

# Press Release

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## Council of Europe Deputy Secretary General's reaction to sexual assault on child of five

Strasbourg, 17.08.2007 – "Any interference with the physical integrity of a child is unacceptable, particularly when it involves a sexual assault", said Maud de Boer-Buquicchio, Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe, in reaction to the sexual abuse of a five year old boy abducted on Wednesday 15 August in Roubaix (France).

The boy was found later the same day thanks to the effectiveness of the police alert plan for kidnappings.

To combat sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children, the Council of Europe has finalised a new international treaty intended to reinforce the prevention and suppression of this crime and to improve international co-operation. The new Convention is the first instrument to define sexual abuse of children as a criminal offence.

The treaty requires governments (a) to take measures to prevent and reduce risks of repeat offences of a sexual nature involving children; (b) to develop partnerships or other forms of co-operation between the competent authorities, specifically the health service, the social services, the judicial authorities and others in charge of supervising sex offenders; and (c) to make an assessment of the danger and possible risk of the repetition of offences, with the aim of identifying appropriate programmes or measures.

The new Council of Europe Convention will be opened for signature at the forthcoming Conference of European Ministers of Justice on 25 and 26 October in Lanzarote (Spain).

"I am confident that France, which played a very active and constructive part in the negotiations of this treaty, will accede to it as soon as possible, thereby equipping itself with an additional tool in the prevention and prosecution of sex crimes against children. The Convention will not be able to erase what this little boy has undergone but must make it possible to prevent other children from being subjected to the same kind of violence," Mrs de Boer-Buquicchio concluded.

The adoption of this Convention comes under the three-year Programme which the Council of Europe has pursued since 2006, entitled [Building a Europe for and with children](#), which aims at promoting children's rights and protecting them against all forms of violence.

[Link to the text of the Convention and explanatory report](#)

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