

Europarådets pressekorrespondent i de nordiske lande

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Meeting of new Council of Europe forum to focus on citizens' participation (Warszawa, 3-4 November 2005)

Strasbourg, 28.10.2005 – The launch meeting of the Council of Europe Forum for the Future of Democracy will be held in Warsaw on 3 and 4 November at the invitation of the Polish authorities.

The forum will bring together representatives of government authorities, parliaments, local and regional authorities and civil society from all over Europe to discuss the theme of citizens' participation.

The launch of this forum is one of the concrete direct results of the Third Summit of the Council of Europe, which took place in Warsaw on 16 and 17 May 2005.

The meeting will be opened at 2.30 pm on Thursday 3 November at the Royal Castle in Warsaw. Speakers will include Ambassador Joaquim Duarte, Chairman of the Ministers' Deputies for the Portuguese Chair, René van der Linden, President of the Parliamentary Assembly, Giovanni Di Stasi, President of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, and Maud de Boer-Buquicchio, Deputy Secretary General. Key guest speakers include Lech Wałęsa, Timothy Garton Ash, of the European Studies Centre in Oxford, and Gesine Schwan, Dean of the Viadrina University in Frankfurt an der Oder.

Annelise Oeschger, President of the Conference of INGOs, and Ugo Mifsud-Bonnici, representing the Venice Commission, will also address the meeting.

The second day will be devoted to an exchange of experience and discussion of practical initiatives and programmes for enhancing citizens' participation. The launch meeting will be closed by Terry Davis, Secretary General of the Council of Europe, and Bogdan Borusewicz, Speaker of the Polish Senate.

A closing press briefing will be held on site at 1.30 pm on Friday 4 November.

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