

## Andreas Kiefer: “Productive co-operation with national associations of local and regional authorities is a Congress priority”

9 June 2017 – Kyiv (Ukraine) – Exchanging on the priorities of their respective organisations during a roundtable organised in Kyiv on 9 June, Andreas Kiefer, Secretary General of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, and Oleksandr Slobozhan, Executive Director of the Association of Ukrainian Cities, agreed on the crucial need to reinforce the links between national associations of local and regional authorities and the Congress, to commonly work for strengthened local democracy. Andreas Kiefer affirmed: “To become sustainable, local democracy needs a strong net of stakeholders, among which local and regional authorities are some of the most important knots”.

This roundtable gathered together, for the first time, members of the Board of the Association of Ukrainian Cities and of the Delegation of Ukraine to the Congress. Sharing their needs and concerns, the participants highlighted the necessity for the Association and the Delegation to meet regularly, in order to commonly voice the interests of Ukrainian municipalities to the Congress, and therefore better promote the interests of local and regional authorities.

The roundtable “Strengthening local democracy in Ukraine: building opportunities between the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe and the Association of Ukrainian Cities” was organised under the project “Promoting local democracy in Ukraine”, within the Council of Europe Action Plan 2015 – 2017 for Ukraine.

*Ukraine joined the Council of Europe on 9 November 1995, ratified the European Charter of Local Self-Government on 11 September 1997 and its Additional Protocol on the right to participate in the affairs of a local authority on 2 September 2014. Countries which have ratified the Charter are bound by its provisions. The Charter imposes compliance with a minimum number of rights and principles, which are the European bedrock of local self-government. The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe ensures respect for these principles.*

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