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Strengthening co-operation with the United Nations in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Reply to Recommendation¹: Recommendation 2150 (2019)
Committee of Ministers

1. The Committee of Ministers has carefully examined Parliamentary Assembly [Recommendation 2150 \(2019\)](#) entitled “Strengthening co-operation with the United Nations in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”.
2. The Committee notes that the United Nations is a key partner of the Council of Europe, which seeks to give expression at regional level to the universal principles of human rights and democracy developed by the United Nations at global level. Co-operation between the two organisations has a long history and covers a variety of areas. The extent of this co-operation can be seen in the various resolutions on co-operation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe which the General Assembly of the United Nations adopts every two years, to coincide with its debate on co-operation with regional and other organisations.
3. The last such resolution was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 26 November 2018 (doc. [A/RES/73/15](#)). The next draft resolution will appear on the Committee of Ministers’ agenda in the spring 2020, for adoption by the General Assembly of the United Nations in the second half of 2020. The Committee will take into due consideration any contribution which the Parliamentary Assembly might wish to send it in connection with the preparation of this draft. It will do likewise in the event that it should have to prepare a contribution to the review of progress in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
4. In addition, the Committee of Ministers has brought Parliamentary Assembly [Recommendation 2150 \(2019\)](#) to the attention of the governments of the member and observer States so that they can take due note of the recommendations set out therein, including the wish “to include members of the Parliamentary Assembly in their delegations to the General Assembly for the purpose of the biannual debate on co-operation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe, as well as to various events for the review of progress in implementing the SDGs, including the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development”.
5. The Committee of Ministers notes that primary responsibility for achieving the SDGs lies with the authorities in the member States. In its view, however, the Council of Europe can contribute to the implementation of Agenda 2030 for sustainable development by helping States to achieve the SDGs at national level. To this end, it points out that the Organisation's programme of activities and budget are now drawn up in line with the relevant SDGs. With regard to intergovernmental activities, it informs the Parliamentary Assembly that for the 2020-2021 biennium, all steering and ad hoc committees could be tasked, *inter alia*, with contributing in their respective fields to the implementation of the United Nations Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and regularly reviewing progress towards the implementation of its SDGs. In addition, the creation of a website indicating how the work of the various Council of Europe bodies and instruments contributes to the SDGs is a useful tool for member States in their reporting on the implementation of the SDGs.

1. Adopted at the 1354th meeting of the Ministers’ Deputies (18 September 2019).



6. The Committee of Ministers has held several discussions on the Council of Europe's contribution to the implementation of the SDGs, including in the context of its regular dialogue with the Secretary General of the Council of Europe. Further exchanges of views on this issue, including with the possible participation of representatives of the Parliamentary Assembly, could be held in particular at the level of the Rapporteur Group on External Relations (GR-EXT).

7. As regards the Council of Europe's representation at the United Nations, the Committee of Ministers wishes to point out that the opening of Council of Europe Liaison Offices in Geneva and Vienna in 2010 and 2011 respectively have been instrumental in strengthening co-operation and achieving greater synergy between the United Nations and the Council of Europe. Co-operation with the United Nations Headquarters in New York is ensured through regular dialogue at the level of the Secretaries General of the two organisations, through exchanges of information and numerous contacts between the two secretariats. The Committee of Ministers is open to considering the possibility of greater Council of Europe representation at the United Nations, subject to budgetary neutrality.