



**Covenant of Mayors going East  
International Conference on the Covenant of Mayors  
21-22 October 2010 – Tbilisi, Georgia**

**TBILISI – 21 OCTOBER 2010**

**PRESS RELEASE**

***Tbilisi hosts first international conference on the Covenant of Mayors initiative for cities in the eastern neighbouring countries of the European Union.***

Tbilisi, the first capital city in the eastern neighbouring countries of the EU to sign the Covenant of Mayors, is hosting the International Conference on the Covenant of Mayors organised by the European Union on 21-22 October 2010. The Covenant of Mayors was launched in 2008 and consists of the formal commitment by City Councils to a 20% reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions through energy efficiency and renewable energy actions. With the conference attracting more than 150 participants from over 45 cities of the Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia region, cities from the region are giving a strong sign that they want to take an active role in addressing the growing energy concerns that directly affect the lives of their citizens.

The conference includes interventions from major signatory cities of the EU and the region such as Paris, Warsaw, Barcelona, Burgas and Lviv as well as other important actors under the Covenant of Mayors such as city networks and supporting structures. Furthermore, it includes a panel with the participation of major International Financing Institutions such as the EIB, EBRD and World Bank.

Up until today, over 2000 cities and towns in all 27 Member States and 10 Partner Countries have signed the Covenant, including 21 capital cities in the EU and three other capitals. This represents a population in excess of 127 million people, and a potential of curbing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by over 132 million tonnes per year. So far the capital of Georgia (Tbilisi), 17 Cities of Ukraine, 5 cities from Moldova, and one city from Armenia have joined or made a clear commitment to join the Covenant of Mayors.

Local authorities have a key role to play in addressing global concerns on climate change, securing energy supply and creating a healthy environment for all citizens. Over half of greenhouse gas emissions are created in and by cities. And 80% of the population lives and works in cities, where up to 80% of energy is consumed. Tackling emissions in a coherent way includes measures to increase the use of alternative energy or pollution control, energy management or changes in behavior by public authorities and citizens. Local governments have therefore become leading actors for implementing sustainable energy policies, and should be recognised and supported in their effort.

The conference is being organised by the European Union, with the support of the EU-funded INOGATE project "Support to Energy Market Integration and Sustainable Energy" (SEMISE), in the framework of the EU's ongoing energy cooperation with countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia. More support to cities participating in the Covenant of Mayors initiative will be provided by the EU through an upcoming project starting in early 2011.

**Contact persons:**

- ♦ Municipality of Tbilisi: Zviad Archuadze: [archuadze@tbilisi.gov.ge](mailto:archuadze@tbilisi.gov.ge), Natia Tabagari, e-mail: [presscentre@tbilisi.gov.ge](mailto:presscentre@tbilisi.gov.ge)
- ♦ Delegation of the European Union to Georgia: Tamriko Mikadze. e-mail: [tamriko.mikadze@ec.europa.eu](mailto:tamriko.mikadze@ec.europa.eu)

For **more information** about the Covenant of Mayors, please visit [www.eumayors.eu](http://www.eumayors.eu).

