

# Media Advisory

## Congress of Local and Regional Authorities

Communication Division

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30.10.2009

## Council of Europe Congress: Ian Micallef to visit Albania

**Date:** 1 - 2 November 2009

**Location:** Tirana (Albania)

**Description:** Ian Micallef, President a.i. of the Council of Europe Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, will pay an official visit to Albania to assess the situation of local and regional democracy in the country.

He will meet President of the Republic Bamir Topi, Prime Minister Sali Berisha, Minister of Interior Lulzim Basha and Mayor of Tirana Edi Rama, as well as Fatos Hodaj, Director General of the Albanian Association of Municipalities, and Refik Rugeja, Head of the Albanian delegation to the Congress and General Rapporteur for Local and Regional Democracy in South-East Europe.

The Congress' latest report on the state of local and regional democracy in Albania was issued in October 2006. In March 2007, the Congress adopted a recommendation following local elections in the country, observed in February 2007.

Coinciding with the visit, on 2 and 3 November, an international seminar on decentralisation and local governance in South-East Europe and South Caucasus will be held at the Grand Hotel Europa in Shkodra, home to Albania's first local democracy agency (which is part of a network set up at the Congress' initiative). The seminar will focus on the challenges of decentralisation and ways of strengthening the role of local government as a catalyst for local revival. Refik Rugeja will address the seminar for the first time in his capacity of General Rapporteur of the Congress for Local and Regional Democracy in South-East Europe.

Ian Micallef will report on the results of the visit to the Bureau of the Congress, meeting in December 2009.

### Communication Division of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities

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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).