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**Council of Europe**

**Intervention UN World Crime Congress March 2021**

Dear excellencies, I am delighted to join the UN World Crime Congress from the Council of Europe in Strasbourg. We welcome the Congress Declaration, which covers many issues that are close to our hearts, and we too are resolutely committed to a multilateral approach in preventing and combating crime and promoting the rule of law.

Our experience shows that respect for human rights and the rule of law when delivering criminal justice contributes to a more effective fight against crime and is essential if we want to prevent it.

The Council of Europe has negotiated more than 200 binding treaties, on extradition for example, on mutual legal assistance, the treatment of prisoners, organ trafficking, falsified medicines, and offences related to cultural property.

We have also devoted specific attention to phenomena that violate the human rights and dignity of those who are victims of them, notably violence against women and domestic violence, trafficking in human beings, and sexual abuse and exploitation of children.

The conventions aim to prevent violations, protect victims, and prosecute perpetrators, and they include monitoring mechanisms to evaluate states' compliance.

Important conventions on sports aim at fighting doping, promoting safe, secure and welcoming sports events, and preventing the manipulation of sports competitions.

Compliance with the Council of Europe's anti-corruption conventions is monitored by the Group of States Against Corruption, GRECO, which collaborates closely with the UNODC.

Our Budapest Convention on Cybercrime has been used by the majority of UN member States as the basis for their legislation and 77 States are Parties to it or committed to becoming parties.

The Council of Europe Warsaw Convention provides governments with tools to freeze and monitor suspected money laundering operations, which is a growing global threat.

These conventions are open for accession by all States, and I invite governments to consider acceding to them.

We are currently working on other topical issues, such as the criminal law challenges posed by AI, including self-driving vehicles, and environmental crime.

The Council of Europe is committed to securing the abolition of the death penalty worldwide and in all circumstances, and with the exception of Belarus Europe is today a death penalty-free zone.

We complement our intergovernmental work with extensive technical assistance programmes.

The Council of Europe is finally very appreciative of the value of working with civil society and with other regional organisations, and of course with our host today, the UN.

We look forward to continuing that, and achieving further concrete results on these important issues.

Thank you.