

Press Release

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Commissioner Hammarberg visits Armenia to assess the respect for human rights

Strasbourg, 05.10.2007 – Thomas Hammarberg, the Council of Europe's Commissioner for Human Rights, starts on Sunday 7 October a 5-day high-level official visit to Armenia to assess the human rights situation in the country.

At the centre of Mr Hammarberg's agenda there will be a broad range of human rights issues, including the functioning of the judiciary, conditions of detention, prohibition of torture and ill-treatment, freedom of expression, freedom of assembly, minorities' rights, conscientious objectors, rights of refugees, social and economic rights. The visit will also focus on trafficking in human beings and vulnerable groups. Commissioner Hammarberg will visit various police stations, detention centres, shelters and psychiatric institutions in Yerevan and Gyumri.

During the visit, the Commissioner will hold meetings with the highest authorities of the State, including the President, Robert Kotcharian, the Prime-Minister, Serzhe Sargsyan and the Chairman of the Parliament, Tigran Torosyan. He will also meet parliamentarians, the Presidents of the Constitutional Court and the Cassation Court, the Ombudsman, local authorities, the Head of the Armenian Church, as well as representatives of the civil society.

On the afternoon of Thursday 11 October, Mr Hammarberg will hold a press conference to present the first findings (Council of Europe's Office in Yerevan - 10, David Anhagt street).

This visit falls within an ongoing series of the Commissioner's country missions to all Council of Europe's member States. An assessment report containing concrete recommendations will be officially presented towards the end of the year.

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Further information regarding the Commissioner's activities can be found at www.commissioner.coe.int

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