

Press Release

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Lisbon forum to discuss universality of human rights

Strasbourg, 05.11.2008 – An international forum opening in Lisbon (Portugal) on Monday 10 November will focus on the principle of universality of human rights and its implementation at international and regional level.

Participants at the meeting will discuss the efficiency of existing systems of human rights protection in different parts of the world, with a specific focus on Europe and America. The protection of human rights in the Asia-Pacific region where no regional mechanism exists, and challenges for the implementation of the Arab Charter on Human Rights will be also debated.

Speakers at the opening session will include:

- Jorge Sampaio, High Representative of the United Nations for the Alliance of Civilizations
- Maud de Boer-Buquicchio, Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe
- Peter Schieder, President of the Lisbon Forum
- Rui Vilar, President of the Gulbenkian Foundation.

President of the European Commission Jose-Manuel Barroso will address the participants through a pre-recorded video message.

Key-note speakers at the conference will include Jean-Paul Costa, President of the European Court of Human Rights and Alvaro Gil-Robles, former Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights.

The event, which is open to the press, will start at 9 am at the Gulbenkian Foundation (Av. de Berna, 45A 1067-001 Lisbon).

Conclusions will be presented at a press conference at 6.30 pm on 11 November (Room 2, Gulbenkian Foundation)

The two-day meeting is organised by the [North-South Centre](#) in partnership with the Venice Commission, the Alliance of Civilizations, the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation and with the support of outgoing (Sweden) and incoming (Spain) presidencies of the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers..

[Further information and the programme of the Forum](#)

Organised since 1994, the Lisbon Forum is a platform for dialogue and for sharing experiences, expertise and good practices between Europe and the other continents – namely in the Middle East, Africa and the countries on the south side of the Mediterranean – in the field of human rights, democratic governance and the rule of law, issues at the heart of the mandate and actions of the Council of Europe.

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