



Plenary sitting

B8-1167/2016

24.10.2016

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the statement by the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

pursuant to Rule 123(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on the situation of journalists in Turkey
(2016/2935(RSP))

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on behalf of the ECR Group

**European Parliament resolution on the situation of journalists in Turkey
(2016/2935(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Turkey, in particular that of 14 April 2016 on the 2015 report on Turkey¹ and that of 15 January 2015 on freedom of expression in Turkey: Recent arrests of journalists, media executives and systematic pressure against media²,
 - having regard to the Commission's 2015 report on Turkey,
 - having regard to previous relevant Council conclusions,
 - having regard to relevant statements by Vice-President/High Representative Federica Mogherini and Commissioner Johannes Hahn,
 - having regard to the statement of 26 July 2016 by the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe on measures taken under the state of emergency in Turkey,
 - having regard to the EU-Turkey High Level Political Dialogue of 9 September 2016,
 - having regard to the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), to which Turkey is a signatory party,
 - having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR),
 - having regard to Rule 123(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas on 15 July 2016 an attempted coup d'état took place in Turkey; whereas in the immediate aftermath the authorities declared a state of emergency, which has been extended for a further three months as of 19 October, and gives the executive far-reaching powers to govern by decree;
- B. whereas Turkey has submitted a formal notice of derogation from the European Convention on Human Rights; whereas no derogation can be made from Articles 2, 3, 4(1) and 7 thereof;
- C. whereas the intimidation of journalists and media outlets inside and outside Turkey by means of arrests, hearings, prosecutions, censorship and layoffs has increased over the past year and has been further expedited since the failed coup attempt of July 2016 and the subsequent declaration of a state of emergency; whereas Turkey is ranked 151st out of 180 countries in the latest Reporters Without Borders Press Freedom Index;
- D. whereas provisions of the state of emergency decrees affect the exercise of the right to

¹ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2016)0133.

² Texts adopted, P8_TA(2015)0014.

freedom of expression, including empowering higher levels of the administration to shut down any media organisation, enabling the government to impose curfews, ban public meetings, gatherings and rallies, and enabling authorities to cancel or confiscate the passports of those under investigation, including their spouses' and partners' passports;

- E. whereas Turkey reportedly has the highest number of imprisoned journalists in the world, with over half of them detained during 2016, and whereas many of them face charges or were convicted of charges under anti-terror legislation;
 - F. whereas Turkey is a candidate country and key partner of the EU;
 - G. whereas the rule of law and fundamental rights, including freedom of expression, are core democratic values, to which Turkey has formally committed through its application for EU membership and through its membership of the Council of Europe;
1. Acknowledges the right and responsibility of the Turkish Government to respond to the coup attempt, but stresses that it still has to comply with the human rights obligations imposed by the Turkish Constitution and with the international human rights conventions to which Turkey is a party;
 2. Condemns the intensified crackdown on media freedom after the failed coup attempt; calls on the Turkish Government to end the political and economic pressure on the independent media; condemns the increasing use of anti-terror legislation against journalists, the content bans for online and conventional reporting, and website blocking; calls on the authorities to release the detained journalists and to allow media outlets to be reopened;
 3. Recalls that freedom of expression, diverse and independent media, and the rule of law are essential elements of a democratic society; stresses that Turkey, as a candidate country, must aspire to the highest possible democratic standards and practices;
 4. Stresses the need for Turkey to put mechanisms in place that safeguard against abuse and preserve the separation of powers and the rule of law;
 5. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the European External Action Service, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, and the Government and Parliament of the Republic of Turkey.