

THE CONGRESS OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES

Resolution 225 (2006)¹ on the rerun of local by-elections in Azerbaijan (observed on 6 October 2006)

The Congress,

1. Refers to:

a. the Committee of Ministers' Statutory Resolution (2000) 1 on the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, and in particular its Article 2, paragraph 3, mandating the Congress to draw up country-by-country reports on the situation of local and regional democracy in member states (monitoring reports);

b. the principles laid down in the European Charter of Local Self-Government which was ratified by Azerbaijan on 15 April 2002 and entered into force in that country on 1 August 2002;

c. its Recommendation 126 (2003) and Resolution 151 (2003) on local and regional democracy in Azerbaijan and its reports on the observations of local elections in Azerbaijan (1999 (rerun in 2000) and 2004);²

d. its Recommendation 182 (2005) on public participation in local affairs and elections;

e. its report on the local elections held on 6 October 2006 and the conclusions of the Congress observation mission;

2. Recalls the key role of national associations of local and regional authorities in facilitating the exercise of local and regional democracy in general, and the efforts of the Congress and the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities in supporting the development of local democracy in Azerbaijan through their joint project to help the establishment of a national association of local authorities in Azerbaijan;

3. Welcomes the will demonstrated by the Azerbaijani authorities to co-operate with the Congress in this field and commends the Azerbaijani authorities for the efforts made in conducting the local elections overall in compliance with international electoral standards, following the "Presidential executive order on improvement of electoral practice" (11 May 2005);

4. Determined to follow the progress made by the authorities of Azerbaijan with a view to the implementation of its Recommendation 206 (2006);

a. invites the Institutional Committee to carry out, as soon as possible, an updated monitoring report on local and regional democracy in Azerbaijan and, in doing so, to pay due consideration to Recommendation 206 (2006) and to the evolution of the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the Status of Municipalities (28 July 1999);

b. instructs its Bureau to follow closely the developments and measures taken by the authorities of Azerbaijan in the consideration and implementation of the recommendations made by the Congress in Recommendation 126 (2003) and Recommendation 206 (2006);

c. renews its readiness to support the development of local democracy in Azerbaijan, in co-operation with the Azerbaijani authorities, and to develop synergies with other sectors of activity of the Council of Europe, notably the Centre of Expertise on local government reform of the Directorate of Legal Affairs;

d. regarding the joint project with the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities to favour the establishment of a national association of local authorities in Azerbaijan, reiterates its support to the setting-up of one structure at the national level.

1. Debated and adopted by the Standing Committee of the Congress on 15 November 2006 (see Document CG(13)33, draft resolution presented by M. Juhkami (Estonia, L, EPP/CD), on behalf of V. Moreira (France, R, SOC) rapporteur).

2. Reports on local elections in Azerbaijan: CG/BUR (6) 184 – 6 March 2000 and CG/BUR (11) 95 – 17 December 2004.