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The role of the Council of Europe in preventing conflicts, restoring credibility of international institutions and promoting global peace

Reply to Recommendation¹: Recommendation 2259 (2023)
Committee of Ministers

1. The Committee of Ministers informs the Parliamentary Assembly that the following reply was adopted by a majority as provided by Article 20 (d) of the Statute.
2. The Committee of Ministers has carefully examined Parliamentary Assembly [Recommendation 2259 \(2023\)](#) “The role of the Council of Europe in preventing conflicts, restoring credibility of international institutions and promoting global peace”.
3. The Committee of Ministers, referring to the Statute of the Council of Europe and recalling that the “pursuit of peace based upon justice and international co-operation is vital for the preservation of human society and civilisation”, took note of the Parliamentary Assembly’s recommendation to develop further Council of Europe’s tools to promote democratic security and preventing conflicts. Whilst recalling that the “matters relating to national defence do not fall within the scope of the Council of Europe”, the Committee shares the Assembly’s opinion that the Organisation is a peace project.
4. The Committee highlights that, at the 4th Summit in Reykjavík, the Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe declared “that the Council of Europe, with its seat in Strasbourg, symbol of peace and reconciliation, is uniquely placed to bring together, on an equal footing, all countries of Europe to protect democratic security in Europe and to counter the undermining of human rights, democracy and the rule of law.” The Heads of State and Government also acknowledged “democracy as the only means to ensure that everyone can live in a peaceful, prosperous and free society” and committed to “prevent and resist democratic backsliding on our continent, including in situations of emergency, crisis and armed conflicts”, including through the adoption of the Reykjavík Principles for Democracy.
5. The Committee reiterates its unwavering support for ensuring a comprehensive system of accountability for the aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine and all its legal and human rights consequences. The Committee recalls that the creation of the Register of Damage Caused by the Aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, which became operational in April 2024, constitutes the first component of a future international compensation mechanism. Since it started operating, several thousand claims have already been submitted and new claims categories for individuals who have suffered grave violations as a result of Russia’s aggression against Ukraine have been opened in March 2025 (personal injury, sexual violence, torture, deprivation of liberty, or forced labour).
6. The Committee also welcomes the significant progress made towards the establishment of the International Claims Commission for Ukraine, which represents the second component of the comprehensive compensation mechanism for Ukraine. If the Intergovernmental Negotiation Committee, which also includes

1. Adopted at the 1528th meeting of the Ministers’ Deputies (7 May 2025)



non-Council of Europe delegations, reaches a consensus on the basis of an Open Council of Europe Convention, the terms of reference of an Ad hoc Committee on the Establishment of a Claims Commission for Ukraine (CAHEC) could be adopted during the summer 2025.

7. The Committee also draws attention to the recent, major step taken for the establishment of a Special Tribunal for the Crime of Aggression against Ukraine within the framework of the Council of Europe. Gathered in Strasbourg from 19 to 21 March 2025, members of the Core Group, including the Council of Europe, finalised the technical work on the three draft documents necessary for the establishment of the Special Tribunal: the draft bilateral agreement between Ukraine and the Council of Europe on the establishment of the Special Tribunal, the Special Tribunal's draft statute and a draft enlarged partial agreement on the management of the Special Tribunal. These three documents will now be submitted for political consideration.

8. More generally, the Committee notes that the Council of Europe has, for several years, been implementing confidence-building measures in countries and regions affected by conflict. These activities bring together members of communities divided by conflict for peer-to-peer exchanges based on Council of Europe standards and are intended to help foster trust and mutual understanding, and more widely to contribute to an environment where tensions are reduced and where dialogue might flourish. In recent years, confidence-building measures activities have focused on the thematic areas of archives management, municipal co-operation, youth participation in peacebuilding, safety of journalists and cultural heritage. This work remains ongoing and is carried out in full co-ordination with the member States concerned.

9. The Committee of Ministers also highlights that the Reykjavík Declaration has given a new impetus to the Council of Europe's external dimension, which contributes to strengthen multilateralism and the international rule-based order, thereby promoting global peace. This contribution is embodied in strengthened dialogue and partnership with other international organisations, in particular the EU, UN and OSCE; the outreach efforts towards non-European States, notably in the context of the support to Ukraine and membership to the Register of Damage, and in general for the promotion of open Council of Europe instruments; and the Council of Europe's policy towards neighbouring regions, based on Council of Europe values and demand driven. The Council of Europe Liaison Offices, with the EU in Brussels, the UN in Geneva and Vienna, and in the near future also in New York, and the OSCE in Vienna and Warsaw have effectively enhanced the Council of Europe external dimension playing a key role in the dynamics of co-operation and visibility of Council of Europe instruments. Observer States, international organisations and co-operation projects also contribute to the promotion of Council of Europe instruments.

10. Finally, the Committee of Ministers draws attention to the Secretary General's initiative to elaborate a New Democratic Pact for Europe – A Commitment for 21st Century Democratic Security in Europe. The initiative is prompted by the acknowledgement that the European democratic model, built on shared values, is being weakened by internal and external challenges. The Council of Europe was established to uphold and safeguard this model and must innovate to defend democracy and the rule of law against both long-standing and emerging threats. The New Democratic Pact rests on three key pillars: learning and practicing democracy by supporting initiatives that equip European citizens; protecting democracy by developing robust responses to internal and external threats, including corruption, electoral interference and disinformation; and innovating for democracy by enhancing democratic processes through deliberative and participatory democracy, as well as by harnessing new technologies. The Steering Committee on Democracy (CDDEM) works on the implementation of the Reykjavík Principles of Democracy by developing a series of parameters, which will contribute to provide a framework for future efforts to protect freedom in Europe.