

# Press Release

## Council of Europe Press Division

Ref: 680a08

Tel: +33 (0)3 88 41 25 60

Fax: +33 (0)3 88 41 39 11

[pressunit@coe.int](mailto:pressunit@coe.int)

internet: [www.coe.int/press](http://www.coe.int/press)

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## European Day against the Death Penalty: panel discussion with Robert Badinter and Bianca Jagger, photo exhibit

Strasbourg, 02.10.2008 - The Council of Europe and European Union will mark the European Day against the Death Penalty, **10 October**, with a **panel discussion from 11.00 am to 12.30 pm** at the Council of Europe's **Agora Building**, featuring French former Minister of Justice and anti-death penalty pioneer Senator Robert Badinter, international activist and Goodwill Ambassador Bianca Jagger, Council of Europe Secretary General Terry Davis and Swedish Human Rights Ambassador Jan Nordlander.

Sponsored by both the Swedish Chairmanship of the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers and the French Presidency of the European Union, the panel will be moderated by Radio Television Serbia anchorwoman Tatiana Bilankov. Streamed live on the Council of Europe website ([www.coe.int](http://www.coe.int)), the panel will unveil a new anti-death penalty video clip, produced by the Council of Europe. A frank discussion of death penalty trends will include questions from local students. An audio message from U.S. death row inmate Troy Davis as delivered to Amnesty International will also be broadcast.

The European Day against the Death Penalty coincides with the World Day against the Death Penalty and includes grass roots events all over Europe, from Armenia to Ukraine. A special op-ed against the death penalty, co-authored by Ministers of Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt and Bernard Kouchner, on behalf of the Swedish Chairmanship of the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers and the French Presidency of the European Union, will also be published in major media across Europe.

**Photo exhibit marking 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights**  
Immediately following the panel, the public is invited to attend a photo exhibit to mark both the World Day against the Death Penalty and to celebrate the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Organised by the French government, in partnership with *Geo Magazine* and the French multimedia chain *FNAC*, the exhibit will feature photos each related to the 30 articles of the Declaration. It will be displayed simultaneously at the French Foreign Ministry, the Quai d'Orsay.

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## The Death Penalty and the Council of Europe

*Europe is today the only region in the world where the death penalty is no longer applied. All the Council of Europe's 47 member states have either abolished capital punishment or instituted a moratorium on executions. The Council of Europe played a leading role in the battle for abolition, believing that the death penalty has no place in democratic societies. This determination to eradicate the death penalty was reflected in Protocol No. 6 to the European Convention on Human Rights. It followed an initiative from the Parliamentary Assembly to abolish the death penalty in peacetime and was adopted in April 1983. In 2002, another important step was taken with the adoption of Protocol No. 13 on the abolition of capital punishment in all circumstances, even for acts committed in time of war. The Council has made abolition of the death penalty a prerequisite for membership. As a result, no execution has taken place on the territory of the organisation's member states since 1997. The Parliamentary Assembly continues to monitor the capital punishment issue. It has extended its action to countries enjoying observer status with the Council, including Japan and the United States.*

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**A political organisation set up in 1949, the Council of Europe works to promote democracy and human rights continent-wide. It also develops common responses to social, cultural and legal challenges in its 47 member states.**