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The Council of Europe Congress, promoter of human rights implementation at local and regional level

Strasbourg, 26.03.2014 – The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe held a debate on best practices in implementing human rights at local and regional level on 25 March 2014. In the resolution adopted, the Congress proposes, in particular, the organisation of a human rights forum, with the participation of elected local and regional representatives, to facilitate the exchange of experiences. It also invites its Monitoring Committee to pursue its activities aimed at raising awareness in the human rights field, particularly on its monitoring visits to Council of Europe member States.

The accompanying report prepared by Lars O. Molin (Sweden, EPP/CCE) underlines the complementary role played by the Congress in promoting human rights, in cooperation with other Council of Europe organs and the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. That cooperation was further illustrated by the participation in the debate of representatives of the three main human rights protection bodies in Europe: Lawrence Early, Jurisconsult of the Registry of the European Court of Human Rights, Nils Muižnieks, Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe, and Maija Sakslin, Chairperson of the Management Board of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, were unanimous in stressing the importance of the local and regional levels for the proper implementation of human rights.

"No one could object to the idea which runs through the text as proposed, namely human rights have to be taken into consideration in daily decisions and activities undertaken by elected representatives, in order to improve their implementation at all levels of governance", said Lawrence Early, addressing the members of the Congress for the first time. "The work of the Congress too can be considered a possible point of reference for the Court's adjudication, especially when it comes to issues which are peculiarly within the ambit of local and regional powers".

The good practices proposed in the report include establishing an independent human rights ombudsman institution, human rights training for police forces, declaring local adherence to human rights, combating child exploitation and domestic violence, and equal access for all to education and public services.

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Interview Lars O. Molin: [Video MediaBox YouTube](#)

26th Session: [Special file](#)

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)