

**Question for written answer E-000994/2021/rev.1  
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Human rights situation in Turkey

Since 4 January there has been no let-up in student protests at Bogazici University (Bosphorus), since Turkish President Erdogan decided to appoint Melih Bulu, a man he trusts and loyal member of his party, as rector, thereby undermining the independence of the academic system.

The Turkish police have engaged in violent clashes with the frequent use of tear gas and rubber bullets; and they have apparently arrested more than 500 people over the past month, 200 in the night of 1 February alone, after the authorities raided the university campus.

In addition to this grave situation, worthy of a fully-fledged dictatorship, the philanthropist Osman Kavala, who has been held in custody for three years without a fair trial, continues to be detained in prison. This has also led to a harsh reaction from the US Department of State.

Writer and intellectual Ahmet Altan – charged with sending out subliminal messages during a live TV broadcast to promote the (failed) coup in July 2016 – also remains in prison. After his release on 4 November, he was once again arrested eight days later on the basis of totally arbitrary and false accusations.

In the light of the above, and of the ongoing attacks on freedom of expression, can the Commission say what diplomatic measures he intends to take to support Turkey's return to democracy?