

Press Release

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Council of Europe organises in Istanbul a symposium on inter-religious and intercultural dialogue

Strasbourg, 26.03.2007 – Over two hundred young leaders and youth workers from around Europe and Asia will gather in Istanbul on 28-31 March to take part in the Symposium on Inter-Religious and Intercultural Dialogue in Youth Work within the framework of the Council of Europe's "All Different - All Equal" Campaign for diversity, human rights, and participation. The symposium will open at 9.30 am on 28 March at the Grand Cevahir Hotel.

Prime-Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Deputy Prime Minister and State Minister of Turkey Mehmet Ali Sahin, as well as representatives of the European Commission, United Nations, and other state bodies and personalities are scheduled to attend the symposium (*). Youth organisations working with cultural and religious minorities will engage in discussions and share experiences at the event, which will allow participants to develop contacts and partnerships.

The symposium is organised jointly by the Council of Europe and the Directorate General of Youth and Sports of Turkey, in cooperation with the Islamic Conference Youth Forum for Dialogue and Co-operation.

The organisers chose Turkey, a founding member of the Council of Europe, as a site for the Symposium because of its deep multi-cultural traditions and its historic role in bridging cultures and religions and in linking Asia and Europe. The event is sponsored by the European Commission, which declared 2008 a Year for Intercultural Dialogue.

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(*) The program of the Symposium and additional information are available at <http://alldifferent-allegal.info> and www.coe.int.

You may also contact the campaign staff Nikki Kazimova (nikki.kazimova@coe.int) and Michael Raphael (michael.raaphael@coe.int).

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A political organisation set up in 1949, the Council of Europe works to promote democracy and human rights continent-wide. It also develops common responses to social, cultural and legal challenges in its 46 member states.