# Press Release

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## Congress President: "Alexiy II played an important role in fostering reconciliation and interfaith dialogue"

Strasbourg, 05.12. 2008 – "It is with great sadness that I learned about the death of Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia Alexiy II, Head of the Russian Orthodox Church," Yavuz Mildon, President of the Council of Europe Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, said in a statement today.

"Alexiy II was at the helm of the Russian Orthodox Church during the difficult period of his country's transition to democracy, and played an important role in fostering interfaith dialogue both on the international scene and within multiethnic and multireligious communities and regions of the Russian Federation. His preaching of reconciliation and non-violence contributed to consolidating unity of Russian society in troubled times," said President Mildon.

## Le Président du Congrès : « Alexiy II a joué un rôle important dans l'instauration de la réconciliation et du dialogue interconfessionnel »

Strasbourg, 05.12. 2008 – « C'est avec une grande tristesse que j'ai appris la nouvelle de la mort du Patriarche de Moscou et de toutes les Russies Alexiy II, chef de l'Eglise orthodoxe russe » a déclaré aujourd'hui Yavuz Mildon, Président du Congrès des pouvoirs locaux et régionaux du Conseil de l'Europe.

« Alexiy II était aux commandes de l'Eglise orthodoxe russe pendant la période difficile de la transition de son pays vers la démocratie, et a joué un rôle important dans l'instauration du dialogue interconfessionnel tant sur le plan international qu'au sein des communes et des régions multiethniques et multireligieuses de la Fédération de Russie. Sa volonté de réconciliation et de non violence a contribué à consolider l'unité de la société russe dans des temps troublés» a dit le Président Mildon.

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 Mildon (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**).