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Congress President asks that ban on Pride event be reconsidered

Strasbourg, 04.10.2012 - "I am seriously concerned about the banning of the 2012 Belgrade Pride event, which represents a restriction on the right to the freedom of assembly," Keith Whitmore, President of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe has stated in reaction to the decision of the city authorities. "I call on the Mayor of Belgrade to do his utmost to ensure that this decision be reconsidered".

"In its 2007 resolution on the freedom of assembly and expression for lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgendered persons, the Congress called on local authorities to create conditions for the exercise of this freedom at local level and to implement reasonable and appropriate measures for such lawful demonstrations to be able to proceed.

"The freedom of assembly and expression is an essential right of citizens guaranteed under the European Convention on Human Rights, which local authorities have the responsibility to uphold together with national governments, as part of human rights implementation in their municipalities. Banning pride events runs counter to this obligation, and only adds to the worrying rise of homophobic actions in Europe," the President added.

[Congress adopted texts: Freedom of assembly and expression for lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgendered persons](#)

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President of the Congress: Keith Whitmore (United Kingdom, ILDG), President of the Chamber of Regions: Herwig van Staa (Austria, EPP/CD), President of the Chamber of Local Authorities: Jean-Claude Frécon (France, SOC)

Political Groups: Socialist Group (SOC), Group of the European People's Party – Christian Democrats (EPP/CD), Independent and Liberal Democrat Group (ILDG).