

Press Release

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Congress President calls on Albanian authorities to fully comply with provisions of the European Local Self-Government Charter

Tirana, 17.01.2006 – During his official visit to Tirana, Giovanni Di Stasi, President of the Council of Europe Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, met President of Albania Alfred Moisiu, Prime Minister Sali Berisha, several members of the Government, Mayor of Tirana Edi Rama and high representatives of international institutions in Albania.

This visit had a double purpose: first, to meet the new Government and to exchange views on future planned reforms aimed at decentralising public powers and strengthening local and regional self-government; second, to examine the controversial relations between the Government and Tirana Municipality concerning public works in the capital.

At the end of the visit, President Di Stasi made the following statement: "The powers of the Construction Police and the composition and functioning of the Territorial Adjustment Council of the Republic of Albania (TACRA) do not conform to the provisions of the European Charter of Local Self-Government, and this creates a lot of misunderstanding and confusion. A competent court should determine if the Constitution, the European Charter and the Organic Law on the organisation and functioning of local government are fully respected in this case, but it is up to the Government and the Parliament to elaborate and to adopt new laws to ensure that the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality are fully applied. We took note of the Government's readiness to change some provisions of relevant laws, and hope that this commitment will contribute to accelerating public works in municipalities.

This situation will be examined in greater detail by the Congress monitoring delegation coming to Albania in a few weeks' time. The Albanian authorities can count on the support of the Council of Europe Congress in carrying out decentralisation reforms".

The visit also provided an opportunity for President Di Stasi to stress the importance of the Adriatic Euroregion for the integration of Albania into European institutions. The Albanian authorities confirmed their strong support for the Euroregion and their readiness to participate actively in the Launching Conference in Venice on 6 February 2006.

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