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*Plenary sitting*

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**B8-1162/2016**

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))

**Fabio Massimo Castaldo, Ignazio Corrao, Rolandas Paksas**  
on behalf of the EFDD Group

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

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,
  - having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948,
  - having regard to its resolution of 11 December 2012 on a digital freedom strategy in EU foreign policy<sup>1</sup> and to its resolution of 13 June 2013 on the freedom of press and media in the world<sup>2</sup>,
  - having regard to the EU Guidelines on Freedom of Expression Online and Offline of 12 May 2014,
  - having regard to its previous resolutions on Turkey,
  - having regard to the Commission's Turkey 2015 progress report,
  - having regard to the Negotiating Framework for Turkey of 3 October 2005,
  - having regard to Rule 123(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas Turkey ranks 151st out of 180 countries in the 2016 World Press Freedom Index by Reporters without Borders;
- B. whereas, as at 19 October of this year, at least 130 journalists were being held in detention and the number of jobless journalists had reached 10 000 after the purges following the attempted coup;
- C. whereas in the months of the state of emergency, freedom of the press has regressed beyond the already alarming point at which it stood before, as according to the Turkish Journalists' Association more than 100 journalists have been arrested since 15 July, 150 media outlets have been shut down, 2 500 journalists have been left jobless and 660 have seen their press cards cancelled; whereas a great number of journalists are giving up their careers as they say that doing critical journalism in Turkey is no longer possible;
- D. whereas at least 150 media platform and outlets, both online and offline, have been shut down;
- E. whereas Decree-Law No KHK/668 of 27 July 2016, approved after the declaration of the state of emergency, provides for the shutting-down of private radio and television stations and newspapers and periodicals linked to Fethullah Gülen; whereas the decree

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<sup>1</sup> OJ C 434, 23.12.2015, p. 24.

<sup>2</sup> OJ C 65, 19.2.2016, p. 105.

also provides that any private radio or television station, newspaper or periodical, publication or distribution channel found to pose a threat to national security may be shut down upon a proposal by an ad hoc committee and with the approval of the relevant minister;

- F. whereas on 28 September the Turkish Prime Minister's office issued orders for the closure of 23 TV and radio stations on the grounds of backing separatist and subversive activities;
  - G. whereas Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has extended the state of emergency for another 90 days starting on 19 October;
  - H. whereas a coalition of 26 international media freedom and human rights advocacy groups has released a statement calling for the lifting of the state of emergency;
  - I. whereas the crackdown also targeted Kurdish and Alevi TV channels, including some based outside Turkey;
  - J. whereas the Council conclusions of 16 December 2014 called for coherence between financial assistance provided by the European Union and the overall progress made by candidate countries, including as regards full respect for fundamental rights and freedom;
1. Recognises that the Turkish Government has the right and responsibility to investigate the violent events of the July 2016 coup attempt and to bring all those responsible to justice;
  2. Strongly deplores the intolerable situation of freedom of expression, of opinion and of the media, both offline and online, in Turkey, which is further deteriorating following the attempted coup of 15 July;
  3. Reiterates that freedom of opinion, expression and speech, including independent media, are core European values and that an independent press is crucial to a democratic society; points out that the current situation of the media and freedom of expression in Turkey is clearly incompatible with European values;
  4. Underlines that Turkey no longer respects the political terms of the Copenhagen criteria; calls for the immediate suspension of financial assistance to Turkey in the framework of the Instrument for Pre-Accession, as the conditions for its disbursement are no longer in place;
  5. Believes that the restrictions imposed under the state of emergency go beyond those permissible under international human rights law, including unjustifiable limitations on media freedom and the right to freedom of expression; calls on the Turkish Government to narrow the scope of the emergency measures, not to use them to curtail freedom of expression, and to revoke the state of emergency as soon as possible;
  6. Calls for the immediate release of all jailed journalists and media workers and the reopening of closed media outlets;

7. Deplores the personal attacks on and intimidation of journalists by leading government officials, the use of Decree-Law No KHK/668 as a tool to curtail freedom of expression and dissent, and the general political climate that is creating an environment curtailing freedom of speech in the media and on the internet;
8. Regrets that emergency provisions have also been used to harass family members of journalists who have fled abroad or gone into hiding, including by cancelling their passports or detaining them in the place of those accused;
9. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, and the Government and Parliament of Turkey.