

Speech by Mr Patrice DAVOST
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Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) for Monaco

*10th Anniversary of the High Commissioner
Monaco, 23 January 2024*

Monaco and ECRI

Your Serene Highness,
Your Excellency the Minister of State,
Your Excellency the Archbishop,
Madam President of the National Council,
Madam Secretary of State,
Ministers,
Excellencies,
Representatives of the High Authorities of the Principality,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Madam High Commissioner for the Protection of Rights, Liberties and for Mediation,

I am delighted to be here in my capacity as Monaco's representative at ECRI, to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the High Commissioner, created by Sovereign Ordinance on 30 September 2013.

I should like, if You will permit me Your Serene Highness, to quote something that Your father, H.S.H. Prince Rainier III, used to say: "One does not have to be big to do great things".

The creation of the High Commissioner for the Protection of Rights is one of those "great things".

That much is clear from the work it has done in the decade since its creation, with the influence that your predecessor ANNE EASTWOOD, and yourself, MARINA CEYSSAC, have given it not only in Monaco but further afield, particularly in the Council of Europe, which the Principality joined on 5 October 2004, before ratifying the European Convention on Human Rights on 30 November 2005.

As a Member State of the Council of Europe, the Principality is also automatically a member of ECRI, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance, which joined forces with the High Commissioner on 25 April 2023 to hold a most interesting and productive round table on the theme "Preventing and Combating Racism and Intolerance in MONACO", attended by numerous representatives of institutions and Civil Society.

News of the event was reported to ECRI's plenary meeting, which was inspired to organise other round tables in the 46 other Member States of the Council of Europe.

The High Commissioner has made a number of contributions to ECRI's work.

Madam High Commissioner, you invited me to talk about ECRI and its composition, its role, and its relationship with the Principality.

I will do so briefly, since I know that many of you are already familiar with the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance.

ECRI is a body of the Council of Europe, not the European Union, as its title might suggest.

The Council of Europe, aptly described by the former Commissioner for Human Rights as the “Red Cross of Human Rights”, was founded after World War II on 5 May 1949. Its headquarters are at the Palais de l’Europe in Strasbourg.

ECRI was created by the VIENNA declaration, adopted by the first Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe on 19 October 1993, and convened for the first time on 22 March 1994.

➤ ECRI’s role:

Its role was significantly expanded on 13 June 2002 by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, which granted ECRI autonomous status, consolidating its role as an independent human rights monitoring body, specialising in issues of racism, intolerance, and anti-discrimination on the basis of:

- skin colour
- language
- religion
- citizenship
- national or ethnic background
- sexual orientation, gender identity or sex characteristics

➤ ECRI’s composition:

Each of the 46 countries of the Council of Europe appoints one member to ECRI, and one deputy.

I am the member for Monaco, and the deputy member is Mr Alexis MARQUET, President of the Bar Association. All of ECRI’s members are independent experts in the field of human rights.

➤ ECRI’s work:

• ECRI has three statutory activities:

1. Thematic work leading to General Policy Recommendations (GPRs), of which there are currently 17, the most recent having been adopted on 28 June 2023 following two years of work.
2. Relations with civil society (debates, round tables, conferences, etc.).
3. Last, but most importantly, country monitoring. This is ECRI’s trademark activity, a unique role not shared by any of the Council of Europe’s other bodies. This monitoring activity concerns all Member States, and is organised in five-year cycles (we are currently coming to the end of the 6th cycle). So all Member States are monitored.

The Principality has been the subject of several “evaluations” and four reports.

- in 2006: 1st ECRI report, adopted on 15 December 2006 and published on 24 May 2007;
- in 2010: 2nd ECRI report, adopted on 8 December 2010 and published on 8 February 2011;
- in 2015: 3rd ECRI report, adopted on 8 December 2015 and published on 3 June 2015;
- in 2021: 6th monitoring cycle and country visit to the Principality from 31 May to 2 June 2021, and 4th report published on 2 June 2022.

In its essential monitoring work, ECRI’s approach relies on confidential and productive dialogue with States, prior to adopting all of its reports.

Every word is carefully considered before the working group for the country concerned, and before the plenary meeting where preliminary reports and final reports are debated in detail with respect for each country, and of course in accordance with the Council of Europe’s founding principles and ECRI’s General Policy Recommendations.

Monaco plays a full part in this process, and its contribution is recognised by all of the Council of Europe Member States, no matter how large or small, as in Strasbourg there are no large or small States, only Member States, whose voices are all heard and respected on an equal footing.

ECRI’s 17 General Policy Recommendations, having been drafted, then reviewed and updated to reflect changes in ideas, societies, and national legislation in the Council of Europe Member States, should provide a solid basis, a common foundation for ensuring respect for Human Rights and Dignity, which are so essential in our modern, or post-modern societies.

In that respect, Monaco’s High Commissioner for the Protection of Rights, Liberties and for Mediation plays a crucial role, of which the Principality can be rightly proud.

ANNEXE 1:

ECRI's General Policy Recommendations

GPR No. 1: Combating racism, xenophobia, antisemitism and intolerance (4.10.1996)

GPR No. 2: Equality bodies to combat racism, xenophobia, antisemitism and intolerance at national level (13.06.1997)

GPR No. 3: Combating racism and intolerance against Roma/Gypsies (6.03.1998)

GPR No. 4: National surveys on the experience and perception of discrimination and racism from the point of view of potential victims (06.03.1998)

GPR No. 5: Preventing and combating anti-Muslim racism and discrimination (16/03/2000)

GPR No. 6: Combating the dissemination of racist, xenophobic and antisemitic material via the Internet (15.12.2000)

GPR No. 7: National legislation to combat racism and racial discrimination (13.12.2002)

GPR No. 8: Combating racism while fighting terrorism (17.03.2004)

GPR No. 9: Preventing and combating Antisemitism (25.06.2004)

GPR No. 10: Combating racism and racial discrimination in and through school education (15/12/2006)

GPR No. 11: Combating racism and racial discrimination in policing (29.06.2007)

GPR No. 12: Combating racism and racial discrimination in the field of sport (19.12.2008)

GPR No. 13: Combating antigypsyism and discrimination against Roma (24.06.2011)

GPR No. 14: Combating racism and racial discrimination in employment (22.06.2012)

GPR No. 15: Combating hate speech (8.12.2015)

GPR No. 16: Safeguarding irregularly present migrants from discrimination (16.03.2016)

GPR No. 17: Preventing and combating intolerance and discrimination against LGBTI persons (28.06.2023)

ANNEXE 2:

The Principality has been the subject of several "evaluations":

- in 2006: 1st ECRI report, adopted on 15 December 2006 and published on 24 May 2007;

- in 2010: 2nd ECRI report, adopted on 8 December 2010 and published on 8 February 2011;
- in 2015: 3rd ECRI report, adopted on 8 December 2015 and published on 1 March 2016;
- in 2022: 4th ECRI report, adopted on 29 March 2022 and published on 9 June 2022.