

Brussels, 8 December 2017

Dear candidate,

We, civil society activists from the member states represented in the Council of Europe, and members of the Human Rights Working Group of the [Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum](#) (EaP CSF), would like to wish you all the best in the current competition to become the organisation's Human Rights Commissioner. We appreciate that the shortlist includes strong candidates each of whom will undoubtedly serve the human rights cause well over the next six years.

As you know the selection process is limited to the Council of Ministers and the members of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe leaving no opportunity for European civil society to get to know the candidates or to express an informed view as to their relative suitability for a key position in the Council of Europe's human rights architecture. In this situation, we have decided to ask you to reply to a number of questions that would allow us to make an informed assessment of your priorities and strengths in this field. If you were to accept our invitation, we would be grateful if you could reply to the EaP CSF Steering Committee by 22 December 2017. We reserve the right to share your responses to this questionnaire with relevant stakeholders.

- 1. What are the main qualities the Council of Europe Human Rights Commissioner needs?*
- 2. Which human rights advocacy and diplomatic tools in the Commissioner's mandate do you consider most useful and how would you intend to use them taking into account that human rights are under pressure in the Council of Europe member states and the space for civil society is shrinking?*
- 3. Which are the most important human rights problems Europe is currently facing and how would you address them? What would be your preferred approach - outspoken or discreet diplomacy?*
- 4. How would you engage with member states refusing to follow and implement your or the Council of Europe's recommendations, or judgements of the European Court of Human Rights?*
- 5. What is your vision for your relationship with the Committee of Ministers and the Parliamentary Assembly? Will you see your role as that of a free actor in the Council or rather one who has to take the interests of other Council institutions into account?*
- 6. Who do you think would be your main partners in your work as the Human Rights Commissioner and in which ways do you intend to engage with them? What will be your policy towards independent civil society organisations operating in the Council of Europe member states?*
- 7. If elected, what communication strategy would you adopt to increase the visibility and impact of the Human Rights Commissioner?*

Krzysztof Bobinski, Steering Committee member, Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum