

Congress President expresses concern about dissolution of local councils in Tunisia

Strasbourg, 13.03.2023 – The President of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, Leendert Verbeek, has expressed grave concern about the decision of the President of the Republic of Tunisia, Kais Saed, to dissolve elected local councils.

"The decision to dissolve elected councils represents a setback for local democracy in the country," said President Verbeek.

"Local councils, formed following the local elections in Tunisia in May 2018, which were observed by the Congress, represented the result of the implementation of the new Tunisian Constitution of 2014 and of the Code of Local Authorities developed in co-operation with the Congress. Through their democratic legitimacy, these councils met the expectations of citizens. The decision of the President of the Republic means a return to the situation that existed before May 2018," continued the President of the Congress.

"The existence of elected local councils has allowed the Congress to grant the status of Partner for Local Democracy to Tunisia and the participation of a delegation of Tunisian elected representatives in the work of the Congress. The dissolution of elected councils calls into question this status," added President Verbeek.

He expressed his strong hope that the new law on local elections would allow for the holding of new local elections in the country as soon as possible.