

# Press Release

## Council of Europe Press Division

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## New independent body to be created to monitor trafficking in human beings in Europe

Strasbourg, 09.11.2007 – A group of ten to fifteen independent experts will form in 2008 the Group of Experts on Action Against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA), a specialised body to oversee the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings ([CETS n° 197](#)) in the countries that have ratified it.

Its members will serve in their individual capacity and will be elected for a 4 year term, renewable once, taking into account gender and geographical balance. They will be chosen from among experts of high moral character in the field of Human Rights, assistance and protection of victims and action against trafficking in human beings.

From 8-9 November in a conference in Strasbourg the Council of Europe's member and observer states, international governmental organisations and NGOs have discussed the content, selection criteria of members and working methods of GRETA. Council of Europe experts shared their views with representatives of states, the OSCE, the European Commission, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Anti Slavery International, Amnesty International and La Strada International.

They also reviewed the experience of other Council of Europe monitoring bodies such as the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), the Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and the Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) as models for GRETA.

The Convention will enter into force on 1 February 2008. At the moment Albania, Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Georgia, Moldova, Romania and Slovakia have ratified it and will be subject to the monitoring of GRETA.

At the meeting Maud de Boer-Buquicchio, Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe, encouraged States and the European Union to ratify the Convention and said that "proper monitoring is indispensable to the effectiveness, credibility and impact of our legal instruments. The election procedure for the future members of GRETA must guarantee their competence, independence and impartiality".

The new body will be created within a year of the entry into force of the Convention and will carry out its evaluation in rounds, like the Minorities Advisory Committee, the ECRI and the CPT. It will define its own evaluation methods, for example questionnaires addressed to national authorities or collecting information from civil society. GRETA may arrange country visits in order to prepare its reports on the implementation of the Convention and make proposals on how states should deal with the problems identified.

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