



**Launching Conference “Coordinating Methodical Centre (CMC) for Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence”, EEA/Norway Grants Programme SK09, 14 April 2015 in Bratislava**

**Intervention by Mr Gianluca Esposito,  
Head of the Equality and Human Dignity Department,  
Council of Europe**

Minister, Ambassador, project partners, ladies and gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to take part in this launch event of the pre-defined project *Coordinating Methodical Centre for the prevention and elimination of violence against women and domestic violence* implemented within the framework of the EEA/Norway Grants.

The role of the Council of Europe in the Norway Grants programmes is to provide strategic and practical advice to

the beneficiary countries in designing its activities and later in implementing them, having in mind the Council of Europe standards.

The Council of Europe is also involved as partner to many pre-defined projects, such as this one. Our input in this project will focus on the capacity building of law enforcement and the judiciary, developing and implementing an awareness-raising campaign, and providing advice on the conceptualisation of the setting-up of the Coordinating Methodical Centre, or CMC.

We look forward to continuing our good co-operation and remain ready to provide our support and advice to the project, in particular by aligning its activities with European standards and best practices.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The Council of Europe is proud to be the home of a legally binding treaty on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence. It has been hailed as the most visionary treaty to tackle this serious violation of

human rights, and as the most comprehensive legal framework for tackling violence against women in all its forms.

This convention, which most of you also know as the Istanbul Convention, has been in force for eight months now and has been signed by 21 member states and ratified by 16 – the 17<sup>th</sup> ratification will come on Friday of this week with Finland and we've just heard the 18<sup>th</sup> is going to be Poland. This Convention is a standard reference text not just in Europe but also globally, by being referred to as the “gold standard” by the UN.

So, what are the groundbreaking features of this convention? Although time does not allow me to describe them in detail, let me give you two examples.

First, the Istanbul Convention introduces a holistic approach to combating all forms of violence against women. Preventing violence, protecting its victims and prosecuting the perpetrators are the cornerstones of the convention. In addition to these 3 “Ps”, it asks states parties to ensure that all measures are adopted and implemented in a co-

ordinated way forming comprehensive *policies* that involve all necessary agencies and institutions, governmental and non-governmental organisations.

Second, to ensure that the states parties to the Istanbul Convention comply with the requirements of the convention, a monitoring mechanism is being set up. It consists of a Committee of Parties and an independent expert body on violence against women known as GREVIO. Based on the nominations made (21 candidates of 12 parties), the ten members of the GREVIO will be elected in May this year. Once becoming operational GREVIO will prepare a questionnaire, against which they will assess how the parties to the Istanbul Convention have lived up to their commitments.

I want to take this opportunity to congratulate the Slovakian authorities for signing the Istanbul Convention [1] and for the progress towards its ratification. We do hope that Slovakia will be amongst the countries that will ratify the Convention as soon as possible.

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<sup>1</sup> Slovakia signed the Istanbul Convention on 11 May 2011, the day of opening for signature of the treaty.

Another important measure – showing in particular the commitment and readiness of your Ministry to pave the way for the ratification of the IC – is the setting up of the Coordinating Methodical Centre.

Article 10 of the Istanbul Convention - on which this project is based - is one of its core requirements. It asks States to establish one or more bodies responsible for the co-ordination, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and measures to prevent and combat all forms of violence covered by the Convention.

It is closely linked to another core obligation of the treaty – the “fourth P” – which requires the adoption and implementation of comprehensive and co-ordinated policies covering all forms of violence against women.

This obligation can only be fulfilled if a governmental body is set up to ensure that all agencies and sectors of government take concerted action and enter into dialogue with different entities. In other words, the co-ordinating body is the embodiment of a holistic approach to preventing and

combating violence against women called for by the Convention.

Choosing to frame the project around this particular aspect of the convention is very interesting and also very challenging. Being a newly established measure, there is so far very little information on such bodies and few examples of good practice among our member states.

This is of course a great opportunity for the Slovakian government, with the support of the Norway Grants funding. We are pleased to contribute to the work of the CMC and we will follow with great interest the final outcomes of this project and what shape the CMC will take in order to fulfil the many tasks foreseen by the Istanbul Convention. Hopefully, it will also serve as a good practice example for other member states on how to go about setting up such a body with numerous and complex tasks.

Ladies and gentlemen, let me conclude. Ratifying treaties is good, effectively implementing them is even better. The hope and the promise that the ratification of the IC carries for women victims has to be met with tangible support and

protection by the authorities and service providers, by information on where to get help and who to turn to, and empathy by all professionals who deal with victims of gender-based violence so that victims can move forward and become survivors. This project will contribute to achieving these important objectives so that Slovakian women can live a life free from violence and safe from fear.

Thank you very much for your attention.