

Press Release

Communication Unit of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities

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Congress to observe the People's Assembly elections in Gagauzia, Moldova

Strasbourg, 13.03.2008 – A delegation from the Council of Europe's Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, including representatives of the EU Committee of the Regions, will observe the elections for the People's Assembly in the Autonomous Territorial Unit of Gagauzia, the Republic of Moldova, which will be held on 16 March 2008.

In Chisinau on 14 March, the delegation will meet the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration, Andrei Stratan, President of the Moldovan Parliament Marian Lupu, and Minister of Local Public Administration Valentin Guznac. Other meetings are scheduled with representatives of the Central Electoral Commission of Moldova and with NGOs operating in the region.

On Saturday 15 March, the delegation will be deployed to Gagauzia, where members will meet representatives of the regional government and parliament, as well as candidates running for elections, prior to observing the voting in a cross-section of polling stations on 16 March.

The delegation will hold a **press conference at 10am on Monday 17 March** at the Infotag News Agency in Chisinau.

Members of the Congress delegation

Karsten Behr, Member of Parliament, Niedersächsischer Landtag (Germany, EPP/CD) – **Head of Delegation**

Joseph Borg, Councillor of Mellieha (Malta, EPP/CD)

Mehboob Khan, Member, Kirklees Metropolitan Borough Council (UK, SOC)

Britt-Marie Lövgren, Vice-Mayor, Umea (Sweden, ILDG)

Helena Pihlajasaari, Chair of the Board, Regional Council of Centra Finland, Vice-Chair of the Municipal Council of Laukaa (Finland, SOC)

Dominique Ronga, Vice-President of the Regional Council of Lorraine, Responsible for interregional relations and decentralised co-operation, (France, SOC).

Members of the EU Committee of the Regions

Uno Silberg, Vice-President of the External Relations Commission, CoR (ET/UEN-EA)

Sharon Taylor, Member of the External Relations Commission, CoR (UK/PES)

Heini Utunen Ziv, Member of the External Relations Commission, CoR (FI/ALDE)

Congress Secretariat

Dolores Rios, Secretary of the Committee on Social Cohesion

Gönül Koçak, Congress Secretariat

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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 Meldon (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).