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Réf. CG-PR 016 (2014)

Local democracy in Armenia

Strasbourg, 27 March 2014 – The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, meeting in Strasbourg (France) on 26 March 2014, examined a report on local democracy in Armenia.

While the Congress rapporteur, Nigel Mermagen (United Kingdom, ILDG) welcomed the efforts made by the Armenian authorities to implement the provisions of the European Charter of Local Self-Government, in particular by introducing constitutional changes in 2005 and adopting new legislation in 2008, he emphasised that "Armenian local authorities only have a limited role". "In practice, Armenian local authorities do not always have full and exclusive powers, with local government bodies serving more as agent for the central government than as autonomous actors of local public administration," he explained. "Moreover, the existence of numerous small and weak municipalities continues to be a structural problem in Armenia," he added.

The Congress therefore recommends that the Armenian authorities review the legislation in order to better implement the principle of subsidiarity and allow the local authorities to regulate and manage a substantial share of public affairs. It further recommends the setting up of a formal consultation mechanism in domestic law to ensure that local authorities and national associations of local authorities are duly consulted on matters which concern them directly.

"We call on the Armenian authorities to improve territorial governance by encouraging inter-municipal co-operation, strengthening the capacity of the community councils and limiting administrative supervision," said Mr Mermagen.

The Congress also calls on the Armenian authorities to increase local authorities' own resources and review financial equalisation arrangements in order to better correct the effects of the unequal distribution of potential sources of finance and of the financial burden they must support.

Armenia ratified the European Charter of Local Self-Government on 25 January 2002. Countries which have ratified the Charter are bound by its provisions. The Charter requires compliance with a minimum core of principles forming the European foundation of local self-government. The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe watches over compliance with these principles.

[Report CPL\(26\)2FINAL](#)

[Interview of Nigel MERMAGEN](#) (United-Kingdom, ILDG), Rapporteur of the Congress

More information : [File 26th Session](#)

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)

