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Ref. CG-PR 059 (2014)

Declaration by the President of the Congress on the treaty signed between the Russian Federation and Abkhazia

Strasbourg, 3 December 2014 - Reacting to the signature, on 24 November 2014, of a treaty on alliance and strategic partnership between the Russian Federation and Abkhazia, a separatist region of Georgia, the President of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, Jean-Claude Frécon, declared that "Abkhazia is a region of Georgia, and we cannot recognise the validity of a so-called treaty adopted in violation of the territorial integrity of a member state of the Council of Europe".

The President of the Congress condemned the treaty as "one more factor in the destabilisation of this part of Europe".

The Congress had already indicated its concern on this subject in October 2014, when, at its latest session, it pointed to its attachment to application of the "principles of international law, such as territorial integrity, sovereignty and the inviolability of the internationally recognised borders of states".

The President of the Congress expressed regret that the Russian Federation was, in Georgia as in Ukraine, committing acts which were not helpful to the effort to find peaceful ways of settling conflicts.

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: 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)