

The Secretary General

Mr Andriy Klochko

Chairperson of the Committee
on Organisation of state power,
local self-government, regional
development and urban planning
Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine
5 Hrushevskoho Vul.
01008 Kyiv
Ukraine

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Strasbourg, 17 May 2022

Dear Mr Klochko,

I would like to take this opportunity to reaffirm the strong support of the Council of Europe Congress to Ukraine and our solidarity with Ukrainian people who are displaying admirable courage in defending their country and the values of democracy and human rights. As indicated by the Congress President in his letter of 4 April 2022 addressed to you, the Congress unanimously adopted on 22 March 2022 a [Declaration condemning the Russian Federation's war against Ukraine](#) as a blatant breach of international law.

The Congress will continue providing its assistance and policy advice to local authorities in Ukraine and their national associations in addressing unprecedented humanitarian, social, economic and environmental challenges they face as a consequence of war, in reconstructing democracy and building resilience at local level.

I would like to renew the readiness of the Congress to support the Committee on organization of state power, local self-government, regional development and urban planning of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine through direct expert assistance in view of ongoing and future legislative changes and in building dialogue to ensure consultation of local authorities on all matters of their concern, both within the martial law period and in post-war recovery and reconstruction. The Congress stands ready to provide its legislative expertise on request of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, using its experts from the Group of Independent Experts of the European Charter of Local Self-Government (the Charter).

In particular, we believe that proper functioning of public authorities and local governments under the martial law should be stipulated to keep the proportionality principle laid down in article 8.3. of the Charter. It is also relevant for the administrative supervision within the martial law to protect the interests of local authorities and to ensure quick response to challenges related to funding of urgent needs caused by war.

Moreover, upholding local democracy must remain an essential component both in martial law and in post-war reconstruction processes, which requires legislative amendments to ensure citizens engagement in an inclusive, open and accountable manner.

This is also important considering the number of Internally displaced persons and the need for their integration in host communities. In that respect, expertise and recommendations to the national legislation on public consultations and potential amendments to the law on local self-government would be advisable.

We fully support the strong intention of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine to adjust and improve national legislation, thus ensuring safe and effective functioning of local authorities, which do their best to provide essential services in their cities and towns during the war.

In that respect, I would appreciate if the Committee could share its priority legislative initiatives and draft laws, so that the Congress, in coordination with other entities of the Council of Europe, could provide efficient and quick assistance through direct legislative expertise and by supporting open consultations with national associations and all relevant Ukrainian and international stakeholders.

In the meantime, the Congress will keep up its political support and concrete help, especially through the cities4cities online matching platform.

We look forward to our future co-operation.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Andreas Kiefer', written in a cursive style.

Andreas Kiefer