



**Doc. 11764**

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## Education of police officers

**Reply to Written question<sup>1</sup>:** Written question No. 552 (Doc. 11671)  
Committee of Ministers

### 1. Question from Mr Lindblad

The General Agreement on Privileges and Immunities of the Council of Europe, Paris, 2 September 1949, Part V – Representatives to the Consultative Assembly, Articles 13 to 15 – sets out the regulations applying to parliamentarians. It states among other things that no administrative or other restrictions shall be imposed on the free movement to and from the place of meeting of representatives to the Assembly.

At the Assembly's latest Standing Committee meeting in Stockholm, a number of members were stopped by the police while they were on their way to the Assembly meeting. The reason was a parallel high-level meeting on the International Compact with Iraq, Annual Review Conference (ICI). The problem is not that some parliamentarians were stopped according to the Swedish police law and its Article 24. My concern is that the police officers on duty were not familiar with the General Agreement mentioned above.

Mr Lindblad,

To ask the Committee of Ministers,

What measures does it intend to take to ensure that information about the General Agreement is included in the training of police officers in member countries?

### *Reply by the Committee of Ministers*

1. The Right Honourable Parliamentarian is referring to events that took place in the context of a high-level international meeting which required substantial security measures, including the presence of 1 700 Swedish police officers, to ensure that it proceeded smoothly. Foreign security forces were also present.
2. Nobody contests the right of the police to prohibit access to certain areas, in accordance with the relevant national legislation, on grounds of law and order or security. Such prohibitions invariably cause inconvenience. Individuals and authorities whose activities are likely to be affected by such measures have no option but to modify their habitual behaviour.
3. For over 10 years the Council of Europe has been engaged in specific co-operation activities designed to improve knowledge of European standards among police forces so that they can apply these standards in their daily work. These activities are designed to familiarise them with the most fundamental human rights standards, in particular the case law of the European Court of Human Rights connected with police activities (freedom of assembly, lawfulness of detention, non-discrimination, lawful use of force, prohibition of ill-treatment, investigation techniques) and the principles set out in the European Code of Police Ethics adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 19 September 2001 at the 765th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies (Recommendation Rec(2001)10).

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1. adopted at the 1040th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies (5 November 2008)



4. Part of the European Code of Police Ethics is devoted to training for the police. Article 28 of the Code states that “general initial training should preferably be followed by in-service training at regular intervals, and specialist, management and leadership training, when it is required”. “Specialist training” means training that meets the specific needs of police forces, in the light of the duties and responsibilities assigned to them or attached to their grade. Article 28 would therefore seem to justify including, in their initial training or in specialist training for police forces responsible for patrolling public events, tuition in diplomatic privileges and immunities, in particular the General Agreement on Privileges and Immunities of the Council of Europe.

5. The Committee of Ministers nevertheless considers that it is for the competent national authorities to decide whether, and at what stage of the training, to include such tuition.