

DIOCESE IN EUROPE

THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

The Bishop in Europe:
The Right Reverend Dr. Robert Innes



23 March 2021

Ms Marija Pejčinović Burić
Secretary General of the Council of Europe

Dear Secretary General,

Istanbul Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence

I am writing to you regarding the statement issued by the Republic of Turkey on 20 March 2021, indicating its decision to withdraw from the Istanbul Convention.

I support wholeheartedly the statement you issued as Secretary General, and I welcome also the joint statement issued yesterday by the Chairman of the Committee of Ministers, H.E. Heiko Maas and the President of the Assembly, Mr Rik Daems.

This announcement is a deeply concerning setback for the protection of women from violence in Turkey and across Europe, as embodied in the gold standard Istanbul Convention.

As Anglican Bishop in Europe in a diocese with over 140 chaplaincies across Europe, including Turkey, I take a close interest in the work of the European Institutions, and the positions of Member States and other parties who are signatories to Council of Europe agreements.

Anglicans have been actively involved in promoting the Istanbul Convention. In 2020, we supported Council of Europe coverage during the global #16days initiative with an advocacy and awareness raising [video](#) and a [social media campaign engaging women across the Diocese](#). You may be assured that Anglicans across Europe, as members of the global Anglican Communion, will continue to campaign for the ratification of the Convention by all Member States of the Council of Europe, and to support Council of Europe policies and programmes that will prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence.

I will likewise continue to work with my fellow bishops in the Church of England in their ongoing efforts in the UK Parliament to press the UK Government to ratify the Istanbul Convention.

I am writing in similar terms to the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.

Yours sincerely,

+ Robert Gibraltar in Europe

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Rue Capitaine Crespel 47 box 49, 1050 Brussels, Belgium

Tel: +3222137480; E-Mail: bishop.europe@churchofengland.org,

Diocesan web site: www.europe.anglican.org/