



Council of European Municipalities and Regions
European Section of United Cities and Local Governments

Brussels, 31 October 2016

Hayrettin GÜNGÖR
Türkiye Belediyeler Birliği
Atatürk Bulvarı 229,
06680 Kavaklıdere / Ankara

Dear Secretary General, dear colleague,

The recent events in Turkey regarding the arrests of mayors and the dismissal of others and their replacement by central government officials prompted the secretaries general and directors of CEMR member associations to debate this issue during their meeting in Budapest on 27-28 October 2016.

Through this letter, they asked me to relay their concerns and those of all local government associations of Europe about this situation. In particular, we would like you to relay our highest concerns about the arrest of the Co-mayors of Diyarbakir, one of whom, Gültan Kışanak, is an active member of UCLG, our world organisation.

Since its inception in 1951 CEMR has been the standard-bearer of local democracy in Europe and in the world, and the latest developments in Turkey have understandably arisen our utmost concern. The recent developments are against the core principles of the European Charter of Local Autonomy and the essence of local democracy.

I would therefore be grateful if you could relay our concerns and request for detailed information to the Turkish Government to provide explanations for the arrest of democratically elected officials, removal of office of over 30 Turkish mayors and their replacement by unelected officials appointed by the central government.

I know this situation is also a concern for the Union and I wish to convey our solidarity to the colleagues,

Sincerely yours,

Frédéric Vallier,
Secretary General