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Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy

Protecting and supporting victims of terrorism

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Introductory memorandum

¹ On 8 October 2018, the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy decided to declassify this introductory memorandum.

1. Introduction

1. I was appointed Rapporteur on 25 January 2018, following the departure of Ms Marie-Francoise Perol-Dumont from our Committee.
2. Terrorism is not a new phenomenon in Europe. Throughout history, acts of political violence have been perpetrated by a variety of extremist movements to advance a wide range of ideological, religious, social and economic causes. In recent years, several member States of the Council of Europe have experienced notorious terror attacks, carried out by groups and individuals, such as those in Oslo and Utøya in 2011, Paris in 2015, Brussels, Nice and Istanbul in 2016, Manchester and Barcelona in 2017, and London in 2017 and 2018.
3. Much of the political focus of counterterrorism efforts in recent years has been on the fight against terrorism and terrorists, particularly their ideology and motivations; it is obvious that the victims of terrorism must not be overlooked by States and international organisations alike in their mission to defend dignity and to protect human rights and in their strategy of combatting terrorism.
4. On several occasions, the Parliamentary Assembly has stated in the strongest terms its condemnation of all acts of terrorism. This is evidenced by, inter alia, resolutions such as [Resolution 2090 \(2016\) *Combatting international terrorism while protecting Council of Europe standards and values*](#), [Resolution 2091 \(2016\) *Foreign fighters in Syria and Iraq*](#), [Resolution 2113 \(2016\) *After the Brussels attacks, an urgent need to address security failures and step up counter-terrorism co-operation*](#), [Resolution 2190 \(2017\) *on Prosecuting and punishing the crimes against humanity or even possible genocide committed by Daesh*](#) and [Resolution 2211 \(2018\) *on Funding of the terrorist group Daesh: lessons learned*](#).
5. The Assembly has also stressed the need to create, when confronted by terrorism, positive alternative narratives aimed at denouncing extremist discourse and untruths, for example, dispelling illusions about the reality of territories held by Daesh and the fate of its recruits. This was the focus of the report on *Counter-narratives to terrorism* and the subsequently adopted [Resolution 2221 \(2018\)](#) and [Recommendation 2131 \(2018\)](#), to which our Committee contributed with an opinion.
6. Over the past three years, our Assembly has engaged in a variety of initiatives intended to encourage society to stand firm against all forms of political violence. In 2016, it launched the #NoHateNoFear initiative to encourage policy makers, academics, journalists, representatives of civil society and ordinary citizens to reject fear and hatred of any kind in order to tackle feelings of collective insecurity and the stigmatisation of certain groups in society.
7. Our Committee in particular heard testimonies, in June and October 2016, from survivors of terrorist attacks or relatives of victims who, along with experts in the field, provided valuable insight into the victims' perspective. Especially moving were the testimonies of Mr Bjørn Ihler, who escaped the 2011 Norway attacks on the island of Utøya; of Ms Luciana Milani, who lost her daughter in the November 2015 Paris attacks; and of Mr Antoine Leiris, who lost his wife in the same Paris attacks.
8. Furthermore, on 11 October 2016, Mr David Anderson, independent expert on anti-terrorist legislation, rightly emphasised that protecting human rights does not obstruct the fight against terrorism and extremism, but rather underlines its importance. Referring to the Islamic terrorist attacks in recent years, he stressed Europe's responsibility not just to enforce laws against terrorism but also to protect people, including Muslims, from the grievances and identity crises that could render them vulnerable to extremism, and in particular Salafi jihadism.
9. On 28 June 2017, the testimonies of Mr Brendan Cox, founder of the Jo Cox Foundation, named after the former MP murdered in 2016, Ms Sajda Mughal, Executive Director of the JAN Trust organisation and survivor of the 2015 London terrorist attack, and Imam Muhammad Imran, trainer in the 'Me and You' programme in Manchester, provided the Committee with insightful expertise on the active role that a resilient civil society, including victims and survivors' organisations, can play in the fight against terrorism.
10. Finally, on 22 May 2018 in Athens, our Committee held an exchange of views and a discussion on the Council of Europe's role in promoting support for the victims of terrorism with Mr Travis Frain, survivor of the Westminster terrorist attack and member of the UK organisation Survivors against Terror, Susanne Gentz from the International Committee of the Red Cross, and Professor Mary Bossis from the University of Piraeus.

11. Most recently, the publication of the Council of Europe Counter-Terrorism Strategy (2018-2022) has set out a series of actions and tools designed to assist national authorities in the fight against terror². This includes recognition of the fact that efforts to increase security and effectively combat terrorist organisations should be accompanied by better coordinated assistance to victims, which is the focus of my report.

12. I intend to analyse the importance of defining terrorism and victims with a view not only to better identifying the needs of the victims and the best strategies at national and international level to meet those needs but also to countering the evolving threat posed by terrorism.

13. I have also identified three case studies representing different approaches: Spain, the United Kingdom and France experienced a number of high-profile attacks in recent years and in some cases a history of terrorism going back many decades, allowing them to develop and implement victim support policies and strategies worth sharing with all Council of Europe member States. In addition, although Germany has a less prominent recent history of terrorism, its experience in recent years has revealed problems that can also provide valuable lessons for other countries to learn from.

2. Defining terrorism and victims: a complex but necessary endeavour

2.1. Defining terrorism

14. Terrorism as a phenomenon can take widely differing forms, therefore a universally agreed definition has proven difficult to establish. Authorities around the world use different definitions of terrorism in their national legislation, a problem often exacerbated by the politically and emotionally charged nature of the term³.

15. In a world where States are increasingly subject to the effects of globalisation, terrorism is no longer a domestic concern but a transnational security threat. Terrorist acts are usually carried out by non-state groups or even individual actors who may have been helped or are being helped by States. Terrorism is evidently unique as a security threat and its victims therefore require specialised support.

16. The challenge in designating a comprehensive definition of terrorism lies in the fact that motives, targets and methods differ broadly from case-to-case. Below are some definitions given by the major international organisations:

- United Nations (UN): Criminal acts intended or calculated to provoke a state of terror in the public, a group of persons or particular persons for political purposes are in any circumstance unjustifiable, whatever the considerations of a political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious or any other nature that may be invoked to justify them.⁴
- Council of Europe: The 2005 Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism (CETS No 196) does not provide a definition of terrorism, but does criminalise public provocation to commit a terrorist offence and recruitment and training for terrorism. The Additional Protocol to the Convention was adopted by the Committee of Ministers in May 2015 and opened for signature in October 2015. The Protocol criminalises being recruited for terrorism, receiving training for terrorism, travelling to another State for purposes related to terrorism, and providing or collecting funds for such travel.
- European Union (EU): Certain criminal offences against persons and property that given their nature or context, may seriously damage a country or an international organisation where committed with the aim of seriously intimidating a population, or unduly compelling a government or international organisation to perform or abstain from performing any act, or seriously destabilising or destroying the fundamental political, constitutional, economic or social structures of a country or an international organisation.⁵

² [Council of Europe Counter-Terrorism Strategy \(2018-2022\)](#), 4 July 2018.

³ The International Centre for Counter-Terrorism – The Hague (ICCT) [Radicalisation, De-Radicalisation, Counter-Radicalisation: A Conceptual Discussion and Literature Review](#), 27 March 2013.

⁴ United Nations Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism, annex to UN General Assembly resolution 49/60, "Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism", 9 December 1994, UN Resolution [A/Res/49/60](#).

⁵ Art. 1 of the Framework Decision on Combating Terrorism (2002).

- North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO): The unlawful use or threatened use of force or violence, instilling fear and terror, against individuals or property in an attempt to coerce or intimidate governments or societies, or to gain control over a population, to achieve political, religious or ideological objectives.⁶

17. Over the last years, a number of devastating terror attacks in European countries have resulted in hundreds of fatalities. The deadliest ones (not including attackers killed) were the Paris attacks in November 2015 (130 killed), the 2016 Nice attack (86 killed), and the 2016 Atatürk Airport attack (45 killed). Some other high profile examples include:

- from 7 January 2015 to 9 January 2015, terrorist attacks occurred across the Île-de-France region, particularly in Paris. Three attackers killed a total of 17 during four shootings, and police then killed the three assailants. The attacks also wounded 22 other people. The then called terrorist organisation Al Qaeda claimed responsibility for the attacks;
- on 22 March 2016, three co-ordinated suicide bombings occurred in Belgium: two at Brussels Airport in Zaventem, and one at Maalbeek metro station in central Brussels. 32 civilians and 3 perpetrators were killed, and more than 300 people were injured. Daesh claimed responsibility for the attacks;
- on 19 December 2016, a truck was deliberately driven into the Christmas market near the Breitscheidplatz in Berlin, leaving 12 people dead and 56 others injured. Daesh claimed responsibility for the attacks;
- on 1 January 2017, a gunman shot and killed at least 39 people and wounded at least 70 others at the Reina nightclub in Istanbul. Daesh claimed responsibility for the attacks;
- on 22 March 2017, a terrorist attack took place outside the Palace of Westminster in London. The attacker drove a car into pedestrians, killing five and injuring more than 50 people. Reports alleged that in a final text message he stated that he was waging jihad in revenge for Western military action in the Middle East;
- on 3 April 2017 a bomb was detonated in the St. Petersburg Metro, killing 15 and injuring 64 others. Daesh claimed responsibility for the attack;
- on 22 May 2017, a shrapnel-laden homemade bomb was detonated as people were leaving Manchester Arena following a concert by the American singer Ariana Grande. 23 people were killed, including the attacker, and over 500 were injured. The attacker was not affiliated with any terror groups but claimed to act in the name of Islamic extremism;
- on 17 August 2017, a man drove a van into pedestrians on La Rambla in Barcelona, killing 13 people and injuring at least 130 others, one of whom died 10 days later. Nine hours after the Barcelona attack, five men thought to be members of the same terrorist cell drove into pedestrians in Cambrils, killing one woman and injuring six others. Daesh claimed responsibility for the attack;
- on 12 May 2018, in Paris, a man killed one pedestrian and injured several more. Daesh claimed responsibility for the attack.

2.2. *Defining victims*

18. It is evident from the above definitions and examples of recent attacks that terror is, fundamentally, a form of ultra-violent communication and “acts of terror themselves are propaganda by the deed.”⁷ Victims of terror serve as conduits for the message communicated by its perpetrators⁸. The victim is thus not an isolated by-product of an act of political violence, but an integral part of terrorism and, therefore, of countering it.

⁶ AAP-06 NATO Glossary of Terms and Definitions, Edition 2017.

⁷ [Countering Terrorist Narratives](#), Policy Department for Citizens’ Rights and Constitutional Affairs, DG for International Policies of the Union, PE 596.829 – November 2017, Study for the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE).

⁸ Argomaniz, J. and Lynch, O., The Complexity of Terrorism – Victims, Perpetrators and Radicalization, *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 41(7), 2018.

19. In order to ensure a comprehensive and effective counter-terrorism policy, it is critical that victims of terrorist attacks are readily identifiable and formally recognised by legislation, policies and procedures. As with the concept of terrorism however, there is also unfortunately no universally agreed definition of a “victim of terrorism”.

20. In a 1986 Declaration of Basic Principles, the UN defined victims of crime as “*persons who individually or collectively have suffered harm, including physical or mental injury, emotional suffering, economic loss or substantial impairment of their fundamental rights, through acts or omissions that are in violation of criminal laws operative within Member States.*”⁹

21. The UN Report on the *Protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism*, adopted by the General Assembly on 19 December 2011, provides for a classification of victims of terrorism according to four main categories: direct victims, secondary victims, indirect victims and potential victims¹⁰.

22. However, a study by the Policy Department for Citizens Rights and Constitutional Affairs of the European Parliament in 2017, titled ‘*How can the EU and the Member States better help the victims of terrorism?*’, argued that this UN classification risks creating a hierarchical approach that overlooks psychological, physical and financial harm.¹¹

23. Defining the victims of terrorism is complicated by the fact that victimhood can vary significantly not only between individuals and communities but also within them over time. While definitions may require narrowing or expanding according to the support offered, it is important that a broad definition is adopted at the initial stages of response to ensure no-one is unduly excluded.

24. It is also important to note that in addition to there being different categories of victims, within these categories certain groups can be considered vulnerable victims that may require tailored support. These include (but are not limited to) children, cross-border victims, and those with a history of mental illness, who should receive specialised support. Furthermore, every victim of terrorism should be afforded the same rights and services irrespective of, for example, residency or citizenship status.

25. Understanding the needs of victims of terrorism as a group first requires recognising that within this group there are different types of victims requiring different forms of support. A comprehensive, individualised and victim-centred approach is therefore vital to effectively protecting and supporting victims of terrorism.

2.3. Needs of victims

26. Terror attacks are distinct to ordinary private acts of violence as they are not directed towards individuals but the State, society or community to which the victims belong. The public and indiscriminate nature of terrorism means that the experience of victims is unique and as a result their needs may be different to those of victims of ‘ordinary’ crime.

27. Basic needs common to all victims of crime include:

- recognition (of their victimhood and suffering);
- protection (from further violence and/or secondary victimisation);
- support (access to legal, financial, medical and psychological assistance, to information, and support in returning to a ‘normal’ personal and professional life);
- justice;
- compensation.

28. Victims’ needs are not necessarily static and may evolve over time. In the case of victims of terrorism, some of these needs may be more or less pronounced depending on the nature of the attack experienced. While some of these needs may be met by existing mechanisms and structures for supporting victims of ‘ordinary’ crime, often a tailored approach is required.

⁹ [Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power](#), adopted by General Assembly Resolution 40/34 of 29 November 1985.

¹⁰ [A/RES/66/171](#).

¹¹ [How can the EU and the Member States better help the victims of terrorism?](#), Study for the LIBE Committee, 2017.

2.4. *Why protecting and supporting victims is important for all*

29. Providing victims the recognition and support they deserve is an important act of reaffirming their dignity and empowering them to become survivors rather than simply victims. As survivors, they are able to create their own counter-narratives of human rights, resilience, justice, love and respect, which can be powerful tools in combatting the spread of extremism. The numerous hearings organised by the Committee over the past years have shown that victims are, in fact, often the best positioned actors to counter violent extremism.

30. The deliberate infliction of lethal or potentially lethal violence by non-State actors in the course of an act of terrorism amounts, in all cases where death or serious physical or psychological injury results, to a grave violation of the human rights of the victim¹². Given that modern terrorist attacks are generally directed at the State rather than individuals, the State therefore has not only a legal but also a moral obligation to protect and support victims. It is widely accepted that counter-terrorism strategies must comply with international standards and norms relating to human rights and fundamental freedoms, and victim support is no exception to this¹³.

31. Terrorism intends to inflict both physical and psychological harm. Most counter-terrorism efforts focus on eliminating the physical threat through counter-radicalisation, law enforcement and security measures designed to prevent attacks from taking place. I strongly believe that supporting, empowering and humanising victims in the aftermath of an attack is equally important to neutralising the psychological threat. Constructing a positive counter-narrative which declares that terror will not prevail against fundamental principles of democracy and human rights therefore has clear strategic purposes¹⁴. This was made clear in [Resolution 2221](#) on Counter-narratives stating that victims could play an important role in delivering “positive, proactive alternative narratives” for “promoting shared values and facilitating conversation, encouraging awareness and dispelling misinformation”¹⁵.

32. By targeting civilians and individuals in particular, the aim of any terrorist action is to weaken the rule of law and generate “radicalism” within institutions as well as public opinion. However, the massive demonstrations of unity and solidarity in the aftermath of an attack have demonstrated how support for human rights and democratic values can be galvanised by terrorism. Antoine Leiris, who testified in front of the Committee, wrote following the November 2015 Paris attack in which his wife was killed:

“[the terrorists] will not have my hatred”.

This simple statement is a salient reminder of the power of supporting and empowering victims in minimising the damage caused by terrorism.

3. **Victim support at the national level: a twofold approach**

33. The support offered to victims of terrorism at the national level generally comes from one of two sources: the national authorities themselves, through legal and institutional measures, or from non-governmental civil society organisations. These are not mutually-exclusive and the support provided by civil society should in no way abrogate the responsibilities and obligations of the State for supporting victims. The natural synergies arising between the two should encourage close co-operation and a comprehensive approach to victim support.

3.1. *Legal and institutional measures provided by national authorities*

34. Many member States of the Council of Europe have legal and institutional measures in place for providing victims of crime with support. These measures are rarely specific to victims of terrorism. As discussed above, by their very nature, acts of terror often adopt added public and political dimensions which may make the victims’ experience distinct to those of ‘ordinary’ crime victims for whom most victim support services are designed¹⁶.

¹² [United Nations Report of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism](#), 4 June 2012.

¹³ [Good Practices in Supporting Victims of Terrorism within the Criminal Justice Framework](#), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2016.

¹⁴ Javier Martín-Peña, Ana Andrés, Pedro J. Ramos-Villagrasa & Jordi Escartín, Living under threat: psychosocial effects on victims of terrorism, *Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression*, 9(3), 2016.

¹⁵ [Report on Counter-narratives to terrorism](#), PACE Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, 2018.

¹⁶ Argomaniz, J. et Lynch, O., *op. cit.*

35. In this respect, governments often designate an agency within the criminal justice sector responsible for implementing policies tailored specifically towards supporting victims of terrorism. It is recommended that a single agency is established as a point of contact for victims and is responsible for co-ordinating the various support services available, thereby ensuring a coherent and comprehensive victim-oriented strategy¹⁷.

36. Given the increasingly globalised nature of terrorism and its victims, it is important that the agency or agencies established for supporting victims of terrorism are appropriately trained to assist those victims who are *not* residents or citizens of the territory where an attack takes place. Cross-border victims are often unaware of their rights in the country where the attack took place and so it is imperative that national authorities proactively communicate with them to make them aware of the available support¹⁸. In many cases this may require collaboration with other governments or through international organisations.

37. Similarly, other groups of victims can be considered ‘vulnerable’, such as children or those with a history of mental health problems, and should be afforded special attention as a result. The use of needs assessments is recommended in this regard for identifying those with particular needs that may not be met through ordinary victim support services¹⁹.

38. In addition, governments should also ensure that non-specific victim support agencies in the criminal justice sector are appropriately trained and resourced for supporting the needs of victims of terrorism.

39. Where possible, victims should be given the opportunity to hear, participate and/or otherwise be involved in the judicial process if they so desire. This is imperative to meeting the victims’ right to truth and justice, thereby contributing to the empowerment of victims, the strengthening of public trust and social solidarity, and as a result the minimisation of harm caused by a terror attack²⁰.

40. Financial support is often a point of serious concern for victims of terrorism, as the attack can inflict both immediate and longer term financial costs which serve to exacerbate the original trauma. While victims of terrorism are usually covered by the same compensation structures available to victims of ordinary crime, this is not always the case or it may be difficult to access, particularly for cross-border victims²¹. Many attacks in recent years have seen charity appeals established in response, allowing the public to donate to victims. However these tend to be formed on an *ad hoc*, reactive basis which may lead to inconsistent or inefficient distribution and in some cases even fraud²².

41. National authorities should therefore ensure that appropriate forms of financial support are available to all victims of terrorism, irrespective of residency or citizenship status, and that some degree of oversight is exercised in the case of charitable appeals to ensure money is raised and distributed efficiently and effectively.

42. Ensuring that support for victims of terrorism is co-ordinated, comprehensive and effective is vital to avoiding secondary victimisation, which results not from the original criminal act but from the institutional response to the victim. Victim support policies and institutional frameworks should seek to minimise or eliminate all unnecessary bureaucratic burdens, ensure consistency in the provision of services across cases, and maximise transparency for victims in order to strengthen public trust and a deep sense of solidarity.

43. Governments should also be aware that upholding the privacy and dignity of victims is important to avoiding secondary victimisation. This means, with respect to freedom of the press, discouraging unnecessary intrusion of the media and any form of sensationalist or dishonourable reporting that may be seen as degrading to victims²³.

¹⁷ [Good Practices in Supporting Victims of Terrorism within the Criminal Justice Framework](#), UNODC, 2015.

¹⁸ [Challenges and solutions with respect to the provision of support to victims of crime in a cross-border situation](#), Victim Support Europe, 2017.

¹⁹ [“How can the EU and the Member States better help victims of terrorism?” – European Parliament Citizens’ Rights and Constitutional Affairs Policy Department, 2017.](#)

²⁰ ONUDC, *op. cit.*

²¹ [Peer-support Groups for Cross-border Victims of Terrorism: Lessons Learnt in the UK after the 9/11 and Paris Attacks](#), Watkins, J., Australian Journal of Emergency Management, 2017.

²² Survivors Against Terror and the Tim Parry Johnathan Ball Peace Foundation, The Case for a new British Solidarity Fund, 2018.

²³ [Guidelines for Assistance to Victims of Terrorism](#), 2017.

3.2. *The essential role of civil society*

44. Whilst governments are responsible first and foremost for protecting and supporting victims of terrorism, nongovernmental and civil society organisations can play an important, complementary role in the development and implementation of policies and services of support for victims.

45. As discussed during the various hearings organised by the Committee, civil society is uniquely placed to understand the needs and interests of victims (many organisations are founded or run by victims themselves). It is therefore in the interests of national authorities and international organisations to share information, engage in mutual consultation, facilitate referrals, and co-ordinate activities with non-governmental organisations involved in supporting victims of terrorism.

46. Victims' organisations have an especially important role to play in sensitising all societal actors to the needs of those affected by terrorist acts by engaging in public discourse and advocacy work on their behalf²⁴. This can include providing moral counter narratives for preventing further extremism and promoting tolerance, nonviolence and other fundamental values, therefore serving a clear strategic purpose to governments and international organisations in combatting terrorism²⁵.

47. In many countries, national authorities provide funding to victims' organisations to further help them in their work. Governments should therefore be attuned to the needs of these organisations and transparent in the decision-making that affects this funding. For this reason, governments should engage in continual consultation with and review of civil society organisations and their activities in order to ensure resources are used efficiently and effectively.

48. Ideally, co-operation between authorities and civil society should be formalised through memorandums of understanding or other forms of agreement. This can prove valuable in facilitating co-ordination and ensuring the coherence of victim support while reducing bureaucratic burdens, therefore also minimising the risk of secondary victimisation.

4. **The growing importance of victim support at international and multilateral levels**

49. A combination of the increasingly transnational nature of terrorism and the greater global mobility that many enjoy today means it is increasingly possible that citizens of one State can become victims of terrorism in another. In the 2017 terror attacks in Barcelona and Cambrils, Spain, citizens of no fewer than 34 countries were affected. The international community therefore has an obvious and urgent interest in ensuring all victims are supported following a terror attack, irrespective of their citizenship or residency status in the State where it takes place. International organisations have a central role to play in overseeing and facilitating the co-operation necessary for this.

4.1. *The Council of Europe*

50. In 2001, following the attacks in the United States, the Council of Europe set up a multidisciplinary group on International Action against terrorism, which in 2003 transformed into the Committee of Experts on Terrorism (CODEXTER). CODEXTER prioritised the facilitation of the exchange of best practices on compensation schemes for victims of terrorism through the work of the Group of Specialists for assistance to victims²⁶. CODEXTER has since evolved into the Committee on Counter-Terrorism (CDCT) which acts as the key co-ordinating body for the Council's activities to combat terrorism, overseeing and ensuring the successful implementation of relevant legal instruments. The CDCT examines how cases relating to victims of terrorist attacks (particularly those with transnational dimensions) are handled, identifies best practices, and drafts recommendations or guidelines on this issue, in co-operation with the European Committee on Crime Problems and the Steering Committee for Human Rights.

51. The work and co-ordination by the different bodies of the Council of Europe resulted in the adoption of the 2006 Recommendation on assistance to victims, which emphasised the need for specific victim support services and training of professionals who work with victims²⁷.

²⁴ [Background Paper on Solidarity with the Victims of Terrorism](#), OSCE, 2005.

²⁵ Argomaniz, J. et Lynch, O., *op. cit.*

²⁶ This group discussed modern methods of assistance to victims and of victimisation prevention. The group focused on victims of terrorist acts initially and elaborated recommendations setting out, inter alia, appropriate standards and principles in this area.

²⁷ [Council of Europe Committee of Ministers Rec\(2006\)8 on assistance to crime victims](#), 2006.

52. In May 2017, member States of the Council of Europe adopted new guidelines regarding support, information and compensation provided for victims of terrorist attacks²⁸. The Council of Europe recommends that the governments of member States be guided in their legislation and practice by these guidelines. Its main recommendations and principles include:

- authorities must provide victims of terrorist attacks with timely help and organise avenues for prolonged medical, psychological, social and material support;
- authorities in every member State must also organise information centres for the victims and ensure that they have access to legal aid and receive compensation in an adequate and timely manner irrespective of their nationality or residency status;
- governments need to be able to provide all these measures for all victims, without discrimination, and independently of any judicial proceedings relating to the perpetrator/s;
- these guidelines refer to the victims' right to maintain private and family lives and ensuring societal recognition and remembrance of victims.

53. Article 13 of the 2005 Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism establishes that measures “to protect and support the victims of terrorism that has been committed within a Party’s own territory” may include “inter alia, financial assistance and compensation for victims of terrorism and their close family members.” However, this provision applies only to victims within a member State’s territory and does not cover European nationals affected by terrorism outside of Europe.

54. In July 2018, the Committee of Ministers adopted a new Counter-Terrorism Strategy (2018-2022) based on prevention, prosecution and protection, including assistance to victims²⁹. In particular, this requests that victims’ assistance be given an international dimension due to the increased likelihood of citizens of member States becoming victims in other European countries and outside of Europe.

4.2. The United Nations

55. The UN has three main objectives in the field of supporting victims of terrorism: ensuring that their voices are heard, respecting their fundamental rights, and considering them allies in the fight against terrorism and violent extremism.³⁰

56. The UN Secretary General, the UN High Commissioner on Human Rights and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) have combined forces to reflect upon how to better recognise and address the particular needs of victims of terrorism.

57. In June 2014, the UN Secretary General launched a web support portal for victims of terrorism to facilitate access to resources by victims, their families and communities. This includes psychosocial support, access to national criminal justice systems or rehabilitation opportunities offered by member States.³¹

58. In April 2015, the Terrorism Prevention Branch of the UNODC launched a handbook on “Good Practices for Supporting Victims of Terrorism within the Criminal Justice Framework”³². This addresses the legal framework and institutional capacity for international efforts aimed at protecting victims of terrorism, the means deployed to support them during criminal investigations, and the role of civil society organisations in assisting with these efforts.

59. In 2016, within the framework of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, a Conference on The Human Rights of Victims of Terrorism was organised by the UN Counter-Terrorism Centre (UNCCT) under the auspices of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) Working Group on Supporting and Highlighting Victims of Terrorism and in collaboration with the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism. The objectives were to raise awareness on the rights of victims of terrorism and to examine how States can strengthen their national legislation, procedures and practices to better protect and support victims, their communities and their families. A resulting report on the “Framework Principles for Securing the Human Rights of Victims of

²⁸ [Revised Guidelines of the Committee of Ministers on the protection of victims of terrorist attacks](#), 2017.

²⁹ [Council of Europe Counter-Terrorism Strategy \(2018-2022\)](#), 2018.

³⁰ [Geneva Conference on Preventing Violent Extremism, UN Department of Political Affairs](#), 2016.

³¹ [Supporting and Highlighting Victims of Terrorism](#), UN Office of Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, 2018.

³² [Good Practices for Supporting Victims of Terrorism within the Criminal Justice Framework](#), UNODC.

Terrorism” (A/HRC/20/14) by the Special Rapporteur put forward a set of recommendations for member States to uphold their international obligations in this regard.

4.3. *The European Union*

60. Despite the EU’s efforts, extensive action on victims’ rights was impeded by the founding Treaties themselves, which did not expressly refer to victims of crime. Recognising this gap, at the EU Summit in Lisbon in 2007, the Council agreed on an additional legal basis in the EU Treaties to ensure victim protection. This provided the foundation and impetus for reviewing victims’ rights and drafting the principal EU instrument for the recognition of victims’ rights, the 2012 Victims’ Rights Directive³³.

61. The Directive is based on meeting the five broad needs of victims: respect and recognition, protection, support, access to justice and compensation. It also extended the definition of a victim from just direct victims to include bereaved family members. It also recognises the needs of particularly vulnerable victims, and specifically refers to victims of terrorism, emphasising that they may need special attention, support and protection due to the particular nature of the crime that has been committed against them.

62. In March 2017, the Council of the European Union approved the EU Directive on Combating Terrorism, which has a greater focus on victims of terrorism.³⁴ The Directive recommends a comprehensive response to the specific needs of victims of terrorism, provided immediately after a terrorist attack for as long as is necessary, is provided within the national emergency-response infrastructure. It also prioritises the need to ensure that all victims of terrorism have access to information about victims’ rights, available support services and compensation schemes in the member State where the terrorist offence was committed.

63. On 10 March 2017, on the occasion of the European Remembrance Day for Victims of Terrorism, the Ministers and Ministers of State in charge of victims assistance for Belgium, the Czech Republic, France, Greece, Hungary, the Italy, Romania, Spain and the UK issued guidelines for assistance to victims of terrorism.³⁵

64. This was a co-ordinated response to the call on the construction of an interdisciplinary and better co-ordinated international policy for victims assistance emphasised at the International Conference for Victims Assistance in Paris, at UNESCO, on 9 January 2017 and taking into account the 2012 EU Victims’ Rights Directive, the 2004 Compensation Directive and the recent provisions on support, assistance and protection to victims of terrorism under the Counter-terrorism Directive adopted by the Council on 7 March 2017.

4.4. *Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)*

65. The OSCE has also passed a number of decisions encouraging participating states to introduce or enhance measures for support to victims of terrorism. For example, Permanent Council Decision No. 618 on Solidarity with Victims of Terrorism of July 2004 encouraged participating States to co-operate with relevant institutions and civil society in expressing solidarity with and providing support for victims of terrorism.

66. OSCE Permanent Council decision No. 1063 of December 2012 on the OSCE Consolidated Framework for the Fight Against Terrorism provides that OSCE activities intended to enhance co-operation and build capacity to prevent and combat terrorism should “place a focus on the role of victims of terrorism and their families, promoting best practices in the area of solidarity with them and ensuring that their voices are heard.”

5. **Case studies: different approaches from different experiences**

67. The growing importance of victim support at national, international and multilateral levels is evidenced by the number of policies and legal tools now available to all Council of Europe member States. However, policies and implementation vary greatly and our Assembly has a role to play in pushing for better protection and assistance to victims.

68. A number of high-profile attacks in recent years and in some cases a history of terrorism going back many decades means that Spain, the United Kingdom and France have had more experience to draw upon than other Council of Europe member States in developing and implementing victim support policies and strategies. Although Germany has a less prominent history of terrorism, its experience in recent years has

³³ [Directive 2012/29/EU of the European Parliament, 2012.](#)

³⁴ [Directive \(EU\) 2017/541 of the European Parliament, 2017.](#)

³⁵ [Guidelines for Assistance to Victims of Terrorism, 2017.](#)

revealed problems that can provide valuable lessons for other countries to learn from. I plan to visit Spain, and possibly also the United Kingdom, and to organise meetings with relevant interlocutors in France over the coming months to complement the information provided in this memorandum.

5.1. *Spain: an edifying past*

69. Spain has a regrettably long history of political violence dating back to the 1960s and as a result has developed over time some of the most advanced policies for protecting and supporting victims of terrorism in the world³⁶.

70. In Spain a victim of terrorism can be legally defined in two ways. A general definition for victims of crime recognises direct victims and, in the case of death, their family members too. A more specific definition for terrorism is defined as “persons who suffered physical and/or psychological damage as a result of terrorist activities”. The latter was introduced by the 2011 Law on Recognition and Integral Protection of Victims of Terrorism³⁷, which grants victims of terrorism the right to aid, benefits and indemnities.

71. Right-holders are defined as direct victims and their family members, people who suffered material damage as a result of terrorism, and witnesses. Protection is also provided to persons who are subject to threat and intimidation from organisations suspected of terrorism. Depending on the level of victimisation, victims can be given access to protection, support or compensation.

72. With regard to support, Law 29/2011 created the office of Information and Assistance to victims of terrorism of the Special Court, which ensures the necessary co-ordination among all institutions involved in the assistance and protection of victims of terrorism. The Spanish legislator consolidated the previously fragmented legislation in a single normative body. Law 29/2011 provides for a quantitative and qualitative increase, with respect to previous legislation, in the assistance, support, honours and measures of protection to which victims of terrorism are entitled. Its application is retroactive and covers those who suffered acts of terrorism from 1960 onwards.

73. The Spanish legislator gave victims of acts of terrorism a political significance by expressly recognising them as symbols of the defence of the democratic rule of law vis-à-vis the terrorist threat. It also considered victims of terrorism as victims of human rights violations, strengthening the legal status of victims and creating binding legal obligations for the State. The law, guided by principles of memory, dignity, justice and truth, seeks to provide victims with comprehensive support.

74. Furthermore, the Directorate General for Support to Victims of Terrorism in the Interior Ministry gives information and provides support. Moreover, it provides vocational and other forms of practical support, such as housing. It can also refer victims to specialised non-governmental and civil society organisations that can provide more customised assistance.

75. Further support is provided by regional Victim Support Offices throughout Spain, which provide victims with information and psychological and practical support, often in collaboration with NGOs.

76. The *Asociación de Víctimas del Terrorismo* (Association of Victims of Terrorism (AVT)) is the foremost non-governmental victims' organisation in Spain, representing and defending the interests of victims of terrorism and providing moral and material support. In June 2017, the AVT launched a European online platform to assist victims of terrorism (EPAVT). EPAVT organised its first international seminar on “*Providing Integral and Specialised Assistance to Victims of Terrorism*” in June 2017 aimed at professionals, institutions and victim support organisations of EU member States. It has also created, with financial help from the EU, a mapping of the associations on victims of terrorism in the EU member states³⁸.

5.2. *France: a permanent and intensified fight*

77. Terrorism has become an increasingly salient concern for French citizens as a number of high-profile attacks have hit the country over the past five years. Most notably, the Paris attacks of 2015 in which 130 were killed and more than 400 were injured led to a heightened fear of further attacks and an official state of

³⁶ Argomaniz, J, State responses to victims of terrorism needs in Spain, in J Argomaniz & O Lynch (eds), *International Perspectives on Terrorist Victimisation: An Interdisciplinary Approach. Rethinking Political Violence*, Palgrave, Basingstoke, 2015.

³⁷ Article 4, Ley 29/2011, Reconocimiento y Protección Integral a las Víctimas del Terrorismo, 2011.

³⁸ [European Platform to Assist Victims of Terrorism](#), 2017.

emergency lasting two years. In addition, an inter-ministerial delegation to the Ministry of Justice succeeded the State Secretariat for Victims Rights in 2016.

78. According to the Interministerial Instruction on Taking Charge of Victims of Acts of Terrorism of 6 October 2008³⁹, victims of acts of terrorism in France are entitled to support from both institutional and civil society actors. Specifically, the decree deals with both victims of attacks on national soil and French victims of attacks on foreign territory. In both instances, the document outlines the policies of emergency services and of judicial process; the necessary steps to formally declare the incident as terrorist attack; how to establish a list of victims and relevant information concerning their families; and the medical and social actions to be undertaken.

79. Concretely, the provisions include legal and psychological support, indemnity, the same rights and advantages guaranteed to victims of war, exoneration from certain taxes and special recognition as a “victim of terrorism”. A Presidential decree in July 2016 also introduced the National Recognition Medal (*Légion d’Honneur*) for Victims of Terrorism “to manifest the nation’s homage to people who have been killed, wounded or held hostage during terrorist attacks”⁴⁰.

80. The wave of attacks that struck France in the 1980s resulted in legislation to create a specific system to provide compensation for the damages suffered by victims of terrorism, leading to the creation of a terrorism fund in 1986, which then became the Guarantee Fund for Victims of Terrorism and Other Offences (FGTI) in 1990.

81. Since its creation, French or foreign victims of terrorist acts occurring in France, from 1 January 1985 onwards, and French victims of acts of terrorism occurring abroad can request compensation from the FGTI following a special procedure. This is different from that of other offences under ordinary law. When the authorities pass on information regarding the circumstances surrounding the terrorist act and the identity of the victims to the FGTI, the Fund’s dedicated terrorist victim compensation team contacts them directly. It helps them to put together their application and strives to make funds available quickly in order to cover any initial costs. The Fund sets out a compensation proposal to victims within three months of a definitive assessment of the damage having been determined.

82. A number of civil society organisations aim to help and support victims of terrorism in France. The most prominent is the French Association of Victims of Terrorism (*Association française des Victimes du Terrorisme*) whose main goal is to help victims of terrorism with all their legal proceedings and their requests to the different administrations in charge of indemnifying the victims. The association informs the victims of their rights and co-ordinates their actions against the various public and private organisms, at the national or international level.

83. Despite all the structures of support in place, there is some evidence to suggest that getting support can be difficult. The paperwork required to receive compensation can be intensely bureaucratic and there is nothing to help with the immediate expenses of victims, like funerals and medical care, leading some lawyers and victims’ organisations to publicly ask for an increase in staff and funds for tackling the administrative backlog created by the rise in applications seen in recent years⁴¹.

5.3. *United Kingdom: a mixed experience*

84. The UK has had considerable experience of terrorism as a result of the conflict in Northern Ireland and a number of high profile attacks in more recent years. While each type of terrorism is quite different, the UK government has been able to draw upon the experience of both in its policies for supporting victims of terrorism.

85. In 2017, the United Kingdom established a cross-government Victims of Terrorism unit to co-ordinate support to UK citizens directly affected by terror attacks at home and overseas. This unit works across government, civil society and local authorities to ensure that support to victims of terrorism is comprehensive, co-ordinated and clearly communicated.

86. The government also developed webpages to provide comprehensive advice to victims and to signpost them to support services in the UK⁴². It has also been working closely with local authorities to

³⁹ [Interministerial Instruction on Taking Charge of Victims of Acts of Terrorism](#), 2008.

⁴⁰ [Légion d’Honneur](#), 2016.

⁴¹ [The victims of terror in France are reeling, and buried in a mountain of paperwork, Canada’s National Observer](#), 2018.

⁴² [Support For Victims of Terrorism](#), 2017.

highlight the support available, and make sure that payments from the “We Love Manchester Emergency Fund” and the UK Solidarity Fund do not affect benefits payments.

87. Legally, support for victims of terrorist acts within the UK is covered by the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime of October 2015, which gives survivors entitlements from the criminal justice system and tailors services to individual needs. This also entitles victims to make a “Victim Personal Statement” during criminal proceedings.

88. Notably, legislative changes passed in early 2017 mean that in the UK victims of attacks carried out with vehicles (like that on London Bridge and at Finsbury Park in 2017) are now entitled to compensation for life from the Motor Insurance Bureau⁴³. This was a proactive update to victim support which proved timely, illustrating the importance of ensuring support for victims evolves at the same pace as threats.

89. With regards to overseas attacks, in November 2012 the first ever Victims of Overseas Terrorism Scheme (a State funded compensation scheme) was introduced by the British government. This scheme pays out only for certain terror attacks however, as decided by the Foreign Secretary.

90. Following the attack on 22 May 2017 in Manchester, an independent review (the “Kerslake Report”) on the preparedness and response of authorities to the attack was carried out. While commendable that such a review was undertaken, its findings on the experiences of victims after the attack were not positive. Many were unaware of the support available to them or how to access it, and of those who did many found it unsatisfactory, especially for children who were disproportionately affected in the attack⁴⁴.

91. Evidence heard by the Committee on 22 May 2018 from a survivor of the London Bridge attack, Mr Travis Frain, further suggested that although the legal structures may be in place in the UK, the support provided in reality was inadequate. He alleged that he and other survivors had to “*fight to gain any real form of support*” and that they only heard from the police five months after the attack⁴⁵.

92. Lastly, the government has agreed to provide grants to UK-based organisations and foundations, which aim at bringing together victims and survivors of terrorism/political violence in order to assist them addressing their trauma and moving forward. Among these are: the British Red Cross, Victim Support, and the Foundation for Peace Survivors Assistance Network. Some have however criticised the short-term nature of these grants as inadequate for an organisation to provide long-term support for victims. In his testimony to the Committee, Travis Frain commented that the Survivors Assistance Network had seen a 600% increase in referrals since last year’s attacks but was yet to have their funding confirmed. Mr Frain also commented that he felt he had been “treated with indifference” by the authorities, illustrated by the fact that he did not hear from the police about the incident until five months after it happened.

5.4. Germany: learning from mistakes

93. Terrorism in Germany is not a new phenomenon, however it has not been as prevalent as in some other European states, and so support for victims has been arguably less developed as a result. Incidents in neighbouring countries and on German territory in recent years however mean that greater attention is now being paid to victims.

94. Since 2001 Germany has provided compensation for victims of extreme right-wing terrorism as a one-off payment. In 2010 the introduction of the budget law updated this to make provision for compensation for victims of other forms of terrorism e.g. left-wing or Islamic extremism⁴⁶. These are intended to symbolise solidarity on behalf of the state with victims and to send a clear message condemning such attacks⁴⁷. Germany had no dedicated system of compensation for victims of homicide however, and so in July 2017 an Act introducing the entitlement to survivors’ benefits was introduced in order to acknowledge the suffering of the survivors⁴⁸. According to this act, compensation was to be paid out on a case-by-case basis depending on the ‘personal proximity’ (*persönliches Näheverhältnis*) of the claimant to the deceased.

⁴³ [Untraced Drivers Agreement](#), 2017.

⁴⁴ [Kerslake Arena Review](#), 2018.

⁴⁵ [London terror attack victim tells parliamentarians: ‘I was treated with indifference’](#), PACE, 2018.

⁴⁶ [Services for Victims of Extremist Attacks](#), Federal Office of Justice, 2018.

⁴⁷ [Information sheet for the compensation of victims of extremist attacks](#), Federal Office of Justice, 2018.

⁴⁸ [“How can the EU and the Member States better help victims of terrorism?”](#) – European Parliament, 2017.

95. In the aftermath of the 2016 Christmas market attack in Berlin, serious shortcomings in the support offered to victims were revealed. Victims and the bereaved complained of a lack of timely information about what happened, the lack of official condolences from the authorities, and the inadequacy of financial support offered. Some families reported lengthy waits to hear if their loved ones were alive or dead and others even reported being sent bills for the autopsies of their relatives before receiving any formal condolences⁴⁹. As the attack was initially classified officially as a road accident, victims struggled to gain the recognition and support available to victims of terrorism.

96. Although the authorities' response to victims was 'bureaucratically correct', the German government recognised that there were serious practical failures to support the victims and their families⁵⁰. As a result, the government appointed an official Commissioner for the Victims to formally assess their needs, how the State had failed to provide for them, and what lessons were to be learnt⁵¹.

97. The Commissioner for Victims' review of procedures made recommendations for improvement and as a direct result the amount of compensation available to victims was tripled from €10,000 to €30,000 and became available to foreign victims for the first time⁵². It was also announced that the authorities would look into having a centralised unit for disseminating information to victims and their families so as to avoid the previous problems of slow and incoherent communication⁵³.

98. The case of the 2016 Christmas market attack in Berlin demonstrates not only the importance of a proactive policy for supporting victims but also the need to continually review, assess and improve them if necessary.

6. Preliminary conclusions and recommendations

99. A terrorist attack is a traumatic event for individuals and communities both directly and indirectly victimised, often involving a violation of their most fundamental human rights. As a result, these victims often develop physical and emotional needs distinct to those of victims of 'ordinary' crime and therefore require tailored support to help them recover.

100. Governments must move beyond merely affirming their solidarity and towards ensuring concrete measures for the protection of the fundamental rights of victims. A number of existing instruments that should provide support and protection to the victims of terrorism have not been fully implemented and respected in practice and there is a need for a more consistent and systematic approach throughout Council of Europe member States.

101. In light of the above, member and observer States and States whose parliaments enjoy observer or partner for democracy status with the Parliamentary Assembly, should be recommended to:

101.1. with regards to recognition of victims of terrorism:

- officially recognise "victims of terrorism" in an universally-agreed framework to recognise their suffering on behalf of the State the act was directed against, to identify their needs as distinct to those of victims of 'ordinary' crime, and to facilitate their access to support services as a result;
- ensure that the "victims of terrorism" status is legally and politically recognised internationally in order to provide cross-border victims with timely and adequate support;
- recognise the humanitarian, legal and strategic importance of providing prompt and effective support to victims at every stage of the recovery process – from the moment of the attack until it is no longer required – in order to empower victims and minimise the harm caused by terrorist attacks at both the individual and societal level;

101.2. with regards to supporting victims of terrorism at the national level:

⁴⁹ [German government criticized over terror victims compensation](#), Deutsche Welle, 2017.

⁵⁰ [Berlin Christmas market victims' families 'neglected'](#), Deutsche Welle, 2017.

⁵¹ [Berlin Christmas market attack: 'We weren't prepared'](#), Deutsche Welle, 2017.

⁵² [Germany aims to boost aid for terror victims after Berlin attack, commissioner says](#), Deutsche Welle, 2018.

⁵³ [Germany to boost support for victims after criticism over handling of terrorist attack](#), thelocal.de, 2017.

- ensure that a dedicated agency is responsible for adopting a comprehensive, compassionate and victim-centred approach towards providing for the various needs of victims (medical, psychological, legal and financial);
- ensure that other agencies in the criminal justice sector, non-specific to victims of terrorism but with which victims of terrorism may interact, are adequately and continually trained and resourced for supporting victims of terrorism to ensure that all support services keep pace with the evolution of threats and attacks;
- co-ordinate the support provided by different agencies in order to minimise administrative burdens for victims, ensure consistency in the provision of services, and maximise transparency, with the intention of generally reducing the risk of secondary victimisation;
- demonstrate an awareness of the specific needs of vulnerable groups of victims, such as cross-border victims, minorities and children, and tailor support policies and mechanisms accordingly;
- provide, where possible, opportunity for victims of terrorism to participate in criminal justice proceedings in order to satisfy their need for justice;
- ensure that every effort is taken to adequately protect victims from further victimisation, by the original perpetrator/s (or those aligned with their cause), and from secondary victimisation as a result of their interactions with national authorities;
- uphold the dignity and privacy of victims by making them aware of their rights towards the media and by encouraging journalists to uphold certain ethical standards, avoiding degrading or sensationalist reporting, with respect to freedom of the press;
- provide appropriate financial assistance to victims of terrorism, irrespective of their residency or citizenship status in the State where the attack takes place, in a timely manner;
- consider establishing a dedicated charitable fund or at least exercise oversight of charity appeals to ensure that money raised by the public for supporting victims of terrorism is distributed efficiently and effectively;

101.3. with regards to supporting victims of terrorism in co-operation with civil society:

- engage and co-operate closely with civil society organisations, such as victims' organisations, preferably through a formal agreement, on policymaking initiatives, awareness and fundraising campaigns, and research, education and training programmes;
- assist civil society and non-governmental organisations involved in providing support to the victims of terrorism within the criminal justice system in order to improve the delivery of justice-related services to support victims and their families;
- review the basis and implementation of grants awarded to non-governmental organisations, consult them on their needs, and monitor and evaluate the support services provided on a continual basis to ensure the most efficient and effective distribution of resources;

101.4. with regards to supporting victims of terrorism at the international level:

- implement existing guidelines and directives on supporting victims of terrorism, in particular the Council of Europe guidelines, on a proactive basis;
- uphold and conform to existing obligations under international human rights law in the development of policies for protecting and supporting victims of terrorism;
- share best-practices and expertise through international organisations and mechanisms in order for the international community to learn from the unique experiences of certain States;
- prioritise the improvement of support for cross-border victims of terrorism in future reforms to support structures, policies and mechanisms.

102. I also intend to look more specifically into ways to foster implementation of Article 13 of the 2005 Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism, with a view to further protecting and supporting the victims of terrorism that has been committed within a Party's own territory, possibly also through a new Protocol to the Convention.

103. With regard to the 4 countries mentioned (Spain, France, United Kingdom and Germany), I will also analyse in more detail what is provided for in terms of compensation (lump sum, individualised, nature of the damage more or less large), types of material assistance (adapted education, rehousing for example, alignment on the status of war victim) as well as the status and aid specific to victims' associations.

104. Finally, I intend to visit Madrid in order to better understand the best practice of the Spanish example and to propose to the Committee to hold a hearing with two French experts, Mr Jonas Knetsch, academic whose work focuses on compensation for victims of acts of terrorism, and Mr Julien Rencki, Director General of the FGTI, at its meeting on December 11 in Paris.