

Press Release

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Council of Europe Secretary General Terry Davis reacts to the desecration of French Muslim graves

Strasbourg, 07.04.2008 - The desecration of 148 French Muslim graves in the military cemetery of Notre-Dame-de-Lorette this weekend in France is a despicable act of racism. The French authorities and the public have reacted with force and conviction, and they should be congratulated for their response. But the lesson we must all learn from acts of vandalism against Muslim, Jewish or any other community, in France or anywhere else in Europe, is that condemnation, however forceful, is not enough. We must act to prevent Islamophobia, anti-Semitism and any other form of racism in our societies. The memory of those who died is our collective responsibility as Europeans. We defend this memory by protecting the rights and the dignity of every community, by rejecting hate and by encouraging tolerance and respect, everywhere and everyday, not only when we are reminded of our responsibilities by yet another act of racist violence and destruction.

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