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## **Summit of Mayors on Roma: press conference in Paris on 6 September 2011**

Strasbourg, 1.9.2011 – The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe is holding a Summit of Mayors under the theme “Building mutual trust at the grassroots” in Strasbourg (France) on 22 September 2011 to mobilise local and regional action to promote the inclusion of Roma and Travellers.

A press conference will be held in Paris at **3pm on 6 September 2011** with the participation of Keith Whitmore, President of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, Roland Ries, Mayor of Strasbourg, and Jeroen Schokkenbroek, Special Representative of the Council of Europe Secretary General for Roma issues.

The press conference will take place in the **Council of Europe’s Paris Office** - 55, avenue Kléber, 1er étage, Métro Boissière.

### **Contacts for the press conference:**

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### **Background and objectives**

The Summit of Mayors on Roma is a response to the increasing discrimination against Roma in Europe. It will bring together representatives of municipalities, regions and networks actively addressing the situation of Roma, Roma organisations and elected representatives and other institutions concerned with the issue. The Strasbourg Declaration on Roma, adopted by the High-level Meeting of the Council of Europe member states on 20 October 2010, highlighted the particular importance of local and regional action to improve the situation of Roma.

The Summit discussions will focus on the relations between local and regional communities and Roma groups, as well as on obstacles to Roma inclusion. The aim is to identify concrete and innovative solutions to any problems encountered. The long-term objective is to establish a pan-European network which will provide information on the growing number of local and regional initiatives and serve as a co-operation framework for the various players in the field.

### **Partners**

The Summit of Mayors on Roma is being organised in co-operation with the Special Representative of the Council of Europe Secretary General for Roma issues, Jeroen Schokkenbroek, and in partnership with the City of Strasbourg and the Strasbourg Club municipal network, with the contribution of the French Foreign Ministry and the European

Commission.

## **Practical information**

### Contacts for the Summit:

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Registration: [www.coe.int/roma-summit-registration](http://www.coe.int/roma-summit-registration)

Interpretation: The Summit working languages will be English, French, German, Russian, Italian and Romany.

The Congress has two chambers, the Chamber of Local Authorities and the Chamber of Regions.

It brings together 318 full and 318 substitute members representing more than 200 000 European territorial communities.

President of the Congress: Keith Whitmore (United Kingdom, ILDG), President of the Chamber of Regions: Herwig van Staa (Austria, EPP/CD), President of the Chamber of Local Authorities: Jean-Paul Frécon (France, SOC)

Political Groups: Socialist Group (SOC), Group of the European People's Party – Christian Democrats (EPP/CD), Independent and Liberal Democrat Group (ILDG).