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Persistent violations of commitments to the aims of the Statute of the Council of Europe by Hungary and Poland

Written question No. 771 to the Committee of Ministers
by Mr Søren SØNDERGAARD, Denmark, Group of the Unified European Left

In 1994, the Committee of Ministers, including representatives of Hungary and Poland, adopted the "Declaration on compliance with commitments accepted by member States of the Council of Europe". In the declaration, it was decided that the Committee of Ministers will consider the implementation of commitments concerning the situation of democracy, human rights and the rule of law in any member State referred to it by, inter alia, member States.

The work of the Venice Commission and of the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights respectively can be seen as complementary in this field. The Venice Commission provides legal opinions requested for and based on an in-depth analysis. On its own right of initiative, the Commissioner analyses, reacts and calls for action in member States in order that they fulfil their commitments. The Commissioner has regularly referred to the recurrent criticism expressed by the Venice Commission about deteriorating rule of law situations in Hungary and Poland.

Since the beginning of 2011, the Venice Commission has adopted 20 opinions on Hungary and, since the beginning of 2016, the Commissioner has adopted 6 opinions on Poland. Incumbent Commissioners have issued about 20 statements, letters, etc. addressed to Hungary and about another 20 to Poland.

Mr Søndergaard

To ask the Committee of Ministers:

What decisions have been taken by the Committee of Ministers or its competent rapporteur group in response to the continuing violations of commitments by Hungary and Poland?