

Press Release

Council of Europe Press Division

Ref: 545a06

Tel: +33 (0)3 88 41 25 60

Fax: +33 (0)3 88 41 39 11

pressunit@coe.int

internet: www.coe.int/press



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Council of Europe Congress to observe local elections in Georgia

Strasbourg, 29.09.2006 – A delegation of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe will observe local elections in Georgia which will take place on 5 October.

The delegation, headed by Wim Van Gelder (Netherlands, EPP/CD), will also include members of the Committee of the Regions of the European Union and of the Venice Commission.

On 3 and 4 October, the delegation will meet representatives of governmental authorities, of the Parliament and of the Central Electoral Commission, as well as leaders of the main political parties. The delegation will also meet representatives of the civil society and of the international community in Georgia, as well as domestic and other international observer organisations.

Ten teams of observers will be deployed throughout the country on Election Day. The Congress delegation will present its preliminary findings at a press conference in Tbilisi on 6 October (time to be confirmed).

Composition of the delegation:

EPP/CD Group

Mr Wim Van Gelder, Queen's Commissioner in Zeeland (Netherlands)
Mrs Susan Bolam, Councillor, Northumberland County Council (United Kingdom)
Mr Joseph Borg, Deputy Chairman of the Local Council Association (Malta)
Mr Gintautas Geguzinskas, Mayor of Pasvalys District (Lithuania)
Mr Lars Molin, Vice Mayor, Örebro (Sweden)
Mr Nikolajs Stepanovs, Chairman, Gulbene County Council (Latvia)

Socialist Group (SOC)

Mrs Myriam Constantin, Deputy Mayor of Paris (France)
Mrs Marie-Rose Koro, Regional Councillor of Basse-Normandie (France)
Mr Günther Krug, Member of the House of Representatives of Berlin (Germany)
Mr Fabio Pellegrini, Consigliere comunale, Rapolano Terme (Italy)

ILDG Liberal Group

Mr Ott Kasuri, Mayor of Harku Municipality (Estonia)
Mr Petru Radu Paun-Jura, Mayor of Simeria, Hunedoara County (Romania)

Non-registered

Mrs Mariacristina Spinosa, Councillor, Piemonte Region (Italy)

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A political organisation set up in 1949, the Council of Europe works to promote democracy and human rights continent-wide. It also develops common responses to social, cultural and legal challenges in its 46 member states.

Other members of the delegation

Mr Roger Kaliff (Sweden), Vice-President of the Committee of the Regions, Chairman of the Commission for External Relations and Decentralised Cooperation (RELEX), Committee of the Regions of the EU

Ms Mirjana Lazarova, (“the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”), member of the Venice Commission, legal advisors to the delegation

Mr Pierre Garrone (Switzerland), Head of the Division of Elections and Referendums, Secretariat of the Venice Commission, legal advisors to the delegation

Ms Inkeri Aarnio-Lwoff (Finland), Political Advisor to the delegation, Directorate General of Political Affairs of the Council of Europe

Ms Olena Petsun (Ukraine), Political Advisor to the delegation, Directorate General of Political Affairs of the Council of Europe

Ms Pilar Morales (Spain), Congress Secretariat

Ms Elena Piscopo (Italy), Congress Secretariat

Contact: Dmitri Marchenkov, Head of the Congress Communication Unit

Tel: +33 3 88 41 38 44 ; Email: dmitri.marchenkov@coe.int