

Brussels, 29 July 2026

Statement on the detention of Ms Sinem Dedetaş, Mayor of Üsküdar and member of the CEMR Policy Committee

The Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) is deeply concerned by the detention today of Ms Sinem Dedetaş, Mayor of Üsküdar and member of the CEMR Policy Committee, together with several members of her team.

This is not an isolated case, but the latest in a sustained series of actions targeting democratically elected local representatives in Türkiye. Since the 2024 local elections, more than 80 municipalities in Türkiye have seen elected mayors replaced through trustee appointments, dismissals or arrests, while over 30 mayors have been detained, many of them remaining in prolonged pre-trial detention.

When mayors and local leaders remain deprived of their liberty and, consequently, are unable to exercise the mandates entrusted to them by their citizens, the impact goes far beyond those directly concerned. Each case leaves a community without the representatives it elected. Taken together, these developments point to a steady erosion of local democracy and a lack of respect for the will of voters in Türkiye.

As President of CEMR, I wish to express full solidarity with Mayor Sinem Dedetaş and with all local elected representatives affected by these developments. We stand with our members and partners in Türkiye in defending local self-government, democratic institutions and the rights of locally elected representatives to fulfil the responsibilities entrusted to them by their citizens.

CEMR recalls the importance of the principles enshrined in the European Charter of Local Self-Government, including respect for democratic mandates and the autonomy of local governments. These principles are essential to maintaining citizens' trust in democratic institutions at all levels.

We call on the Turkish authorities to ensure full respect for fundamental democratic standards and the rule of law, and to guarantee that elected representatives can carry out their responsibilities freely and without undue interference. We also call European institutions and the international community to stand in solidarity with democratically elected local representatives in Türkiye and to continue advocating for the protection of local self-government, democratic institutions and the rule of law.

At a time when democracy is facing growing challenges across Europe, safeguarding local self-government remains more important than ever. CEMR will continue to monitor developments closely and stand alongside its members and partners in Türkiye in their commitment to democratic local governance.



Christoph Schnaudigel
President of the County of Karlsruhe