

DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

[04/11/08] We fifty-five human rights defenders from different parts of the European continent met in a roundtable organised by the Commissioner for Human Rights on 3-4 November 2008 at the headquarters of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg. We shared with him our concerns and the obstacles we face on a daily basis in our work in defending the human rights of others persons in our countries.

We welcome the opportunity provided by the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights to interact and create an effective network of human rights defenders throughout Europe, based on solidarity, good communication and the capacity to react rapidly in urgent situations in defence of each other's rights.

We strongly support the Commissioner's efforts and we call upon him to strengthen and expand his activities in support of us and our work. We call upon member states of the Council of Europe to support him politically and financially in this endeavour, which is at the heart of his mandate.

More resources are needed to allow the Commissioner to effectively promote an enabling and conducive environment in which all human rights standards of the Council of Europe are respected and a reality in Europe.