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27.09.2010

Council of Europe Group of Eminent Persons: Thorbjørn Jagland meets Joschka Fischer in Brussels

Date: 30 September 2010

Location: Brussels

News: Council of Europe Secretary General Thorbjørn Jagland will meet former Foreign Minister and Vice Chancellor of Germany Joschka Fischer for the launch of the *Group of Eminent Persons*. The Turkish Ambassador to the Council of Europe, Daryal Batibay, will take part in the meeting.

Project: In co-operation with the next Turkish Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers (November 2010 – May 2011), Thorbjørn Jagland has proposed to create a *Group of Eminent Persons* in order to prepare a report within the context of the *the Pan-European project Living together in 21st century Europe* to be submitted to the Committee of Ministers prior to Istanbul Ministerial of 11 May 2011.

Background: The "European model" with the values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law is today challenged because of the resurgence of intolerance and discrimination. Over the past few years all Council of Europe Member States have been affected by deteriorating social ties, radicalisation and increasing gaps between different communities within our societies. Tolerance, mutual respect and acceptance of diversity are preconditions to learn how to "live together". The *Group of Eminent Persons* will help the Council of Europe, as guardian of the European Convention on Human Rights, to deal with new challenges for security and stability of European citizens.

Eminent Persons: The group consists of 9 high-ranking individuals with a specific expertise and a particular interest in the subject. Joschka Fischer is the Chairman. Edward Mortimer will be the *rapporteur* responsible for preparing the draft report. The other members are: Timothy Garton Ash, Emma Bonino, Martin Hirsch, Danuta Hubner, Ayşe Kadioğlu, Sonja Licht, Vladimir Lukin and Javier Solana Madariaga.

Joint press-conference: Thorbjørn Jagland – Joschka Fischer – Daryal Batibay, *Norway House*, Rue Archimede 17 (11h00 – 12h00). Compulsory registration: giuseppe.zaffuto@coe.int

Other meetings: During his visit to Brussels, Jagland will also meet Steven Vanackere, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Institutional Reforms of Belgium.

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