

# Press Release

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## **“We can no longer accept divided or ghost towns”, says Congress President**

Strasbourg, 29.05.2006 – “We can no longer accept situations in Europe where divided towns or ghost towns exist, stated Giovanni Di Stasi, President of the Congress of local and regional authorities, after his official visit to Cyprus. “This state of division is harmful to the quality of life of Cypriot citizens, whichever community they belong to,” he stressed.

The visit was devoted to discussions concerning possibilities of lasting and permanent involvement of local representatives of the Turkish Cypriot community in the work of the Congress.

During his meeting with the President of the Republic of Cyprus, Tassos Papadopoulos, the President of the Congress also raised the question of stronger involvement of Cypriot citizens and local authorities in resolving the situation there. “Our fellow citizens and the municipalities should perform a more active, constructive and complementary part in this process, thereby allowing us to rebuild in time the necessary mutual confidence between the island’s Greek and Turkish communities,” the President of the Congress concluded. “I should like all parties to enter into a constructive dialogue.”

On 25 May Giovanni Di Stasi also met the Minister of the Interior, the country’s delegation to the Congress, the representatives of the Unions of Cyprus Municipalities and Communities, and the political leaders of the Turkish Cypriot community. The question of the latter’s representation in the Congress will be on the agenda of the 13<sup>th</sup> plenary session in connection with the Resolution on the credentials of national delegations.

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