



Draft 27 November 2012

## **Hearing on local democracy in Azerbaijan – challenges and possibilities – which road forward?**

Committee of the Regions  
Rue Belliard 99, Brussels  
Room JDE 70

13 December 2012, 10:00 – 13:00

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*On October 17, 2012 the Congress of the Council of Europe adopted a monitoring report on Local and Regional democracy in Azerbaijan. The report stressed the virtual inexistence of local self-government in Azerbaijan and invited the Government of Azerbaijan to take the necessary measures to adopt an action plan in order to implement the Congress's recommendations and to fulfil Azerbaijan's commitments as party to the Charter of Local self-government that Azerbaijan joined in 2002.*

*This hearing will gather the relevant stakeholders to discuss the perspectives of developing local self-government in Azerbaijan and the role the Council of Europe and EU can play to support these efforts. In particular the hearing will aim at identifying specific actions and policy initiatives that could be taken to develop local and regional democracy in Azerbaijan.*

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**10:00      Opening remarks**

- *Mr. Per VINTHER, Governing Board member, Association of Local Democracy Agencies*

**10:10      Local and Regional democracy in Azerbaijan – Council of Europe's Assessment and recommendations**

- *Mr. Jos WIENEN, Rapporteur on the Congress monitoring report on Local and Regional Democracy adopted by the Congress on October 17, 2012.*

**10:30      Local Democracy in Azerbaijan seen from Azerbaijan – the government's assessment and perspective on future reforms**

- *Mr. Anar IBRAHIMOV, Head of Azerbaijan's delegation to the Congress of Council of Europe and member of CORLEAP (TBC)*
- *Representative of the Azerbaijan Ministry of Justice or Embassy in Brussels (TBC)*

- 10:45**      **Local Democracy in Azerbaijan seen from Azerbaijan – civil society’s assessment and suggestions for future reforms**
- *Mr. Abil BAYRAMOV, Expert BINA – The NGO Alliance for Municipality Development, Azerbaijan*
- 11:00**      **Discussion and questions**
- 11:30**      **The EU-Azerbaijan relationship - state of play and potential for the promotion of local democracy in this context**
- *Mr. Reinhold BRENDER, Deputy Head of the Eastern Partnership Division for Relations with Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus and the Southern Caucasus, European External Action Service*
- 11:45**      **The committee of the Region’s work with Local Authorities and support to local democracy in Azerbaijan**
- *Mr. Gordon KEYMER, Rapporteur on Azerbaijan, Committee of the Regions and member of the CIVEX committee.*
- 12:00**      **EU’s programmes with Azerbaijan and the role of local and regional democracy and development in these programs**
- *Mr. Juergen KETTNER, Azerbaijan coordinator, Geographical Coordination Neighbourhood East, European Commission DG DEVCO*
- 12:15**      **Discussion and questions**
- 12:45**      **Closing remarks**
- 13:00**      **End of hearing**

**Languages: ENGLISH/RUSSIAN**