

THE CONGRESS OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES

Resolution 287 (2009)¹ Declaration on the 60th anniversary of the Council of Europe

1. We, local and regional elected representatives of European territorial communities, members of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, meeting in Strasbourg for a special session to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Council of Europe during the 17th Plenary Session of the Congress (13-15 October 2009),

2. Are convinced that the peaceful, prosperous and united Europe we wish for is a Europe not only of nation states, but also of local and regional communities at the service of their citizens, who are thus in control of decisions which directly affect their daily lives;

3. Are convinced that the Congress has contributed, since 1957, to the spectacular advance on our continent of local and regional democracy, which is the bedrock of European democratic development and one of the major achievements of the Council of Europe;

4. Reaffirm that the European Charter of Local Self-Government (ETS No. 122), adopted in 1985, remains the main international treaty for local democracy whose example is being followed in other parts of the world, and that the implementation of the charter and observance of its principles constitutes a solid basis for further development of European democracy;

5. Are convinced that by monitoring the implementation of the European Charter of Local Self-Government and the situation of local and regional democracy in Council of Europe member states, the Congress contributes, at local and regional level, to the main objectives of the Council of Europe: democracy, human rights and the rule of law;

6. Reiterate our conviction that local and regional communities and their elected representatives have become key economic and political players in our societies, and that the growing magnitude of the local dimension has led to a real partnership with governments and parliaments;

7. Are convinced that the Congress advances human rights by urging communities and their elected representatives to create the best possible conditions for the respect of these rights and by encouraging them to build inclusive and intercultural communities;

8. Emphasise that, in building this new environment, the Congress seeks to foster equal access to social rights, integration of migrants, protection of minorities, intercultural dialogue and the increased participation of citizens in democratic processes and decision making at local level, in particular that of young people;

9. Firmly believe that the Congress must be endowed with adequate resources, in recognition of its role in consolidating and strengthening local and regional democracy in Europe, to be able to pursue its mission effectively, and must maintain a constant and constructive dialogue with the central authorities of Council of Europe member states in order to ensure co-operation between the local and regional and national levels of governance, which is of crucial importance for the effective functioning of democracy.

1. Debated and adopted by the Congress on 13 October 2009, 1st Sitting, (rapporteur: D. Suica, Croatia (L, EPP/CD)).