

# Press Release

## Communication Unit of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities

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### Local democracy beyond Europe's borders and the celebration of 50 years of local democracy in Europe on Congress plenary session agenda

Strasbourg, 21.05.2007 - The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe will be holding its next plenary session from 30 May to 1 June 2007 in Strasbourg (France).

Co-operation on local democracy beyond Europe's borders, in particular with Morocco, Japan and Mexico, is one of the items on the agenda. Delegations from these three countries will address the Chamber of Local Authorities and the Chamber of Regions of the Congress.

A round table on "50 years of local democracy in the Council of Europe" will take place on 30 May 2007 to mark the anniversary of the first session of the Conference of Local Authorities, held on 12 January 1957 under the Chairmanship of the late French Prime Minister and National Assembly Speaker Jacques Chaban-Delmas.

On the same day a debate is scheduled on the new Congress Charter, which the Committee of Ministers adopted on 2 May this year and which allows for the increasing political role played by the Congress.

Spain's State Secretary for Territorial Co-operation, Ana Isabel Leiva Diez, will speak on 1 June, inter alia to present the plans for the Conference of European Ministers responsible for local and regional authorities to be held in Valencia (Spain) on 15 and 16 October next.

This will be followed by a debate on the 'European Local Democracy Week' project. At the initiative of the Congress and the European Committee on Local and Regional Democracy (CDLR), this proposal could be officially launched at the Valencia Conference.

Other personalities who will be present include Liechtenstein's Minister of the Interior Martin Meyer, the Mayor of Moscow, Youri Loujkov, and the Mayor of Rabat in Morocco, Omar Bahraoui.

Also on the session's agenda are various debates on the monitoring of local and regional democracy, election observation, social cohesion and, in particular, territorial continuity, and also urgent societal issues such as global warming.

The debates will be webcast live and a special file covering all the session news will be available online at: [www.coe.int/congress-session/fr](http://www.coe.int/congress-session/fr)

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The Congress has two chambers, the Chamber of Local Authorities and the Chamber of Regions. It brings together 318 full and 318 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).