

**Question for written answer P-008358/2016
to the Commission**

Rule 130

Takis Hadjigeorgiou (GUE/NGL)

Subject: Arrest of Selahattin Demirtaş and Figen Yüksekdağ

A few hours ago the two joint leaders of Turkey's pro-Kurdish Peoples' Democratic party (HDP), Selahattin Demirtaş and Figen Yüksekdağ, were arrested together with nine other HDP MPs. The arrests were followed by a total ban on access to Twitter, Facebook and WhatsApp. It should be noted that on 26 October 2016 both joint mayors of Diyarbakir were arrested on charges of supporting the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK).

The arrests of the two joint leaders of the HDP, the most senior Kurdish leaders, are only part of the President Erdoğan's efforts to suppress democracy that began before 15 July. However, these efforts culminated with the state of emergency announced immediately afterwards. So far, in addition to the 900 Kurds who have been arrested, 10 000 Kurdish teachers have been dismissed, 28 mayors have been removed from office, while 20 Kurdish TV channels have been shut down.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. When and how will it denounce the blatant violation of the rule of law and fundamental freedoms - which Turkey has undertaken to respect as a candidate country - by President Erdoğan?
2. Does it consider that the measures taken against democratically elected Kurdish MPs under the state of emergency are out of proportion, in terms of size and impact, with the alleged threat that these people pose in the eyes of President Erdoğan?