and public safety.
- It considered that its role was to provide a technical/ legal, fact-based foundation for the political work that would be undertaken subsequently by the Committee of Ministers. It recalled the tight deadlines involved, especially for the Committee of Ministers, and considered that it should seek to provide concrete elements that could be included in a draft declaration.
- It agreed on the factual situations that it would address, namely expulsion of foreign nationals convicted of serious criminal offences and extradition of foreign nationals, including issues under Articles 3 and 8 of the Convention; instrumentalisation of migration; mass arrivals of migrants by land and sea; innovative solutions to address migration; and decision-making in migration cases.
- It agreed on a common approach to be taken when discussing these issues and presenting the results of its discussions in the eventual outcome document.
- It agreed on dates for its next meeting and on methods to be used for further work in advance of the next meeting.
- It agreed on a policy for the publication of written comments and submissions.

MEETING REPORT

1. The Steering Committee for Human Rights (CDDH) held an extraordinary meeting in Strasbourg, from 13 to 15 January 2026, with Tonje MEINICH (Norway) in the Chair (see list of participants in Appendix II).

ITEM 1: OPENING OF THE MEETING AND ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

2. Gianluca ESPOSITO, Director General for Human Rights and Rule of Law (DGI), welcomed the participants and recalled the background to the CDDH's work, notably the Informal Ministerial Conference that had been convened by the Secretary General on 10 December 2025, and the mandate that the CDDH had subsequently received from the Committee of Ministers.

3. The CDDH adopted the agenda of the meeting as it appears in Appendix I.

ITEM 2: EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON THE MANDATE

4. The CDDH exchanged views on its mandate, as set out in the decision of the Ministers' Deputies on follow-up to the Informal Ministerial Conference.

5. The CDDH discussed the meaning to be given to the expression "elements for a political declaration". It considered that its role was to provide a technical/ legal, fact-based foundation for the political work that would be undertaken subsequently by the Committee of Ministers. Recalling the tight deadlines involved, especially for the Committee of Ministers, the CDDH considered that it should seek to provide concrete elements that could be included in a draft declaration.

ITEM 3: EXAMINATION OF A DRAFT STRUCTURE

6. The CDDH expressed appreciation for the approach taken in the document presented by the Secretariat (CDDH(2026)01), which included a possible "menu" of elements from which the Committee of Ministers could select. Whilst the elements need not be presented in the form of a draft declaration as such, they should be structured in such a way as to facilitate the work of the Committee of Ministers.

7. The CDDH considered that its outcome document should include an explanatory text on the issues addressed, along with concrete drafting proposals for elements where possible. These elements could be inspired where appropriate by previous relevant declarations and the case law of the European Court of Human Rights (the Court).

8. The CDDH agreed that its discussions should follow a four-step approach: first, to identify the factual situations to be addressed; second, to describe the legal issues involved, with reference to the Convention and the Court's caselaw where relevant; third, to determine the collective position in response to those issues; and fourth, to consider specific language to express the collective position. It considered that its discussions on steps two and three could provide material for the explanatory document, with discussions under step four potentially producing draft elements for the political declaration.

ITEM 4: DISCUSSION OF POSSIBLE ELEMENTS FOR A POLITICAL DECLARATION

9. The CDDH exchanged views on the issues that should be addressed in the political declaration. Several members expressed appreciation for the possible elements set out in document CDDH(2026)01 as a basis for addressing more general issues. Several members referred to the Joint Statement delivered to the Informal Ministerial Conference on 10 December 2025, which had been supported by 27 member States.

10. The CDDH agreed that it would address the following issues: expulsion of foreign nationals convicted of serious criminal offences and extradition of foreign nationals, including issues under Articles 3 and 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights (the Convention); instrumentalisation of migration; mass arrivals of migrants by land and sea; innovative solutions to address migration; and decision-making in migration cases. The CDDH underlined that its approach to these issues must be based on respect for the independence and integrity of the Court and the authority of the Court's judgments, avoiding any impression of giving instructions to the Court.

11. Following preliminary discussion of these issues, CDDH members were invited to contribute to informal drafting of a preliminary draft text on the issues of instrumentalisation of migration and innovative solutions to address migration. The CDDH as a whole then examined the resulting draft text and made proposals for further drafting.

ITEM 5: ORGANISATION OF FUTURE WORK

12. The CDDH decided to hold its second extraordinary meeting from 25 – 27 February 2026.

13. As to working methods, the CDDH decided that the Secretariat will distribute a preliminary draft text of the outcome document by 30 January. Members and participants are encouraged to submit any contributions to the preparation of this draft text to the Secretariat, on an informal, bilateral basis, at the earliest opportunity. The deadline for comments on this text is 13 February.

14. The CDDH will hold a third extraordinary meeting on 10 – 12 March 2026 so that the outcome document can be finalised for transmission to the Committee of Ministers in advance of the deadline of 22 March 2026.

15. Both the February and the March meetings will be held in hybrid format.

16. The CDDH discussed whether and how to publish written comments and submissions by States, given the interest in ensuring an appropriate environment in which to conduct negotiations on these sensitive issues. It agreed that this material would not be published on the CDDH website but instead be distributed to members, observers and participants by email only. This implies that such material should not be published on other websites or via other media.

ITEM 6: OTHER BUSINESS

17. None.

ITEM 7: ADOPTION OF THE MEETING REPORT

18. The CDDH adopted the report of the present meeting.

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Appendix I

Agenda

1: OPENING OF THE MEETING AND ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA	**1 : OUVERTURE DE LA RÉUNION ET ADOPTION DE L'ORDRE DU JOUR**
CDDH EXTRA(2026)OJ1	CDDH EXTRA(2026)OJ1
2: EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON THE MANDATE	**2 : ÉCHANGE DE VUES SUR LE MANDAT**
Conclusions of the Informal Ministerial Conference (Strasbourg, 10 December 2025) CM/Del/Dec(2025)1546/4.3 – decisions of the Ministers' Deputies on follow-up to the Informal Ministerial Conference (Strasbourg, 10 December 2025)	Conclusions de la Conférence ministérielle informelle (Strasbourg, 10 décembre 2025) CM/Del/Dec(2025)1546/4.3 – décisions des Délégués des Ministres sur les suites à donner à la Conférence ministérielle informelle (Strasbourg, 10 décembre 2025)
3: EXAMINATION OF A DRAFT STRUCTURE	**3 : EXAMEN D'UN PROJET DE STRUCTURE**
CDDH(2026)02 – Draft structure for the document containing elements for a political declaration	CDDH(2026)02 – Projet de structure pour le document contenant des éléments d'une déclaration politique
4: DISCUSSION OF POSSIBLE ELEMENTS FOR A POLITICAL DECLARATION	**4 : DISCUSSION DES ÉVENTUELS ÉLÉMENTS D'UNE DÉCLARATION POLITIQUE**
CDDH(2026)01 – Possible issues for inclusion in a political declaration CDDH(2026)03 – Comments received in advance of the first CDDH extraordinary meeting	CDDH(2026)01 – Éventuelles questions à inclure dans une déclaration politique CDDH(2026)03 – Commentaires reçus avant la première réunion extraordinaire du CDDH
5: ORGANISATION OF FUTURE WORK	**5 : ORGANISATION DES TRAVAUX FUTURS**
6: OTHER BUSINESS	**6 : QUESTIONS DIVERSES**
7: ADOPTION OF THE MEETING REPORT	**7 : ADOPTION DU RAPPORT DE RÉUNION**
CDDH(2026)R_EXTRA – (Draft) Meeting Report	CDDH(2026)R_EXTRA – (Projet de) Rapport de réunion

Appendix II

List of participants

MEMBERS / *MEMBRES*

ALBANIA / *ALBANIE*	**Brunilda KOÇO** Deputy Permanent Representative of Albania to the Council of Europe **Arlinda GJATA (online)** State Advocate, Office for Legal Representation in Foreign Courts and International Arbitration Tribunals, State Advocates Office
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AUSTRIA / *AUTRICHE*	**Brigitte OHMS (online)** Deputy Government Agent, Division for European and International Law, Human Rights Protection **Valerie TROFAIER-LESKOVAR (online)**
AZERBAIJAN / *AZERBAIDJAN*	**Ziya FATALIYEV** Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Representation to the Council of Europe **Elmin JAFAROV (online)** Second Secretary, Department for Cooperation with International Human Rights Institutions, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
BELGIUM / *BELGIQUE*	**Philippe WERY (online)** Chef du Service des droits de l'homme, SPF Justice, Service des Droits de l'Homme **Isabelle NIEDLISPACHER (online)** Agent to the European Court of Human Rights for the Government of Belgium
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