

Andreas Kiefer: “Fiscal autonomy and intergovernmental coordination in decentralization need structures and capacities”

Washington D.C. 1st September 2017 – At the occasion of the first Forum of the Decentralization and Subnational Fiscal Management Network of Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Washington D.C., from 31 August to 1st September, Congress Secretary General Andreas Kiefer shared the findings of the Congress in Monitoring activities, notably troubles faced by several Council of Europe member states in complying with Art. 9 of the European Charter of Local Self-Government governing financial resources of local authorities.

In line with the Forum thematic: “Fiscal autonomy and coordination for effective decentralization”, Mr Kiefer presented recurring issues on local finance and consultation. He outlined in particular the Congress report “Coping with the debt burden: local authorities in financial difficulty” dealing with adequate financial resources for and with local authorities to respond to the economic crisis. He also mentioned, as examples for inter-governmental relations, existing consultation schemes in Albania and Austria which cover both draft legislation and policies and financial aspects. “Fiscal autonomy is a key pillar of local democracy. A functioning fiscal and financial decentralisation, which is the basis for genuine local self-government, requires a clear understanding of why tasks should be delegated to the local level and a clear distribution of powers and responsibilities at all levels of government. It requires a legal framework which allows taxation and discretion in spending and defines accountability, ethical rules and transparency and includes inter-governmental consultation mechanisms”, Andreas Kiefer concluded.

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