

# Press Release

## Directorate of Communication

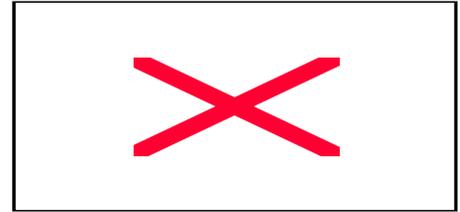
Ref: 395b09

Tel. +33 3 88 41 25 60

Fax +33 3 88 41 39 11

Internet: [www.coe.int](http://www.coe.int)

e-mail: [pressunit@coe.int](mailto:pressunit@coe.int)



### 47 member States

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  
Montenegro  
Netherlands  
Norway  
Poland  
Portugal  
Romania  
Russia  
San Marino  
Serbia  
Slovakia  
Slovenia  
Spain  
Sweden  
Switzerland  
"The former Yugoslav  
Republic of  
Macedonia"  
Turkey  
Ukraine  
United Kingdom

## Reykjavik conference maps out future Council of Europe work on media and the Internet

**Reykjavik, 29.05.09** - Ministers and representatives from the 47 Council of Europe member states today adopted an Action Plan that contains the direction of the work of the organisation on media and the Internet in the future.

In a political declaration adopted at the 1<sup>st</sup> Council of Europe Conference of Ministers Responsible for Media and New Communication Services on 28-29 May, they stated that the Council of Europe should explore the notion of media and, if necessary, review the concept itself, establishing criteria for distinguishing media or media-like services from new forms of personal communication.

The ministers asked the organisation to assess in consultation with relevant stakeholders whether the existing freedom of expression and information standards for traditional media should apply to new media and service providers, or if new ones should be elaborated. As for traditional media, they supported self-regulation as the basic way for ensuring compliance with freedom of expression standards. They also highlighted that new service providers - such as ISPs, content aggregators or search engines – should be made aware of their rights and their duties and responsibilities.

In the conference, the ministers also adopted resolutions on the new notion of media, critical Internet resources, and the protection of freedom of expression and information with regard to anti-terrorist laws.

The ministers resolved to review national anti-terrorist laws and practice on a regular basis to ensure that any impact on freedom of expression and information is consistent with the Council of Europe standards, in particular the case law of the European Court of Human Rights. (1)

They stated that although in some cases it is inappropriate to disseminate particular information in order to prevent terrorist acts in the interest of an ongoing investigation, the protection of the victims or judicial proceedings, "reporting on terrorism cannot be equated to supporting terrorism". They also underlined that concerns have been raised that, in some cases, anti-terrorist laws restricting freedom of expression and information in member states are "too broad, fail to define clear limits to authorities' interference or lack sufficient procedural guarantees to prevent abuse".

With regard to the Internet, they called on all states and non-state actors to explore ways to ensure that critical Internet resources are managed in the public interest and as a public asset, even by elaborating an international law instrument. They also asked the Council of Europe to explore the feasibility of elaborating a treaty to further protect cross-border Internet traffic. Finally, they called on the Council of Europe to make more lasting arrangements for organising Pan-European Internet governance events.

Organised under the theme "A new notion of media?" the conference was organised by the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture of Iceland and the Council of Europe.

(1)The Russian Federation supported all the adopted texts with the exception of this undertaking.

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

# Press Release

---

Political Declaration and resolutions

**Practical information:**

- The sessions of the ministerial conference are available in video **webcast** on [www.ministerialconference.is](http://www.ministerialconference.is)

- For further information, please contact Jaime Rodriguez (Tel. +33 3 89 99 50 42; [jaime.rodriquez@coe.int](mailto:jaime.rodriquez@coe.int))