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## **The Congress conducts a monitoring visit in Lithuania to assess the state of local and regional democracy**

Strasbourg, 06 June 2011 - The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe is carrying out a monitoring mission, from 6 to 8 June, to assess the state of local and regional democracy in Lithuania. A first visit already took place in 2001. Congress Rapporteurs Gudrun MOSLER-TÖRNSTRÖM (Austria, SOC) and Irène LOÏZIDOU (Cyprus, EPP/CD) will examine the follow-up of the commitments Lithuania took in the field of local and regional self-government, with regard to the country's ratification of the European Charter of Local Self-Government in June 1999.

The meetings scheduled include representatives of the government, notably Mr Raimundas PALAITIS and Mr Sigitas ŠIUPSINŠKAS respectively Minister and Vice-minister of Interior as well as Vice-Minister of Finances M. Edmundas ŽILEVIČIUS.

The delegation will also meet representatives of the Constitutional Court and the Supreme Administrative Court including Mr Romualdas Kestutis URBAITIS, Acting President of the Constitutional Court and Mr Ričardas PILIČIAUSKAS, President of the Supreme Court as well as representatives of the Ombudsman, Mr Romas VALENTUKEVIČIUS, and Dr Augustinas NORMANTAS, Ombudsman of the Seimas (Lithuanian Parliament).

Meetings with mayors and secretaries of the cities of Vilnius, Ignalina and Utena as well as with members of the Parliament and the Association of Local authorities of Lithuania are also scheduled.

### **Contact on the spot:**

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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: Keith Whitmore (United Kingdom, ILDG), President of the Chamber of Regions: Herwig van Staa (Austria, EPP/CD), President of the Chamber of Local Authorities: Jean-Paul 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).