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Congress President concerned by resurgence of regional tension in Georgia

Strasbourg, 20.07.2015 – Reacting to the moving of the Administrative Border Line (ABL) between South Ossetia and the rest of Georgian territory, Jean-Claude Frécon, President of the Council of Europe's Congress of Local and Regional Authorities made the following statement:

"In March this year, speaking on behalf of the Congress, I strongly condemned the signature of a so-called "alliance and integration treaty" between South Ossetia and Russia. We were convinced that this move could heighten tension in the region and pose a threat to the local populations. The information we have received in recent days regarding the moving by the Russian forces of the Administrative Border Line between South Ossetia and the rest of Georgia, expanding a little further the territory of the separatist entity, is a cause of great concern to us.

We call on the Russian Federation to cease any action which could give rise to excesses that are in nobody's interest and are condemned by the international community. The moving of the ABL beyond the villages of Tsitelubani and Orchosani placing the Baku-Supsa pipeline under the control of the Russian forces creates a further risk of destabilising the whole region.

The Congress has always been in favour of establishing regions with a special status which respect the territorial integrity of states. Consequently, the only reasonable solution is for South Ossetia to once again come under the control of the Tbilisi authorities."

The Congress has two chambers, the Chamber of Local Authorities and the Chamber of Regions. It brings together 324 full and 324 substitute members representing more than 200 000 European territorial communities.

President of the Congress: Jean-Claude Frécon (France, SOC), President of the Chamber of Local Authorities: Anders Knape (Sweden, EPP/CCE), President of the Chamber of Regions: Gudrun Mosler-Törnström (Austria, SOC)

Political Groups: Socialist Group (SOC), Group of the European People's Party – Christian Democrats (EPP/CD), Independent and Liberal Democrat Group (ILDG), European Conservatives & Reformists Group (ECR)