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100% of European territory is covered by the European Charter for Local Self-Government

Strasbourg, 16.05.2013 – With the signature of the European Charter of Local Self-Government by the Foreign Affairs Minister of the Republic of San Marino, Pasquale Valentini on 16 May 2013, all 47 member states of the Council of Europe are now covered by this international treaty.

“The signature of the Charter by the Republic of San Marino completes a cycle commenced in 1985 with the opening for signature of this instrument, which lays down the European standards for local and regional democracy”, stated Jean-Claude Frécon (France, SOC), President of the Chamber of Local Authorities of the Congress. “The Charter has become a benchmark international treaty in this field and has been a great inspiration to other continents, in particular to the *International Guidelines on Decentralisation* adopted by the United Nations,” he continued “The application of the Charter over 100% of European territory was indeed one of the major objectives of the Congress.”

The European Charter of Local Self-Government was opened for signature by the Council of Europe member states as a convention on 15 October 1985, and came into force on 1 September 1988. The Charter stipulates respect for a minimum of rights which thus form a European foundation of local self-government.

The Congress of the Council of Europe watches over compliance with the principles laid down by the Charter and the additional Protocol thereto, through regular monitoring of the state of local democracy in the member countries. Thus it furthers at a local and regional level the fundamental goals of the Council of Europe, which are to advance democracy, rule of law and human rights.

[More information on the European Charter of Local Self-Government](#)

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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)