

Press Release

Council of Europe Press Division

Ref: 316a06

Tel: +33 (0)3 88 41 25 60

Fax: +33 (0)3 88 41 39 11

pressunit@coe.int

internet: www.coe.int/press



46 members

Albania
Andorra
Armenia
Austria
Azerbaijan
Belgium
Bosnia and Herzegovina
Bulgaria
Croatia
Cyprus
Czech Republic
Denmark
Estonia
Finland
France
Georgia
Germany
Greece
Hungary
Iceland
Ireland
Italy
Latvia
Liechtenstein
Lithuania
Luxembourg
Malta
Moldova
Monaco
Netherlands
Norway
Poland
Portugal
Romania
Russia
San Marino
Serbia and Montenegro
Slovakia
Slovenia
Spain
Sweden
Switzerland
"The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia"
Turkey
Ukraine
United Kingdom

Local elected representatives sign Declaration to fight human trafficking

Strasbourg, 31.05.2006 – On the second day of the Congress session, local elected representatives from 17 municipalities signed today, in the presence of Council of Europe Secretary General Terry Davis and Congress President Halvdan Skard, the Declaration on the fight against trafficking in human beings.

By doing so, they recognised the gravity of the problem, which is felt most at local and regional level, and committed themselves to mounting local action against trafficking.

"Trafficking in human beings is slavery," stressed the Secretary General speaking at the signing ceremony. "The 'slave trade' of today takes place on the streets of cities and towns. The local authorities are the first to be confronted and to have to deal with trafficking and related issues. You are the front line in the fight against trafficking and in helping the victims," he said, adding that the Declaration was one step further in involving local authorities and recognising their role in dealing with this tragic and shameful phenomenon.

"A human being is born to freedom. Yet still today many millions of people in Europe are not free as they being trafficked, exploited and sold as slaves," underscored the Congress President, calling trafficking a blight on our society and a scourge for territorial communities. "Combating trafficking requires not only international texts and national policy measures, but also a complementary, concerted local and regional approach. It is at local and regional level that the drama of trafficking takes place," he said, urging a maximum number of local authorities to sign the Declaration.

The Declaration is the Congress' contribution to the Council of Europe's campaign against trafficking, led under the slogan "Human being – not for sale!" It will be available for signature online at the Congress' website www.coe.int/congress.

List of signatories:

Lorenç LUKA, Head of the Regional Council of Shkodra (Albania)
Hilde ZACH, Mayor of Innsbruck (Austria)
Dubravka SUICA, Mayor of Dubrovnik (Croatia)
Jean-Claude FRÉCON, Mayor of Pouilly-les-Feurs (France)
Pascal MANGIN, Deputy Mayor of Strasbourg (France)
Jean-Marc BOURJAC, Deputy Mayor of Vitry-sur-Seine (France)
Pantelis EIRINAKIS, Mayor of Agios Dimitrios (Greece)
Theodora TSIKARDANI, Municipal Councillor of Servion (Greece)
Wolfgang SCHUSTER, Mayor of Stuttgart (Germany)
Gianni RISARI, Deputy Mayor of Crema (Italy)
Ligita GINTERE, Chair of the Jaunpils Rural Municipality Council (Latvia)
Josef BORG, Councillor of Mellieha (Malta)

.../.

To receive our press releases by e-mail, contact : Council.of.Europe.Press@coe.int

A political organisation set up in 1949, the Council of Europe works to promote democracy and human rights continent-wide. It also develops common responses to social, cultural and legal challenges in its 46 member states.

Cristian TOADER PASTI, Mayor of Tirgu Carbunesti (Romania)

Ramón ROPERO MANCERA, Mayor of Villafranca de los Barros (Spain)

Britt-Marie LÖVGREN, Vice-Mayor of Umea (Sweden)

Muriel BARKER, member of North East Lincolnshire Unitary Authority (United Kingdom)

Sandra BARNES, Leader of the South Northants District Council (United Kingdom)