



PRESS RELEASE

Ploiesti, Romania, 17th of May 2013

The sixth Political Conference of the European Confederation of Local Intermediate Authorities (CEPLI) was held on 17 May 2013 in Ploiesti, Romania.

Bringing together delegations from 11 national associations of local intermediate authorities (Germany, Belgium: Flemish and Walloon provinces, Bulgaria, France, Hungary, Italy, Poland and Romania) and associated networks (Arco Latino and Partenalìa), this Conference represented also the moment of the Confederation's leadership renewal.

The Political Conference elected a new Political Bureau:

- **President** - Mr Paul-Emile MOTTARD, President of the Association of Walloon Provinces (APW), Belgium, Provincial Deputy of Liège;
- **Vice President** - Mr Marian Oprisan, President of the National Union of County Councils of Romania (UNCJR), President of Vrancea County;
- **Secretary-General** - Mr Claudy Lebreton, President of the Assembly of French Departments (ADF), President of Côtes d'Armor Department;
- **Treasurer** - Mr Todor Popov, President of the National Association of Bulgarian Municipalities (NAMRB), Mayor of the Municipality of Pazardzhik.

On the same occasion, CEPLI granted the observer status to the Union of Districts Councils of the Republic of Moldova.

The theme of the 6th Political Conference of CEPLI was "**Decentralization, resources and local autonomy**".

Representatives of the European Parliament (Mr Victor Bostinaru), the Committee of the Regions (Mr Franz Schausberger, Mr Vladimir Kissiov, Mr Ion Prioteasa, Mr Silvian Ciuperca and Mr Mircea Cosma) and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe (Mr Emilio Verrengia and Mrs Antonella Cagnolati) contributed to the debate and expressed their concerns about the way in which the territorial reforms are carried out in some European countries.

These reforms are legitimate when responding to a need for closer political decision to citizens, in a spirit of proximity and subsidiarity. It is important to ensure that they are thoughtful and concerted with all relevant levels of government.

The pretext of the economic crisis is too often used to justify the fundamental calling into question of the place of Local Intermediate Authorities, even if they provide elements of stability, trust and solidarity contributing, in this way, to the development of our territories.

The political representatives of CEPLI want to raise the awareness of the national authorities and European institutions on the principles that should govern the initiated territorial reforms in order to avoid territorial and social fractures, harmful to democracy and the well-functioning of services for the population.

The multilevel governance, manifested through an equitable participation of all political actors from different levels and increased subsidiarity, must be at the heart of underway or planned reforms.

The correlation between decentralization and economic competitiveness of territories, based on the proximity between local authorities and citizens, ensures an effective development, mindful to democracy.

In this uncertain environment, CEPLI reaffirmed the irreplaceable role of Local Intermediate Authorities in relation with their citizens in order to fight against the effects of the crisis and give them a message of hope.

In his closing speech to the Conference, the President of CEPLI, Mr Paul-Emile Mottard, has set as a priority for the coming months, to ensure a closer cooperation with the Committee of the Regions and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, as legitimate institutions representing the voice of the territories. CEPLI will participate, in particular, in the debate of the Committee of the Regions on its evolution, on the occasion of the celebration of its twentieth anniversary.

Moreover, CEPLI will develop its contacts with the national delegations to the European Parliament, as well as with the European Commission and its Directorates-General. These approaches are aimed at developing, together with European partners, a reflection process on the role of Local Intermediate Authorities in Europe.