



# General Assembly

Distr.: General  
6 March 2021

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## Seventy-fifth session

Agenda item 130 (l)

**Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations: cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe**

## Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 3 March 2021

[without reference to a Main Committee ([A/75/L.64](#) and [A/75/L.64/Add.1](#))]

### 75/264. Cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling the Agreement between the Council of Europe and the Secretariat of the United Nations signed on 15 December 1951 and the Arrangement on Cooperation and Liaison between the Secretariats of the United Nations and the Council of Europe of 19 November 1971,*

*Recalling also its resolution 44/6 of 17 October 1989, in which it granted the Council of Europe a standing invitation to participate as an observer in its sessions and work, as well as its previous resolutions on cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe,*

*Acknowledging the contribution of the Council of Europe to the strengthening of multilateralism as well as to the promotion and protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, democracy and the rule of law through its standards, principles, monitoring mechanisms and technical cooperation, as well as to the effective implementation of relevant international legal instruments of the United Nations,*

*Acknowledging also the contribution of the Council of Europe to the development of international law, and welcoming the openness of the Council of Europe to the participation of States of other regions in its legal instruments,*

*Welcoming the role of the Council of Europe in building a united Europe without dividing lines, and the contribution of the Council of Europe to cohesion, stability and security in Europe,*

*Commending the increasing contribution of the Council of Europe, including at the parliamentary level, to democratic transition in its neighbouring regions aimed at promoting democratic institutions and procedures, and welcoming the readiness of*



the Council of Europe to further share its experience in democracy-building with interested countries on the basis of a demand-driven approach,

*Welcoming* the increasingly close relations between the United Nations and the Council of Europe, and commending the contribution of the Permanent Delegations of the Council of Europe to the United Nations Offices at Geneva and at Vienna to the enhancement of cooperation and the achievement of greater synergy between the United Nations and the Council of Europe,

*Recognizing* that multilingualism contributes to the achievement of the goals of the United Nations and the Council of Europe, welcoming the efforts of the United Nations and the Council of Europe towards strengthening multilingualism in their respective organizations, and encouraging them to advance in this field, in particular through the exchange of experience and best practices,

*Taking note with appreciation* of the report of the Secretary-General on cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe,<sup>1</sup>

1. *Welcomes* the contribution of the Council of Europe and of its member States, at all levels of government, to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development<sup>2</sup> in Europe and beyond, while also recognizing the need for the United Nations and the Council of Europe to continue to work together, within their respective mandates, to accelerate the pace of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals towards achieving the 2030 Agenda, recognizes in this context that since 2018, special attention has been given in the design of the Council of Europe programme and budget to the contribution of the Council of Europe to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and that Council of Europe programmes include links to concrete Goals, and also recognizes that since 2020, the terms of reference of intergovernmental committees of the Council of Europe include in their tasks reviewing progress towards the Goals;

2. *Encourages* the United Nations and the Council of Europe to strengthen their cooperation at all levels in order to effectively address the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) health crisis and its dramatic consequences for the people of Europe and the world, including deepening already existing inequalities, remains determined to address the COVID-19 pandemic through a multilateral response and cooperation, welcomes the initiatives taken by the two organizations in this respect, recalls the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly related to the impact of COVID-19,<sup>3</sup> takes note of the policy briefs and statements of the Secretary-General of the United Nations on COVID-19-related issues, and also takes note of the information papers of the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe, which provide guidance to member States on proportionate measures for the pandemic response;

3. *Reiterates its call for* the reinforcement of cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe regarding the promotion and protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, the promotion of democracy and the rule of law and good governance at all levels, *inter alia*, the prevention of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, the fight against terrorism, trafficking in human beings, sexual and gender-based violence, including violence against all women and children, including sexual abuse, the fight against all forms of racism, xenophobia and intolerance, the fight against multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities, the promotion of freedom of expression and freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief, the protection of the rights and dignity of all members of society without any distinction

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<sup>1</sup> See [A/75/345-S/2020/898](#), sect. II.

<sup>2</sup> Resolution [70/1](#).

<sup>3</sup> Resolutions [74/270](#), [74/274](#) and [74/306](#).

and the promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women and girls and of human rights education, as well as the promotion of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment and to promoting respect for human rights by businesses and access to remedy;

4. *Confirms its recognition* of the key role of the European Court of Human Rights in ensuring effective human rights protection under the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms for the more than 830 million persons in the 47 States members of the Council of Europe, and notes with interest the efforts to guarantee the long-term effectiveness of the Convention system and to ensure the rapid and effective execution of Court judgments, as well as to conclude, as soon as possible, the accession of the European Union to the Convention;

5. *Recognizes* the important role of the Council of Europe in upholding the rule of law and fighting impunity, including by strengthening the capacity of the national judiciaries of its member States to carry out their work consistent with the relevant international obligations of the member States in particular, and where applicable, those defined in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court;<sup>4</sup>

6. *Also recognizes* the valuable role of the Council of Europe in advising and assisting States with regard to upholding constitutional and fundamental laws respecting human rights, democracy and the rule of law principles, including through its European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission), noting in this context the cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe;

7. *Further recognizes* the role of the revised European Social Charter and of the European Committee of Social Rights in protecting economic and social rights, notes in this context the cooperation between the Council of Europe and the International Labour Organization, notes also the contribution that the Council of Europe can make in ensuring the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities,<sup>5</sup> notes in this regard the Council of Europe Strategy on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2017–2023, confirms its support for cooperation between the two organizations with respect to the protection and promotion of the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities, including women and girls with disabilities and persons with disabilities in sport, the eradication of poverty, strengthening social cohesion and intergenerational solidarity and ensuring the protection of economic, social and cultural rights for all, and encourages further cooperation between the Council of Europe and the World Health Organization, including the World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe;

8. *Notes* the effective implementation of the joint declaration on the reinforcement of cooperation between the secretariat of the Council of Europe and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, and in this respect encourages further cooperation between the United Nations, including the Human Rights Council, its special procedures, the Office of the High Commissioner and the human rights treaty bodies, and the Council of Europe, along with its Commissioner for Human Rights, with regard to promoting and ensuring respect for human rights and the role of human rights defenders;

9. *Notes with appreciation* the contribution of the Council of Europe to the enhancement of cooperation between international and regional mechanisms for the promotion and protection of human rights, and in this context welcomes, in particular, the contribution of the Council of Europe to the universal periodic review regarding the situation of human rights in States members of the Council of Europe;

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<sup>4</sup> United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2187, No. 38544.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., vol. 2515, No. 44910.

10. *Encourages* further cooperation, where appropriate, between the United Nations and the Council of Europe through their mechanisms on the prevention of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment;

11. *Encourages* the Council of Europe to continue cooperation with the United Nations in the fight against trafficking in persons, including in the context of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons, recalls that the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings is open for accession by all States, and notes with interest the results of the monitoring activities carried out by the Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings and by the Committee of the Parties to the Convention;

12. *Notes with appreciation* the Council of Europe Convention against Trafficking in Human Organs, as a follow-up to the joint Council of Europe/United Nations study on trafficking in organs, tissues and cells and trafficking in human beings for the purpose of the removal of organs, encourages further cooperation in this field, and recalls in this respect that the Convention against Trafficking in Human Organs is open for accession by all States;

13. *Also notes with appreciation* the cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe in the field of bioethics, in particular through the participation of the Council of Europe as an associate member in the Inter-Agency Committee on Bioethics, notes in this context the adoption by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe of the Strategic Action Plan on Human Rights and Technologies in Biomedicine (2020–2025), and encourages the enhancing of this cooperation, taking into account scientific and technological breakthroughs, such as artificial intelligence and genetic engineering, and continues to recall that the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Dignity of the Human Being with regard to the Application of Biology and Medicine (Convention on Human Rights and Biomedicine) is open for accession by all States;

14. *Welcomes and encourages* the enhancing of the close collaboration among the United Nations Children’s Fund, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children, the Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council on the sale and sexual exploitation of children, including child prostitution, child pornography and other child sexual abuse material, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Committee on the Rights of the Child and the Council of Europe aimed at protecting and promoting the rights of the child, recalls the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2016–2021) promoting the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child<sup>6</sup> in its member States, continues to recall in this context that the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse is open for accession by all States, and in this context recalls once again the “Start to talk” initiative calling to public authorities and the sport movement to take the necessary prevention and protection measures to stop child sexual abuse;

15. *Recognizes* the important contributions made by the Council of Europe European Commission against Racism and Intolerance, in the 25 years since its creation, to the implementation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination<sup>7</sup> and the development of domestic laws and policies aimed at combating racism and intolerance in Europe, while at the same time recognizing that challenges still remain, and in this regard welcomes the Commission Road Map to Effective Equality for the years to come;

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., vol. 1577, No. 27531.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., vol. 660, No. 9464.

16. *Welcomes* the commitments of the Council of Europe in the field of protection of persons belonging to national minorities, recognizes the important contribution of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages in protecting persons belonging to national minorities, as well as the paramount importance of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities,<sup>8</sup> notes with appreciation the setting-up of new Council of Europe intergovernmental structures to guide future State action and to enable peer review of experience and good practices in combating discrimination, promoting the social inclusion and respect for human rights of the Roma, safeguarding the rights of persons belonging to national minorities and the use of regional or minority languages, countering hate speech and promoting inclusive societies, and encourages greater interaction between all relevant United Nations and Council of Europe bodies in these important areas;

17. *Recognizes* the contribution of the Council of Europe to the development of international standards for the promotion of women's rights and gender equality and for combating sexual and gender-based violence, including domestic violence, such as the adoption of recommendation (2019)1 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on preventing and combating sexism, its regular and active participation in the sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women and the agreed and specified cooperation between the Council of Europe and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), which includes support to member States, upon their request, in implementing commitments on gender equality and women's rights and the promotion of the Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy, takes note of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence and invites States that have not yet done so to consider signing or ratifying it, in this context encourages the above-mentioned bodies to continue to develop a specific and fruitful collaboration in eliminating sexual and gender-based violence, including with the Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council on violence against women, its causes and consequences, and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, and the achievement of de facto gender equality, and recognizes the contribution of the Convention and of the monitoring activities carried out by the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence and by the Committee of the Parties to the Convention in eradicating this scourge;

18. *Recalls* its resolutions on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on women and girls,<sup>9</sup> given the disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the social and economic situation of women and girls and their access to education and essential health-care services, the increased demand for paid and unpaid care work and the reported surge of sexual and gender-based violence, which risk reversing the progress achieved on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in recent decades, and in this regard welcomes the policy brief of the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the impact of COVID-19 on women and girls,

19. *Encourages* continuing cooperation between the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the Council of Europe, including the Council of Europe Development Bank, in particular in the protection and promotion of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of refugees, asylum seekers, stateless persons and internally displaced persons, under the European Convention on Human Rights, and in the prevention and reduction of statelessness, in this context welcomes

<sup>8</sup> Resolution 47/135, annex.

<sup>9</sup> Resolutions 75/156 and 75/157.

the contribution of the Council of Europe to the ongoing work on the implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration<sup>10</sup> and to the implementation of the global compact on refugees, as well as during the Global Refugee Forum held on 17 and 18 December 2019, as activities identifying durable solutions for refugees, including the facilitation of protection and integration through education and the creation of employment opportunities, in this context notes with interest the results of the activities of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe on Migration and Refugees, welcomes the implementation of the Council of Europe Action Plan on Protecting Refugee and Migrant Children in Europe, and recognizes the importance of the interface offered by the presence at the Council of Europe of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Representation to the European Institutions in Strasbourg, as well as by the Permanent Delegation of the Council of Europe to the United Nations Office at Geneva, welcomes the active contribution of the Council of Europe to the dissemination of the European Qualifications Passport for Refugees with a view to ensuring that qualifications held by refugees and displaced persons receive fair recognition and the development of the new United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education,<sup>11</sup> and welcomes the adoption by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe of recommendation (2019)4 to member States on supporting young refugees in transition to adulthood and of recommendation (2019)11 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on effective guardianship for unaccompanied and separated children in the context of migration;

20. *Recognizes and encourages* the continuing close liaison and fruitful cooperation between United Nations missions and the Council of Europe offices in the field;

21. *Encourages* further cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe in the area of democracy and good governance, including through active participation in the Strasbourg World Forum for Democracy and the North-South Centre Lisbon Forum and engagement with members of parliaments, youth representatives and civil society, as appropriate, and the strengthening of the links between the Council of Europe European Programme for Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals and relevant United Nations agencies;

22. *Recognizes* the experience of the Council of Europe in engaging young people in the promotion of human rights education, and encourages the strengthening of the cooperation between the Council of Europe and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in view of the implementation of the fourth phase of the World Programme for Human Rights Education (2020–2024), which is dedicated to youth;

23. *Notes* the important role of the United Nations Development Programme and the Council of Europe in supporting good local democratic governance, in particular through the implementation of the European Charter of Local Self-Government, as well as the fruitful cooperation between them, encourages further deepening of the cooperation in this field, and calls for enhanced cooperation between the Council of Europe and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) in the field of sustainable urban governance, in particular also through the Council of Europe Conference of Ministers Responsible for

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<sup>10</sup> Resolution 73/195, annex.

<sup>11</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *Records of the General Conference, Fortieth Session, Paris, 12–27 November 2019*, vol. 1 and corrigendum, *Resolutions*, annex II.

Spatial/Regional Planning and through its Congress of Local and Regional Authorities;

24. *Also notes* the cooperation between the European and Mediterranean Major Hazards Agreement of the Council of Europe and the United Nations, in particular the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, and further notes the cooperation between the Council of Europe and the United Nations in the field of nature, in particular on the basis of the enhanced memorandum of cooperation between the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the secretariat of the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats;

25. *Further notes* the contribution of the Council of Europe in protecting and promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the access to information, the right to freedom of expression and opinion and the freedom of the media offline and online, including through the Council of Europe platform to promote the protection of journalism and the safety of journalists, and continues to encourage further cooperation between the Council of Europe and the United Nations in this regard, in particular in the implementation of the United Nations Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity;

26. *Notes* the continued development of the Council of Europe Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data, which is open for accession by all States and its modernization (Amending Protocol, Council of Europe Treaty Series No. 223), and reaffirms that, as the information society and the Internet develop, the rights to privacy and freedom of expression, as set out in articles 17 and 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,<sup>12</sup> must be protected and respected, including as they relate to data protection, recalls that any restrictions to these rights must be made in full compliance with international human rights law, acknowledges the importance of the work of the Council of Europe in protecting human rights online and offline, including in the fight against hate speech, and welcomes and encourages the cooperation between relevant United Nations agencies and special procedures of the Human Rights Council, including the Special Rapporteur on the right to privacy and the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, and the Council of Europe, most notably with regard to the follow-up to General Assembly resolution [70/125](#) of 16 December 2015 on the overall review of the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society, in particular in promoting greater multi-stakeholder participation and engagement in dialogue on Internet governance at the global, regional and national levels;

27. *Encourages* further cooperation between the United Nations, especially the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, and the Council of Europe through their mechanisms on the development of standard-setting instruments in the digital era, especially for artificial intelligence; notes the ongoing work of the Council of Europe in this field, in particular the creation of the Ad Hoc Committee on Artificial Intelligence and the adoption by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe of recommendation (2020)<sup>1</sup> to member States on the human rights impacts of algorithmic systems;

28. *Welcomes and continues to encourage* the close cooperation between the two organizations in the fight against transnational organized crime, cybercrime, terrorism, money-laundering and environmental crimes, as well as in the protection of the rights of victims of such crimes, and recalls once again that the Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime and the Additional Protocol thereto, concerning the criminalization of acts of a racist and xenophobic nature committed through

<sup>12</sup> See resolution [2200 A \(XXI\)](#), annex.

computer systems, the Council of Europe Convention on Offences relating to Cultural Property and the Council of Europe Convention on the Counterfeiting of Medical Products and Similar Crimes Involving Threats to Public Health, as well as several other relevant Council of Europe conventions, are open for accession by all States;

29. *Welcomes and supports* the cooperation and enhanced synergies between the respective mechanisms concerning the prevention of and the fight against corruption at all levels, notably by reviewing and mutually reinforcing the implementation of international anti-corruption standards;

30. *Welcomes* the commitment of the Council of Europe to the promotion of the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy<sup>13</sup> and the collaboration between their respective mechanisms regarding the fight against terrorism, including the financing of terrorism, in full respect of human rights and the rule of law, acknowledges the contribution of the Council of Europe to the implementation of Security Council resolution [2178 \(2014\)](#) of 24 September 2014 on threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts through the Additional Protocol to the Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism and through the recommendation of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe to its member States of 4 April 2018 on terrorists acting alone, as well as through the updated recommendation of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe to its member States of 5 July 2017 on “special investigation techniques” in relation to serious crimes, including acts of terrorism, and the Council of Europe Counter-Terrorism Strategy (2018–2022), and recalls that the Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism, including its Additional Protocol, and the Council of Europe Convention on Laundering, Search, Seizure and Confiscation of the Proceeds from Crime and on the Financing of Terrorism are open for accession by all States;

31. *Also welcomes* the continued cooperation of the Council of Europe, where appropriate and in accordance with international drug control conventions, with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the International Narcotics Control Board in the fight against drug abuse and drug trafficking, in particular the role played by the Pompidou Group in this regard, continues to encourage further cooperation in the light of the recommendations made at the 2016 special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem,<sup>14</sup> and recalls the 2019 Ministerial Declaration on Strengthening Our Actions at the National, Regional and International Levels to Accelerate the Implementation of Our Joint Commitments to Address and Counter the World Drug Problem, adopted during the sixty-second session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs;<sup>15</sup>

32. *Further welcomes* the contribution of the Council of Europe to the work of the Sixth Committee of the General Assembly and the International Law Commission;

33. *Notes* the cooperation established between the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations and the Council of Europe following their signature of a memorandum of understanding on 29 September 2008 and the accession of the Alliance of Civilizations to the Faro Platform, and continues to encourage the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the Alliance of Civilizations on the one hand, and the Council of Europe and its North-South Centre on the other, to

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<sup>13</sup> Resolution [60/288](#).

<sup>14</sup> See resolution [S-30/1](#), annex.

<sup>15</sup> See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2019, Supplement No. 8 (E/2019/28)*, chap. I, sect. B.

pursue their developing and fruitful collaboration in the fields of intercultural dialogue and global development education;

34. *Also notes* the cooperation between the Council of Europe and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in the field of education, and encourages further the extension of this cooperation, which should continue to focus on the role of education in developing just and humane societies characterized by the participation of individuals and the ability of individuals and societies to conduct intercultural dialogue, as well as on the encouragement of the diversity of cultural expressions;

35. *Welcomes* the cooperation between the Council of Europe, the Office of the Envoy of the Secretary-General on Youth, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the United Nations Development Programme, encourages further cooperation to promote and implement the World Programme of Action for Youth,<sup>16</sup> and notes the adoption by the Committee of Ministers of resolution (2020)2 on the Council of Europe youth sector strategy 2030;

36. *Also welcomes* the cooperation among the Council of Europe, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to promote integrity and inclusiveness through sport, encourages those organizations to increase their cooperation to support the implementation of the Kazan Action Plan of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, adopted in July 2017, to consolidate the International Partnership against Corruption in Sport and to promote States' commitments to international conventions relevant for sport, and recalls that the Anti-Doping Convention of the Council of Europe, the Council of Europe Convention on the Manipulation of Sports Competitions and the Council of Europe Convention on an Integrated Safety, Security and Service Approach at Football Matches and Other Sports Events are open for accession by all States;

37. *Invites* the Secretaries-General of the United Nations and the Council of Europe to combine their efforts in seeking answers to global challenges, within their respective mandates, and calls upon all relevant United Nations bodies to support the enhancement of cooperation with the Council of Europe, as set out in relevant resolutions;

38. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its seventy-seventh session, under the item entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations", the sub-item entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe", and requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-seventh session a report on cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe in the implementation of the present resolution.

56th plenary meeting  
3 March 2021

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<sup>16</sup> Resolution 50/81, annex, and resolution 62/126, annex.