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Ref. CG-PR042(2012)

Congress delegation heading for a monitoring mission to assess grassroots democracy in Albania

Strasbourg, 10.12.2012 - The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe will carry out a monitoring visit to Albania from 12 to 14 December 2012. Congress Rapporteurs Zdenek BROZ (ERC, Czech Republic) and Ake SVENSSON (SOC, Sweden) will examine the follow-up to the commitments undertaken in the field of territorial democracy and decentralisation, with regard to Albania's ratification of the European Charter of Local Self-Government in 2000. The last monitoring mission was carried out in 2006.

On 13 December, high level meetings are scheduled with representatives of the government – including the Deputy Minister responsible for local self-government Ferdinand PONI, the Ombudsman Z. Igli TOTOZANI, as well as Bashkim DEDJA, President of the Constitutional Court and representatives of the State Auditor's Office.

On 14 December the delegation will meet with Mayors, including, Lulzim BASHA, Mayor Of Tirana, Artan SHKEMBI, Mayor of Pogradec and Qazim SEJDINI, Mayor of Elbasan.

The delegation will also hold discussions with members of the Albanian Parliament, the Albanian delegation to the Congress, representatives of the Associations of local authorities and representatives of the international community.

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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: Herwig Van Staa (Austria, EPP/DC), President of the Chamber of Regions: Nataliya Romanova (Ukraine, IDLG), 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), European Conservatives & Reformists Group (ECR)