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Doc. 11707
17 September 2008

Secret detentions and illegal transfers of detainees in Europe

Reply to Written question[1]: Written question No. 545 (Doc. 11577)
Committee of Ministers

1. The honourable member refers to the reply to Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation 1801 (2007) on secret detentions and illegal transfers of detainees involving Council of Europe member states.

2. The Committee of Ministers has few comments to add to that reply. It does wish, nevertheless, to underline that the reply sets out – very clearly – governments' obligations under the European Convention on Human Rights, notably to prevent human rights violations and, if they have occurred, to carry out independent and impartial investigations and to bring to justice those responsible for serious violations.

3. The Committee of Ministers would like to draw the honourable member's attention to the fact that the second of two studies, which it commissioned from the Venice Commission in the context of its reply to Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation 1713 (2005), was adopted at the Commission's 74th Plenary Session (Venice, 14-15 March 2008) (Document CDL-AD(2008)004). The report concerns democratic control of the armed forces and complements a previous report on democratic oversight of the security services in member states. These texts have both been transmitted to the governments of member states; they are available on the website of the Venice Commission: www.venice.coe.int/docs/2008/CDL-AD (2008)004-e.asp.

1. adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 11 September 2008, at the 1034th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies.