



The Bureau of the Euro-Mediterranean Regional and Local Assembly (ARLEM) reminds that this political Assembly in essence supports the dialogue between EU and non-EU local and regional authorities, in particular in critical moments like the one we are living right now, when peer-learning and exchange of best practices are welcome in the Euro-Mediterranean region.

For this reason, the totally abusive and unprovoked action by the Turkish authorities, which prevented on the 5th of November 2022 Apostolos Tzitzikostas, the First Vice President of the European Committee of the Regions and chairman of the Euro-Mediterranean Regional and Local Assembly, to attend and chair the plenary session of the Assembly in Izmir, Türkiye, is unacceptable.

By preventing members of the CoR to enter the country, as it happened on the 5th of November to Apostolos Tzitzikostas, who was restrained in the port of Izmir without any explanation, the government of Türkiye harms itself by creating unnecessary international tensions; ultimately it harms its own community by preventing locally elected officials to fully engage with European and Mediterranean partners, as it is wished by many Turkish Mayors.

We strongly condemn the action of the Turkish authorities which jeopardised the organisation of the meeting of the Euro-Mediterranean Regional and Local Assembly in Izmir.

In this context, and in order to decide the condition of convening the next meeting of the CoR's Working Group on Türkiye, scheduled to meet in Türkiye in December, the ARLEM Bureau calls for a full clarification and credible explanations from the government of Türkiye on the incident involving our First Vice President in Izmir on the 5th of November 2022.