

# Press Release

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## Commissioner Hammarberg to assess human rights situation in Albania

Strasbourg, 26.10.2007 – Starting Monday 29 October, the Council of Europe's Commissioner for Human Rights, Thomas Hammarberg, will pay a five-day high-level official visit to Albania to assess the overall human rights situation in the country.

Mr Hammarberg's agenda focuses on a broad range of issues including the functioning of the judiciary, conditions of detention, torture and ill-treatment, trafficking in human beings, gender equality, Roma and minority rights as well as social and economic rights. Accompanied by three members of his Office, Commissioner Hammarberg will also visit various institutions such as a police station, detention centre, shelter and psychiatric establishment in Tirana, Shkodra, Vlorë and Elbasan.

During the visit, the Commissioner will meet with top State authorities including the President, Mr Bamir Topi, the Prime Minister, Mr Sali Berisha, and the Speaker of Parliament, Ms Jozefina Topalli. Further talks will be held with ministers and parliamentarians, the Presidents of the Constitutional Court and High Council of Justice, the Prosecutor General, the Ombudsman and local authorities. Moreover, Mr Hammarberg's agenda includes meetings with representatives of the civil society and international organisations.

The Commissioner will present his preliminary observations on Friday 2 November at 11h00 during a press conference organised in the Council of Europe's Information Office in Tirana (Sheshi Skenderbej, Palatti i Kultures, Kati I pare).

The visit is part of the activities carried out in accordance with the Commissioner's mandate to assess the implementation of human rights obligations by all Council of Europe's member States. An assessment report with relevant recommendations will be presented and published within three months after the visit.

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The Commissioner for Human Rights is an independent, non-judicial institution within the Council of Europe (CoE), mandated to promote awareness of, and respect for, human rights in the 47 member States of the CoE. Elected by the Parliamentary Assembly of the CoE, the present Commissioner, Mr Thomas Hammarberg, took up his function on 1 April 2006.

For further information regarding the Commissioner's activities, please visit [www.commissioner.coe.int](http://www.commissioner.coe.int)

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