

Press Release

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Launch in Madrid of the European Local Democracy Week (ELDW)

Strasbourg, 13.10.2008 - Council of Europe Secretary General Terry Davis, President of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities Yavuz Milden and Deputy Mayor of the City of Madrid Ana Botella Serrano will launch the European Local Democracy Week (ELDW) in Madrid (Spain) on 15 October, during a ceremony at the Arganzuela District.

The European Local Democracy Week is an event which takes place simultaneously at national and local level in Council of Europe member states, with the goal of deepening the knowledge of local democracy and promoting citizens' participation in local affairs. To foster local democracy, more than 1000 activities will be taking place in hundreds of municipalities across Europe on the occasion of the 2008 edition of ELDW. Madrid, Odessa, Varna and the Brussels-Capital Region act as "pilot cities" for this edition, by organising various events, in particular during the week from 13 to 19 October.

The ceremony in Madrid will launch the public consultation "Arganzuela participa", which, until 28 October, will enable the administration of the Arganzuela District to know directly citizens' opinions and suggestions, and will allow inhabitants to have a say in public policy making concerning municipal services, and make proposals for district administration.

The ceremony, which will take place in Casa del Reloj de la Junta Municipal de Arganzuela (Paseo de la Chopera, 10 - Madrid) as from 10 am, will be open to the press.

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The ELDW is a joint initiative of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities and the European Committee on Local and Regional Democracy of the Council of Europe. Their role is to co-ordinate the European dimension of the project, whereas the national and local implementation of the ELDW is being supported in each participating country by the correspondents designated by the national associations of local authorities.

More information can be found at www.coe.int/demoweb

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).