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Congress adopts a Report on local elections in Albania including a resolution and a recommendation

Strasbourg 21 October 2015 –The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe debated on 21 October, a report, Recommendation on the local elections held in Albania on 21 June 2015. The local elections were the first to be held after the adoption of the territorial-administrative reform in July 2014 and based on changed legislation concerning female candidates.

"In general, the 2015 local elections can be seen as an important step towards "normalisation" of the political environment in Albania" stated Stewart Dickson, (United Kingdom, R, ILGD) Congress Rapporteur and Head of delegation. He welcomed the improvement, since previous elections, of the peaceful and civilized campaign and organised voting.

Invited to address the Chamber Session, Declan McDonnell, (Ireland, ALDE) presented the concluding report on behalf of the delegation of the Committee of the Regions participating in the observation mission.

In particular, he highlighted the calm electoral campaign and the fact that parties and coalitions refrained, by and large, from violent disputes, also in the post-election phase. "However, what remains to be an issue is the political polarisation along party lines and the need to de-politicise and professionalise the whole electoral administration", Stewart Dickson underlined.

Referring to the Resolution already approved by the Congress' Monitoring Committee at its September meeting, the Rapporteur pointed to the urgent need of fact-finding mission to be carried out in Albania in the framework of the post-electoral dialogue, which would include an assessment of the impact of the territorial administration reform and respective changes of the legal framework in place for the 2015 local elections.

Further recommendations of the Congress include the modalities of appointment dismissal of members of electoral bodies, legal provisions on residency requirements for voter registration and the creation of a level playing field for independent candidates.

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[Speech of Stewart Dickson, \(United Kingdom, R, ILGD\)](#)

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 Knappe (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)