

Press Release

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Thomas Hammarberg to review human rights situation in Cyprus

Strasbourg, 07.07.2008 – The Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, Thomas Hammarberg, will pay a three-day visit to Cyprus from today to review some of the most important human rights issues that are linked to the specific situation in Cyprus. The Commissioner will also assess the current developments as regards refugees and asylum seekers, human trafficking and conditions of detention.

During the visit, the Commissioner will meet with high-level state officials including the President of the Republic, Mr. Dimitris Christofias and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Markos Kyprianou. He will also hold discussions with the Commissioner for Administration, the Law Commissioner, the Committee on Missing Persons in Cyprus and representatives of international organisations and civil society.

In addition, Mr Hammarberg and his delegation will visit places of human rights relevance, such as detention centres and a shelter for victims of trafficking.

On 9 July Commissioner Hammarberg will cross the Green Line and hold talks with representatives of the Turkish Cypriot Community, including notably Mr Mehmet Ali Talat. He will also meet with non-governmental organisations active in the north and visit relevant places.

The visit is part of the activities carried out in accordance with the Commissioner's mandate to promote full respect for human rights in Council of Europe member states, with a particular focus here on the contribution of an enhanced human rights compliance to a lasting settlement.

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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 the organisation's 47 member states. Elected by the Council's Parliamentary Assembly, the present Commissioner, Thomas Hammarberg, took up his duties on 1 April 2006. For further information on the Commissioner's activities, please visit www.commissioner.coe.int

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