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Reported cases of political prisoners in the Russian Federation

Reply to Recommendation¹: Recommendation 2236 (2022)
Committee of Ministers

1. The Committee of Ministers has carefully examined Parliamentary Assembly [Recommendation 2236 \(2022\)](#) on “Reported cases of political prisoners in the Russian Federation” and forwarded it to the Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) for information and possible comments.

2. At its latest quarterly meeting to supervise the execution of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR)² (1459th meeting, 7-9 March 2023), the Committee adopted an interim resolution in which it deplored that, despite its repeated calls, Mr Aleksey Navalnyy has still not been released and is detained mainly in solitary confinement without direct and unsupervised access to his lawyers. The Committee exhorted once again the authorities to release him immediately. Concerning Mr Alexsey Pichugin, the Committee adopted an interim resolution at its Human Rights meeting in March 2022, exhorting again the Russian authorities to find, as a matter of urgency, alternative avenues to secure redress to the applicant, including by considering the adoption of measures to ensure his release. The Committee of Ministers condemns the recent sentencing of Vladimir Kara-Murza to 25 years in prison on politically motivated charges including spreading “knowingly false information” about the Russian armed forces; involvement with an “undesirable” organisation; and “treason”. Mr Vladimir Kara-Murza denounced Russia’s invasion of Ukraine for what it was – a blatant violation of international law and the United Nations Charter”.

3. The Parliamentary Assembly has encouraged the Committee of Ministers to use all the tools at its disposal to secure the execution of such judgments. In this connection, the Committee recalls that at its quarterly meeting in December 2022 on the supervision of the execution of ECHR judgments, it decided to implement a [new strategy](#)³ on its supervision of cases against the Russian Federation in which it deeply deplored that, since 3 March 2022, Russia ceased all communication with the Council of Europe concerning the execution of judgments. Given the absence of information from the authorities, the input provided by civil society remains of vital importance, and the Council of Europe will enhance exchanges with relevant NGOs; a first such exchange with NGOs was held in March 2023⁴. Interaction with relevant UN human rights instruments to which Russia is still a party should also be stepped up. Finally, the Committee of Ministers [invited](#) the Secretary General to write to the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs after each meeting on the execution of judgments, to provide information on outstanding Russian cases and urge the authorities to comply with their obligations under international law to fully abide by the judgments of the European Court. The Secretary General did so immediately after the Committee’s meetings in December 2022 and March 2023, referring, *inter alia*, to the Committee’s decision in respect of Mr Navalnyy.⁵ These continuing attempts

1. Adopted at the 1467th meeting of the Ministers’ Deputies (31 May 2023).

2. The Russian Federation ceased to be a member of the Council of Europe as from 16 March 2022 (Resolution [CM/Res\(2022\)2](#)), and a Contracting Party to the Convention as from 16 September 2022. The Committee continues to supervise the execution of the judgments and friendly settlements concerned, and the Russian Federation is required to implement them (§ 7 of Resolution [CM/Res\(2022\)3](#)).

3. See [CM/Inf/DH\(2022\)25](#)

4. See Press release DC 059(2023).

5. See Press releases [DC\(265\)2022](#) and DC 059(2023).



to foster implementation of the judgments of the ECHR are vital also with a view to the current situation in Russia, where increasing cases of politically motivated prosecution and incarceration harshen repression and deprive ever more citizens of their human rights.

4. The Committee shares the view of the Parliamentary Assembly that prevention of torture and inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment of such detainees is of great importance and, in this regard, the Committee recalls the work of the CPT to prevent torture and inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment of persons deprived of their liberty in Europe.

5. Recalling that the Russian Federation remains a party to the European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the Committee of Ministers calls on the Russian Federation to respect its voluntarily assumed obligations under that Convention including by permitting the CPT to visit any place within its jurisdiction where persons are deprived of liberty by a public authority. The Committee invites the CPT to inform it of any action it may have taken to monitor the Russian Federation's compliance with its undertakings under the Convention.