

Press Release

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Ian Micallef calls on Russia not to enact amendments to local self-government law

Strasbourg, 04.05.2009 – "The draft amending law on local self-government in Russia, which has just been adopted by the Russian Federal Assembly, is a cause for serious concern", stated today Ian Micallef, President a.i. of the Council of Europe Congress of Local and Regional Authorities.

"If enacted, the amendments will introduce a new mechanism enabling the dismissal of mayors by municipal councils at the initiative of the regional governor. I believe that the dismissal of mayors without any consultation with the population that elected them and without a right to appeal to court, may not be in conformity with the European Charter of Local Self-Government, which the Russian Federation ratified in 1998."

"I regret that the opinions and proposals of municipalities, regions and independent experts and most of the amendments submitted by the All-Russia Council on Local Self-Government, based on proposals from local authorities, were not taken into account," he said.

"I call on the Russian authorities, first and foremost the President of the Russian Federation, not to enact the draft amending law on local self-government in Russia before seeking an opinion of the Council of Europe, particularly of its Congress of Local and Regional Authorities", concluded President Micallef.

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).