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Secretary General Thorbjørn Jagland: "Europe in biggest human rights crisis since Cold War"

New report on the state of human rights, democracy and the rule of law in Europe

Strasbourg, 16.04.2014 - Serious human rights violations including corruption, human trafficking, racism and discrimination persist across Europe, according to a new [report](#) by Secretary General Thorbjørn Jagland. Unemployment and poverty in many countries are nurturing extremism and conflicts. The report represents the first consolidated analysis of human rights, democracy and the rule of law in Europe, based on the findings of the Council of Europe's monitoring bodies.

Referring to the crisis in Ukraine and Russia's military intervention in Crimea, Mr Jagland warned of the risk of similar conflicts erupting in Europe: "The lack of democratic checks and balances, free media and an independent judiciary caused widespread corruption and misuse of power". The Secretary General called on member states to comply fully with the European Convention on Human Rights:

"I urge member states to stop the erosion of fundamental rights and adopt further reforms of Europe's unique Convention system. Europe needs a new pan-European security agenda which must include the protection of the rule of law and democratic principles. Together, we need to put Europe back on the path of unity and co-operation, based on common values, standards and legal obligations", said the Secretary General.

The report, which makes a series of recommendations on how the organisation can provide more rapid and effective assistance to its 47 member states, will be discussed at the meeting of the Council of Europe's Committee of Foreign Ministers on 6 May in Vienna.

Expressing his concern over current outbreaks of violence in eastern Ukraine, Mr Jagland said: "I call on all parties in Ukraine to stop the escalation of violence and engage in political negotiations about the future of the nation. Ukraine's international partners should support the country to find solutions leading to peace and stability".

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