

# Press Release

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## Human Rights Commissioner to make official visit to Austria

Strasbourg, 18.05.2007 - Thomas Hammarberg, the Council of Europe's Commissioner for Human Rights, will begin a one-week assessment visit to Austria next Monday, with a view to drawing up a comprehensive report on the human rights situation. The country report will be made public in autumn 2007.

The Commissioner will meet government representatives on the federal, regional and municipal level. On the federal level, he has scheduled meetings with Chancellor Alfred Gusenbauer, Minister for European and International Affairs Ursula Plassnik, Minister of Interior Günther Platter, Minister of Justice Maria Berger, Minister for Social Affairs and Consumer Protection Erwin Buchinger and Minister for Women's Affairs Doris Bures.

Mr Hammarberg will also hold discussions with the Chair of the Parliamentary Committee on Human Rights, the President of the Constitutional court, the Chair of the Independent Federal Asylum Review Board, as well as ombudspersons and other representatives of human rights protection structures and complaints bodies. Discussions have also been scheduled with the governors of the provinces (*Länder*) of Vienna and Styria, and with the Mayor of Graz, and several other senior interlocutors.

As part of his programme, the Commissioner will also meet leading representatives of civil society, and will visit reception, accommodation and pre-deportation centres for asylum-seekers, a prison, a sheltered employment workshop for persons with disabilities, and a shelter for women victims of violence.

Commissioner Hammarberg will present his initial conclusions at a press conference at the Presseclub Concordia in Vienna (Bankgasse 8, Telephone: +43 1 533 85 73) at 11.30 on Friday, 25 May.

The Commissioner for Human Rights is an independent, non-judicial institution within the Council of Europe, mandated to promote awareness of and respect for human rights in 47 Council of Europe member states. For more information on the Commissioner's activities, please visit [www.commissioner.coe.int](http://www.commissioner.coe.int)

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