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The Congress adopts a Recommendation on the observation of pre-term local elections in Ukraine

Strasbourg 15.10.2014 – Following its mission to observe the pre-term local elections in Ukraine in May 2014, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe adopted on 14 October a Recommendation on this subject. The Congress delegation included five members of the EU Committee of the Regions.

Congress rapporteur, Nigel Mermagen (ILDG, United Kingdom), welcomed the fact that the Ukrainian authorities had taken into consideration previous Congress recommendations concerning the election of the Mayor of Kyiv, the compilation of voters' lists and more transparent procedures.

He also welcomed the large turnout and that the elections, to a great extent, took place in a good atmosphere without pressure on voters.

"The elections of 25 May were held in an emergency situation for Ukraine and for Europe as a whole. Unfortunately, as we all know, the situation is still very worrying", the rapporteur stated.

Addressing the Session on behalf of the members of the Committee of the Regions, Arnoldas Abramavicius, Lithuania (EPP), pointed out that "challenges for the election administration included not only questions of security, but also the managing of simultaneous presidential and local elections – particularly in Kyiv where four ballots were cast."

"Despite over-crowded polling stations, under-staffed electoral commissions and lengthy procedures, the majority of the voters were keen to cast their vote. This is why our assessment on the Election Day is – by and large– a positive one," Nigel Mermagen underlined.

The Congress recommends further improvement regarding electoral legislation and the practical side of electoral management, in particular a more efficient counting procedure and training of electoral staff.

In the interest of smooth electoral organisation and to further strengthen local democracy, it recommends also holding the next general local elections separately, without any other vote on the same day.

To conclude, the rapporteur stressed the Congress' determination to continue its support of Ukraine through different lines of action – observation of elections, post-monitoring activities and raising awareness of local democracy issues.

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: Jean-Claude Frécon (France, SOC), President of the Chamber of Local Authorities: Anders Knape (Sweden, EPP/CCE), President of the Chamber of Regions: Gudrun Mosler-Törnström (Austria, 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)

