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Jean-Claude Frécon: "Europe must bring a halt to the diabolical sequence of humanitarian disasters in the Mediterranean"

Strasbourg, 21 April 2015 – "In response to the diabolical sequence of humanitarian disasters in the Mediterranean, Europe must show resolve and set up effective mechanisms to organise surveillance and rescue in the maritime areas concerned. Europe must also join forces with the local authorities and help them to deal with the migrants arriving on their territory", urged Jean-Claude Frécon, the President of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, in response to the sinkings that have occurred in recent days.

"In addition to the horror that we feel when hearing of these tragedies, which are now occurring so unbearably frequently, we must act on several levels, European, national, but also local and regional, to deploy efficient strategies on both shores of the Mediterranean to avoid these disasters. We call on the participants at the extraordinary European Summit to be held on Thursday to take account of the need for discussion at all levels", he added.

The Congress has regularly alerted the 47 member states of the Council of Europe to the urgency of the situation, particularly in view of the conflicts and the political instability and insecurity in the Middle East and in sub-Saharan Africa. At a debate on 24 March 2015 with the mayors of Calais (France), Lampedusa (Italy) and Siirt (Turkey), the Congress highlighted the role of local authorities, which are first in line when it comes to receiving migrants and face huge problems in providing basic services such as health and education.

Furthermore, in a statement issued in 2013, it called on Europe to take on collective responsibility and, in particular, to guarantee EU funding for the countries most affected by the arrival of migrants, to provide for the possibility of applying for asylum in the southern Mediterranean countries from which they were departing and to agree on a common European migration policy.

- [Debate « Local authorities facing migration flows » - March 2015](#)
- [Declaration on "Emergency in the Mediterranean: the tragedy of Lampedusa" - October 2013](#)

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: Jean-Claude Frécon (France, SOC), President of the Chamber of Local Authorities: Anders Knappe (Sweden, EPP/CCE), President of the Chamber of Regions: Gudrun Mosler-Törnström (Austria, 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)