

CONGRESS OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES OF EUROPE

Resolution 138 (2002)¹ on the second draft world charter of local self-government

The Congress bearing in mind the proposal of the Chamber of Local Authorities,

1. Having regard to:

- a.* Opinion 12 (1999) of the CLRAE on the initial draft world charter of local self-government (hereafter, world charter);
- b.* Resolution 118 (2001) of the CLRAE on the draft world charter of local self-government –State of discussions;
- c.* Opinion 17 (2002) on the second draft world charter presented by the rapporteurs Dr Gerhard Engel (Germany, L) and Mr Alan Lloyd (United Kingdom, R);
- d.* exchange of views on the draft world charter with representatives of local authorities of the United States of America and People's Republic of China, which took place at the 8th Plenary Session of the Congress;

2. Acknowledging that:

- a.* this second Congress opinion comes at a time when the initial consensus around the necessity to draw up a draft world charter has crumbled and that the process of preparing and adopting a world charter has changed its nature once it shifted to state level;
- b.* the problems began when an attempt was made to institutionalise the process and make official recognition by the United Nations General Assembly its ultimate goal;
- c.* the opposition does not really come from the countries with economic problems – since the Group of 77 has

declared that it favours the project – but from countries which are generally wary of any international intervention which seems likely to restrict their freedom of action, and from countries which see such initiatives as an intrusion on their sovereignty and an attempt to impose unsuitable institutional models on them;

- 3. Recalling that in paragraph 7 of Opinion No.12 (1999), the Congress stated that it wished “to avoid imposing, deliberately or otherwise, a European model of local democracy on all countries in other continents, regardless of their history or culture” and even suggested (section IV, paragraph 5) that more notice should be taken of the ideas and contributions of other continents;
- 4. Feeling that this new context requires the Congress to continue constructive dialogue with the representatives of those countries that opposed the draft world charter,
- 5. Welcomes the setting up of a consultative committee of local authorities within the United Nations, in which local authorities and their international associations are represented, to guarantee a dialogue between the United Nations and local authorities worldwide;
- 6. Will continue to monitor the process launched under the United Nations Program on Human Settlements with a view to drawing up a world charter and hopes that the dialogue aimed at promoting such a charter will be taken up again on a more consensual basis in the relevant United Nations' bodies;
- 7. Clearly reaffirms its support for the process of drawing up the world charter and gives international associations of local authorities more encouragement to pursue it;
- 8. Stands ready to arrange meetings on the draft world charter through its international contacts with the elected assemblies of other regional organisations.

1. Debated and approved by the Chamber of Local Authorities on 4 June 2002 and adopted by the Standing Committee of the Congress on 6 June 2002 (see Doc. CPL (9) 3 revised, draft resolution, presented by Dr G.Engel and Mr A. Lloyd, rapporteurs).