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## **San Marino ratifies the Charter of Local Self-Government: uniting the European local democracy family**

Strasbourg, 29.10.2013 – At a ceremony held during the 25th Session of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, Giancarlo Venturini, Minister for Home Affairs, Civil Service, Justice and Relations with Municipal Councils of San Marino, deposited the instruments of ratification of the European Charter of Local Self-Government, which was approved by the San Marino Parliament on 23 October last.

"This historic day marks the end of a long process to establish a harmonized legislative space for European territorial democracy" stated M. Venturini. With this ratification, all 47 member states of the Council of Europe are now covered by this international treaty. This is a crucial stage which, 25 years on from the entry into force of the Charter, confirms the unanimous recognition by governments of local democracy as the cornerstone of the democratic system.

"The Charter affirms the role of the local communities as the first level of implementation of democracy and imposes respect for a minimum level of rights, which thus represent the European bedrock for local self-government," said Herwig van Staa, during the ceremony. "Today with the ratification made by San Marino, the Charter has become part of the family of the key conventions of the Council of Europe that have been fully ratified by all member States," underlined Thorbjørn Jagland, Secretary General of the Council of Europe.

*The European Charter of Local Self-Government was opened for signature by member states of the Council of Europe as a Convention on 15 October 1985, and came into force on 1 September 1988. The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe ensures respect for the principles set out in the Charter and its Additional Protocol by regularly monitoring the situation of local democracy in member states. This is its contribution, at the territorial level, to the fundamental goals of the Council of Europe, namely ensuring the progress of democracy, the rule of law and human rights.*

[Interview with Jean-Claude Frécon, President of the Chamber of Local Authorities](#)

[File "25<sup>th</sup> Session"](#)

The Congress has two chambers, the Chamber of Local Authorities and the Chamber of Regions. It brings together 318 full and 318 substitute members representing more than 200 000 European territorial communities.

President of the Congress: Herwig Van Staa (Austria, EPP/DC), President of the Chamber of Regions: Nataliya Romanova (Ukraine, IDLG), President of the Chamber of Local Authorities: Jean-Claude Frécon (France, SOC)  
Political Groups: Socialist Group (SOC), Group of the European People's Party – Christian Democrats (EPP/CD), Independent and Liberal Democrat Group (ILDG), European Conservatives & Reformists Group (ECR)