

“Mayors Leaders for Change” Workshop (2 – 3 March 2016)

Organized by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe

Vinnytsya

Wednesday, 2 March 2016

Speaking notes of Andreas Kiefer, Secretary General of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe

Welcome you all to the workshop “Mayors leaders for change”. It is organised for Ukrainian mayors elected after the last local elections and within the framework of the Council of Europe Action Plan 2015-2017 for Ukraine. This action plan was launched in Kyiv on 17 March 2015, jointly by the Council of Europe Secretary General and President Poroshenko.

I would like to take some time to present the Congress. Our organisation is the Council of Europe's assembly of local and regional representatives, a political and consultative body of 324 territorial delegates who hold an elected mandate in the 47 member states.

The main role of the Congress is to ensure compliance with the provisions of the Charter, which is verified through the monitoring mechanism of the Congress. In addition, the Congress carries out observations of local and regional elections so as to ensure the integrity of electoral processes at local and regional level, as it was the case for the elections of May 2014 and October 2015 in Ukraine.

We have recently engaged in post-monitoring dialogue with the national authorities concerned and co-operation activities to improve the implementation and impact of Congress recommendations.

In this respect, Ukraine was the first member state to engage in such a dialogue and to agree on a roadmap for the implementation of Congress Recommendation 348 (2013) on local and regional democracy in Ukraine.

Co-operation activities aim to support the implementation of the principles of the Charter and to develop the competencies and institutional capacity of local elected representatives. We have designed the project “Promoting local democracy in Ukraine” with an integrated approach where we address Mayors, councillors and young local leaders who constitute the main actors of local democracy, in our towns and cities.

This workshop is an example of the peer-to-peer work with the participation of Congress members and Ukrainian Mayors who will exchange best practices. With the interactive sessions we hope to create an enabling environment that will allow you to freely address common concerns and share ideas for enhancing your daily practice.

Dear colleagues,

What do we expect that you take back to your communities from this seminar?

A mayor who feels comfortable in his/her role and responsibilities is a mayor that provides better services to the population. A mayor with enhanced leadership and communication skills is

a mayor that grasps the local needs, communicates clearly his/her options and justifies them before the citizens. A mayor as a leader for change is a mayor that engages with all stakeholders when looking for solutions for local problems.

I do hope that this workshop, with the participation of several Congress Members will be inspiring and that it is a good opportunity for the creation of lasting ties between peers. It is also an opportunity to exchange ideas, learn from each other and expand networks of peers throughout Europe.

Today's participants will be invited to participate in a follow-up meeting targeting the same four Ukrainian regions. Local initiatives aimed at developing practices of good governance, transparency, accountability and ethical decision-making will be further supported.

The work with local elected official will also be complemented by national thematic roundtables to be organised on issues of concern which are topical in this challenging period of reforms in the country.

I wish you all a good workshop and I am keen on listening to your discussions, to your feedback as practitioners.