

Press Release

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Dialogue, Tolerance and Education : Council of Europe Round Table in Kazan

Strasbourg, 22.02.2006 - European religious leaders from the Catholic, Protestant, Orthodox, Jewish and Muslim faiths will meet with government representatives from Council of Europe member states in Kazan, the capital of Tatarstan in Russia, on 22 and 23 February 2006, at the invitation of the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, Alvaro Gil-Robles. The theme will be "Dialogue, Tolerance and Education: the concerted action of the Council of Europe and the Religious communities".

Within the broader context of the promotion of inter-religious and church-state dialogue, the seminar – the fifth in the series - will focus on the objective teaching of religious beliefs as a means of combatting the ignorance of other faiths often at the root of intolerance and violence. The participants will examine the possibility of creating an European institute for the teaching of religious facts.

The participants will also consider ways of strengthening relations between religious faiths and communities and the Council of Europe as a neutral forum for the promotion of inter-cultural and inter-religious dialogue.

A **press conference** will take place in Kazan on **Wednesday 22 February** at **4.30 pm**, at *Gorodskaya Ratusha*.

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Since 2000, the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights Alvaro Gil-Robles has organised a series of round tables between leaders of the main monotheistic faiths and religious communities in Europe to discuss their rights and responsibilities, their role in the promotion of tolerance and their relations with the state authorities.

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