

# Press Release

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## EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS

044  
23.1.2007

### Press release issued by the Registrar

### 2008 to be "Year of Hope" for European Court

The European Court of Human Rights' President told journalists today that 2008 would be "the year of hope after a year of disappointments".

Speaking this afternoon at the Court's annual press conference in the Human Rights Building, Strasbourg, President Jean-Paul Costa (French) conceded that the main disappointment in 2007 had been Russia's refusal to ratify Protocol No. 14 to the European Convention on Human Rights, thus blocking its entry into force. Protocol No. 14 is essentially a package of measures to streamline the Court's procedures and speed up the treatment of cases. Its non-ratification meant, among other things, that many judges whose terms of office could have been extended by two or three years would be replaced in the course of the year, inevitably slowing down the Court's efficiency.

On a more positive note, Mr Costa's identified the seeds of hope for 2008:

- the possibility of finding alternatives to Protocol No. 14 and other ways of dealing with manifestly unfounded cases before the Court;
- the complementary work of the other parts of the Council of Europe in preventing violations of the Convention;
- efforts at national level to implement the Court's judgments and prevent human rights abuses; and
- the prospect of the European Union acceding to the Convention.

Mr Costa also explained that the number of pending cases before the Court had risen 15% (from 90,000 in 2006 to 103,000 in 2007). The total number of judgments delivered by the Court in 2007 was 1503, fewer than the 1560 delivered in 2006. However, that was the result of the Court's decision to focus on the more complex and serious cases, which took longer to process.

The Court also issued its [annual table of violations by country for 2007](#) at today's press conference. The table reveals that Turkey had the highest number of judgments finding at least one violation of the Convention recorded against it (319), followed by Russia (175), Ukraine (108), Poland (101) and Romania (88).

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Further information about the Court can be found on its Internet site (<http://www.echr.coe.int>).

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*The European Court of Human Rights was set up in Strasbourg by the Council of Europe Member States in 1959 to deal with alleged violations of the 1950 European Convention on Human Rights.*

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