

Press Release

Communication Unit of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities

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Congress President to visit Ukraine

Strasbourg, 01.03.2007 – Halvdan Skard, President of the Council of Europe Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, will pay an official visit to Ukraine from 5 to 6 March to discuss recent developments concerning of local and regional democracy in the country.

President Skard will have meetings with Vice-Prime Minister Volodymyr Rybak, who is also Minister for Construction, Architecture, Housing and Communal Services, and Viktor Tikhonov, Chair of the Parliamentary Committee for State Building, Regional Policy and Local Self-Government. Meetings are also planned with representatives of the Presidential Administration, the Ministries of Economy and of Justice, the Foundation for Local Self-Government of Ukraine, and the leaders of the Association of the Cities of Ukraine and the Association of Local and Regional Authorities of Ukraine.

On 5 March, President Skard will address a seminar on regionalisation in Ukraine, organised jointly by the Congress Chamber of Regions, the Verkhovna Rada (Parliament of Ukraine), the Ukrainian delegation to the Congress and the Public Council on Regional Policy Issues under the Ministry of Architecture, Building and Communal Housing of Ukraine.

The seminar participants will analyse the current state of constitutional reform in relation to regional democracy and possible models of regional self-government for Ukraine, and will discuss recent initiatives aimed at developing transborder and interregional cooperation, as well as the Action Plan on regionalisation in Ukraine for 2007.

On 6 March, President Skard will participate in the round table with associations of local and regional authorities and members of the Ukrainian delegation to the Congress.

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The Congress has two chambers, the Chamber of Local Authorities and the Chamber of Regions. It brings together 315 full and 315 substitute members representing more than 200 000 European territorial communities. President of the Congress Halvdan Skard (Norway, SOC), President of the Chamber of Regions: Yavuz Milden (EPP/CD, Turkey), President of the Chamber of Local Authorities: Ian Micallef (Malta, EPP/CD). Political Groups : Socialist Group (**SOC**), Group of the European People's Party – Christian Democrats (**EPP/CD**), Independent and Liberal Democrat Group (**ILDG**).