

## EUROPEAN COMMITTEE ON DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE (CDDG)

*The Chair*

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Strasbourg, 17 October 2022

Dear CDDG members,

I am writing to you in my capacity as Chair of the CDDG with some thoughts about how we work together in future, which the Bureau has discussed and agreed.

First, let me say we are happy that **our CDDG meetings can fully resume their normal course**. The fact that we can all meet face-to-face again greatly facilitates exchanges and interactions, which is beneficial to the quality of our debates and work. The practice now in the Council of Europe is for in-person meetings, and we will be following this for meetings of the CDDG and any working groups. We have also discovered that there can be advantages using the new IT-related working methods. We intend in future to draw on this, for instance to facilitate exchanges with Ministers, and partner organisations, and for short informal meetings.

You are aware that the **work of the CDDG is of particular importance in the current general European context** as there is a need to reaffirm the importance and usefulness of our democratic values and institutions in Europe. Our committee is preparing ground-breaking standards this year and several further important documents will be drafted under our terms of reference for 2022-2025 on which we will begin to start work from this November's plenary.

It is important that **all members of the CDDG actively participate in the work** which it undertakes in accordance with its terms of reference as set by the Committee of Ministers. We are grateful for the contributions you have made and we very much hope that we can count on your and your government's support in the future. I would also add that through such initiatives as the "Rapid Response Service" and "Peer Reviews", the CDDG provides valuable practical support for each of our ministries. For this to be as effective as possible requires each of us to contribute whenever we have the experience and expertise to do so. In 2014, the CDDG took over from the European Committee on Local and Regional Democracy (CDLR), which had a mandate limited to the work of local authorities. Today, the broader scope of work increases **the need for good collaboration between CDDG delegates and a variety of their national ministries and authorities**, both to input into the CDDG's work and for the promotion of Council of Europe standards for which the CDDG is responsible.

I look forward to your contribution in the November plenary where there are a range of important issues for discussions and decision, and for exchanging information and views between member States including at ministerial level. I'm copying this to the Permanent Representations.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Rowsell CBE