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Protecting and supporting the victims of terrorism

Reply to Recommendation¹: Recommendation 2164 (2019)

Committee of Ministers

1. The Committee of Ministers has carefully examined Parliamentary Assembly [Recommendation 2164 \(2019\)](#) on “Protecting and supporting the victims of terrorism”, which it has forwarded to the Committee on Counter-Terrorism (CDCT) and the Steering Committee for Human Rights (CDDH), for information and possible comments.

2. The fight against terrorism and the protection of the victims of terrorism have long been a major concern of the Council of Europe. It is important to enhance collaboration to combat terrorism committed by whomever, wherever and for whatever purposes, including to take appropriate steps to counter public provocation to commit a terrorist offence and propaganda for terrorism. Several legal instruments have been adopted in this field since the 1970s and serve as a basis for judicial and law-enforcement co-operation between member States. The Committee of Ministers therefore calls on those States which have not yet done so to ratify without delay the Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism (CETS No. 196) and its Additional Protocol (CETS No. 217).

3. The Committee of Ministers concurs with the Parliamentary Assembly that it is essential to give a strong international dimension to the assistance to victims of terrorism, not only in Europe, but globally. As regards the situation of victims of terrorism in Europe, the Committee of Ministers considers that there is a need to further deepen co-ordination and co-operation in this field between the Council of Europe and the United Nations, the OSCE, as well as other regional organisations, in order to exploit synergies and to avoid unnecessary duplication of work. It especially encourages the ongoing co-operation between the Council of Europe and the European Union, *inter alia*, in the form of concrete joint projects to develop and implement common standards.

4. The member States of the Council of Europe have already taken a number of important steps through the adoption of the Revised Guidelines of the Committee of Ministers on the protection of victims of terrorist acts (2017). These include, among other things, that States should provide an appropriate legal and administrative framework for victims of terrorist acts without any discrimination. In June 2019, the French Presidency of the Committee of Ministers held a workshop on the protection of victims of terrorist acts, in co-operation with the CDDH, in order to raise awareness of these Guidelines and to share good practices on how they can be implemented at national level.

5. It is also worth mentioning the assessment of the implementation of Article 13 of the Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism carried out by the Consultation of the Parties to this Convention, and the resulting prioritisation of efforts by the CDCT to address the situation of persons who become victims of terrorist attacks perpetrated outside the territories of their own States (activity 3.3 of the Council of Europe Counter-Terrorism Strategy 2018-2022). Moreover, in May 2019, the CDCT has decided to establish a network of contact points for the exchange of procedural information regarding the legal standing of victims of terrorism. This network, which became operational on 1 November 2019, is intended to become global, incorporating not only member States of the Council of Europe, but all interested States around the world.

1. Adopted at the 1 380th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies (1 July 2020).



6. The Committee of Ministers underlines that, in the framework of its activities, the CDCT will continue to hold on a regular basis exchanges between its members and participants concerning the legal situation of victims of terrorism in the Council of Europe member States, as well as on best practices in assisting and compensating such victims. It recalls that the Parliamentary Assembly has the status of participant in all intergovernmental committees and invites it to be represented on them.

7. Finally, as regards the proposal by the Parliamentary Assembly on the adoption of a European charter of the rights of the victims of terrorism (paragraph 4.3 of the recommendation), the Committee of Ministers informs the Assembly that the competent steering committees will consider the feasibility of such an undertaking by the Council of Europe. It will inform the Assembly of any development in respect of this initiative.