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Combating violence against women through the Istanbul Convention

Reply to Written question¹: Written question No. 683 (Doc. 13768)
Committee of Ministers

1. The Council of Europe's Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) provides a unique legal framework at the international level to combat the scourge of violence against women. Therefore, the Committee of Ministers strongly supports its signature and ratification by the largest possible number of States. Since its opening for signature in 2011, a number of national, regional and global events have been organised to promote the Istanbul Convention. These events were instrumental to the entry into force of the Convention.

2. In this regard, the Committee of Ministers is pleased to note that the number of member States which ratified the Istanbul Convention continues to grow, in particular with recent ratifications by Finland, Poland and Slovenia. Several other member States are actively preparing for signature and/or ratification in the near future.

3. Bosnia and Herzegovina's Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers will organise a high-level conference on 20 October 2015, in Sarajevo, which will be dedicated to the monitoring of the implementation of the Istanbul Convention. This conference will provide an opportunity to engage in a reflection process on new synergies at different levels (including at government and parliamentary levels) and an occasion for further promoting the Convention amongst key stakeholders in member States.

4. As is the case for other conventions, monitoring compliance of commitments taken by States parties to the Convention will contribute to the effective implementation of the Convention's provisions. The Committee of the Parties of the Istanbul Convention held its first meeting in May 2015 and elected the first 10 members of the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO). GREVIO will hold its first meeting on 21 to 23 September 2015 and is expected to start its first round of monitoring in early 2016.

5. While the current priority is the establishment and effective operation of the monitoring mechanism of the Istanbul Convention, efforts are continuing to promote the Convention and support its wide ratification, in particular in the context of co-operation programmes with member States.

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