

Press Release

Congress of Local and Regional Authorities Communication Division

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Ian Micallef: "Copenhagen was a missed opportunity but local and regional authorities will pursue their action"

Strasbourg, 21.12.2009 – "The outcome of the Copenhagen conference on climate change is frustrating. In the face of the global challenge that threatens the very future of our planet, the lack of agreement on binding targets, the lack of commitment to resolute mitigation and adaptation measures is nothing but alarming and irresponsible, showing a growing divide between world public opinion and certain governments," Ian Micallef, President a.i. of the Council of Europe Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, stressed in the wake of the conference.

"Unfortunately, the Copenhagen conference did not reach ambitious consensus on specific commitments between states. An opportunity has been missed. However, regardless of the outcome, the municipalities and regions of Europe, local and regional authorities worldwide will pursue their action to combat global warming without delay, and put pressure on governments to recognise and support their activities.

"We must work to adapt our communities and reduce their vulnerability. We must take innovative steps to reduce carbon emissions in our territories. We must work for better governance and demand stronger institutional capacities at local and regional level. And we must set ambitious targets for ourselves, without waiting for our governments to take a more positive attitude. Climate change won't wait," he said.

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).