

Press Release

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European governments pledge better protection for victims of domestic violence

Tromsø (Norway), 19.06.2009 – Acting on the determination that victims of domestic violence are not just victims of abuses but too often victims of indifference and forgetfulness as well, the Ministers of Justice of the Council of Europe member countries undertook today to adopt definite measures to combat domestic violence and break the silence surrounding it.

Prevention, protection and prosecution – towards a new Council of Europe Convention to fight violence against women

Besides the need to take measures on prevention and protection of victims, women and children especially, and to provide them with effective remedies, the Ministers declared that it was urgent to prosecute and punish the perpetrators of domestic violence, but also to ensure that they were offered treatment to prevent re-offending.

The Ministers gave their support to the work of the Council of Europe committee of experts responsible for drafting a new convention to prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence, protect victims and prosecute the culprits – expected to come out in 2010.

The Tromsø conference moreover mapped out the main thrusts of future Council of Europe work to devise common rules on the status and rights of victims in criminal proceedings.

Re-enforcing the rule of law and building together for a common European area of justice to benefit 800 million Europeans

Countries not yet having done so were invited to sign and ratify the 2nd Additional Protocol to the European Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters which gives the Convention the capability to meet the challenges which the growing cross-border complexion of crime poses today, by providing for new machinery and means of co-operation, facilitating mutual judicial assistance, and making it speedier and more flexible.

The Ministers stressed the need to continue working out practical measures to increase the effectiveness of international co-operation in criminal matters throughout Europe.

Calling for greater synergy between the Council of Europe, the United Nations and the European Union, the Ministers reiterated their support for the activities of the Council of Europe in strengthening and promoting rule of law, and urged the Organisation to enhance the global scope of some of its key conventions.

To meet again in Turkey in 2011

Turkey will host the 30th Conference of Ministers of Justice of the Council of Europe in 2011.

The resolutions adopted at the conclusion of the conference are available on www.coe.int/minjust.

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