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PC.DEL/1910/21
17 December 2021

ENGLISH only

Joint statement on “Recommendations from conference participants at the international conference held on 2 June 2021 on “Torture Prevention in the Criminal Justice System: Roles and Responsibilities of Police and other Law Enforcement”

As delivered by Ambassador Dinesen, Permanent Representative of Denmark to the OSCE, at the 1349th Meeting of the Permanent Council

Madam Chair,

At the 27th OSCE Ministerial Council in Tirana in 2020, OSCE participating States adopted a decision strongly condemning all forms of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment as one of the most flagrant violations of human rights and human dignity and reaffirmed that freedom from torture and other ill-treatment is a non-derogable right under international law. However, despite clear commitments, the use of torture and other ill-treatment continues to be a challenge in criminal justice systems across the OSCE region.

In this context, on 2 June 2021, Denmark and Switzerland organised the international conference, “Torture Prevention in the Criminal Justice System: The Roles and Responsibilities of Police and other Law Enforcement”, with the support of the OSCE 2021 Swedish Chairpersonship and the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). The conference was co-sponsored by a total of 43 OSCE participating States: Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, the EU and its Member States, Georgia, Iceland, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, San Marino, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

Earlier this week, we distributed a short follow-up publication to all participating States through the Pidgeon holes at Hofburg as well as online. The publication is our attempt at collecting and structuring the recommendations made by the speakers and participants at the conference, including relevant recommendations from recent publications referred to at the conference.

The overview document does not endorse any recommendations over others. Our hope is, however, that the document can serve as inspiration for further dialogue and possible action for relevant stakeholders.

We hope that you will find the publication useful, and we would like to thank all conference participants for their valuable contributions to the discussions. We look forward to continuing our dialogue on this important agenda in the New Year.

Thank you, Madam Chair.