

Press Release

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Congress calls upon local and regional authorities to support a new energy culture

Strasbourg, 30.05.2008 - During its plenary session, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe adopted, on 29 May 2008, a recommendation and a resolution on "Public local and regional action: for a new energy culture".

In response to the urgency raised by climate change and the need for a secure supply of energy at affordable prices, the Congress called upon local and regional authorities to develop a new energy culture incorporating regions' energy performance. This would depend particularly on use of renewable energy sources, improvement of energy efficiency, and reorganisation of means of transport.

"We need to act in all sectors of responsibility: as energy consumers, service suppliers, investors and spatial planning officials. We must mobilise the population and the local players," rapporteur Mariacristina Spinosa, Italy, pointed out.

"National governments must support the local and regional authorities in their efforts to promote energy efficiency, by granting them the necessary resources in accordance with the European Charter of Local Self-Government," rapporteur Oleksandr Luk'anchenko, Ukraine, said during the debate.

The Congress furthermore invited the authorities to set up local energy agencies in order to implement a sustainable energy policy at their level, while stressing the need for national parliaments to harmonise the legislative and regulatory framework regarding energy issues.

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 : Yavuz Milden (Turkey, EPP/CD), President of the Chamber of Regions: Ludmila Sfirloaga (Romania, SOC),

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**).