



ASSEMBLÉE DES RÉGIONS D'EUROPE
ASSEMBLY OF EUROPEAN REGIONS
VERSAMMLUNG DER REGIONEN EUROPAS
ASAMBLEA DE LAS REGIONES DE EUROPA
ASSEMBLEA DELLE REGIONI D'EUROPA

Strasbourg, 23rd May 2000

Press release

The AER and the CLRAE

Mr L Cuatrecasas, elected President of the Congress

At the 7th Plenary session of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities in Europe of the Council of Europe (Strasbourg, 23-25th May 2000), Mr Llibert Cuatrecasas (Catalonia – E) was elected President of the Congress with the support of the AER and all the political groups.

Mr Cuatrecasas is an active member of the AER and is rapporteur for the draft European Charter on Region Self-Government. He will work, over his two year mandate, in favour of the adoption of this Charter by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe. The AER, which supports this project since the very beginning (1997), commits itself to supporting the Congress' work in this field by undertaking, in particular, action to mobilise members, regarding the first draft, within national governments.

Elections also took place for the Presidency of the Chamber of the Regions of the Congress where Mr Risto Koivisto (Tampere-FIN) succeeded Mr J C Van Cauwenberghe (Wallonia-B). Mr Koivisto is rapporteur, with Mr Luc Van den Brande, President of the AER, on the Intergovernmental Conference within the Committee of the Regions of the European Union. In his nomination speech Mr Koivisto stressed the importance of the current debate on new forms of governance in Europe and spoke in favour of auto-governance at regional and local level.

The AER took the occasion of the annual session of the Congress to officially launch its Centurio in the Balkans programme; this programme aims to offer work traineeships in democracy and public administration, in EU Regions, to the representatives of local authorities in the Balkans. Indeed, since the end of April, many candidatures have been arriving at the AER, coming from, in particular, the Cantons of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Bosnian Canton of Sanjack in Serbia which is currently undertaking brave action against the discriminatory ethnical policies of Belgrade's regime. The Italian Regions have already offered to take in some trainees. However, mobilisation in other European Regions is necessary in order to satisfy all of the requests and contribute, through this gesture of solidarity, to stability in the Balkans.

The AER is the political movement of the Regions of Europe, committed since 1985 to the promotion of regionalism in Europe and the development of interregional cooperation.

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