

CONGRESS OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES OF EUROPE

Resolution 164 (2003)¹ on sustainable regions under global rules

The Congress, bearing in mind the proposal of the Chamber of Regions,

1. Recalling the texts already adopted by the Congress:

- a.* Resolution 55 (1997) on local and regional financial instruments for the environment in Europe;
- b.* Recommendation 57 (1999) on local and regional economic instruments for the environment;
- c.* Recommendation 101 (2001) and Resolution 121 (2001) on the impact of globalisation on regions;
- d.* Resolution 126 (2002) on Rio +10: towards the next World Summit on Sustainable Development;
- e.* Recommendation 106 (2002) and Resolution 127 (2002) on sustainable development and the liberalisation of the energy market;

2. Considering the report on sustainable regions and cities under new global rules (Document CPR/DEV (9) 4) containing the analysis of the impact of globalisation on European regions and the presentation of some good practices,

3. Calls on local and regional authorities to:

- a.* consider new co-operative international policies as ways of solving problems of global change. The concept of global governance can be a good reference:
 - i.* for sustainable development as a positive model;
 - ii.* for international relations;
 - iii.* for bringing together different actors such as the state, civil society, economic and scientific communities;
 - iv.* for co-ordinating all levels from global to national, from regional to local;
- b.* consider that, according to the concept of global governance, municipalities and regions have a central responsibility to check whether implementation of global action at national level concurs with local level. At the same time regions should use their expertise to ensure local experience is recognised at the global level;

c. develop further renewable energy sources within the framework of sustainable development;

d. focus on the growing importance of “sustainable investment” and make it a target of local and regional policy to support enterprises in their endeavour for increased sustainability;

e. ask to be informed and consulted on global discussions and decisions, above all those having a direct influence on regional or local policies, and make use of existing platforms to promote environmental and social standards;

f. set up local and regional structures with the capacity to monitor effectively negotiations and agreements at the international level, especially within the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and to play an advocacy role. Activities would include:

i. ensuring commitments relating to certain service sectors where local and regional authorities may have political influence;

ii. reporting back to local and regional authorities to inform them which service sectors are under negotiation to be included in future commitments. This would provide local and regional authorities with an early warning mechanism in order for them to react to negotiations, influence the national application of such commitments and enable early adaptation to forthcoming regulations;

g. take further steps to ensure the compliance of local and regional regulations with the global system of rules:

i. a sustainability check – the central aim of policy orientation, even in the service sector, should be to set up a sustainable economic structure. Each service sector should be checked in order to ensure whether it is in line with the sustainable development of the local and regional authority. This should ideally be part of the Agenda 21 process;

ii. a General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) check – all services provided, supported or regulated by the public authority should be assessed in terms of whether they would be affected by GATS. The central criterion would be: are there private or public operators with a commercial interest in fulfilling the service?

iii. an efficiency check independently of whether there is a legal obligation to assess if opening the market would make sense in terms of efficiency, drawing upon international experience;

h. prepare a mechanism for communication on the basis of consultation and participation between municipalities,

regions and central states in order to improve mutual co-operation and co-ordination at national level, with a view to preparing a dialogue aimed at international treaties;

i. consider the best practice examples presented in the report on sustainable regions and cities under new global rules (Doc. CPR/DEV (9) 4);

j. develop regular exchange of best practice examples in Europe in the field of implementing Agenda 21 under the changing rules of globalisation.

1. Debated and approved by the Chamber of Regions on 21 May 2003 and adopted by the Standing Committee of the Congress on 22 May 2003 (see Document CPR (10) 5, draft resolution presented by Mrs U. Koczy, rapporteur).