

**Question for written answer E-003449/2017
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)**
Rule 130
Marie-Christine Arnautu (ENF)

Subject: VP/HR - Human rights situation in Turkey

On 12 April 2017, the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs penned an article in *Le Figaro*, in which he stated that 'membership of the European Union remains our strategic priority'. On 9 May 2017, the Turkish President expressed his wholehearted agreement, arguing that Turkey 'intended to pursue EU membership, which is seen as a strategic goal'. The following day, a meeting was held between the Vice-President/High Representative and the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, marking the resumption of the accession process. Yet, as the Austrian Minister of Foreign Affairs has stated, 'it is entirely wrong to maintain this fiction of accession when Turkey is moving further away from Europe with each year'. Using the slogan of combating terrorism, Turkey is violating human rights without compunction; Thousands of people, including journalists, political opponents and intellectuals, are languishing in prison under the pretext of the fight against 'internal enemies'. The fight against ISIS is serving as a pretext for the fight against Kurds and the occupation of northern Syria.

Why, in these circumstances, does the EU persist in dangling the promise of EU membership in front of Turkey?