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12 October 2017

## Ensuring political democracy in Turkey: HDP co-chairs and opposition MPs in prison

**Written declaration No. 643**

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This written declaration does not reflect the position of the Assembly; only of those members that have signed it. It will not be considered further by the Assembly.

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As explicitly stated in the reports of the Venice Commission (858/2016) and of the Monitoring Committee ([Doc.14078](#)) as discussed in a recent [Resolution 2156 \(2017\)](#) of the Parliamentary Assembly, we are seriously concerned about the ongoing detention of HDP co-chairs and opposition MPs.

Immunities of MPs were lifted in May 2016, for cases until that day, after a constitutional amendment in full contradiction with the Turkish Constitution and the European Convention of Human Rights. As a result, 55 of 59 Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) deputies are stripped of their immunity and currently 10 deputies, including HDP co-chairs, Selahattin DEMIRTAS, Figen YUKSEKDAG and Enis BERBEROGLU of Republican People's Party (CHP) are imprisoned.

All those deputies are indicted for political speeches, press releases or meetings. Five HDP deputies have already lost their mandate after court sentences and three others are pending appeal. If the present judicial situation remains as it is, all deputies pending court decision will be running the risk of losing their mandate.

We call for an immediate release and an investigation into the status of jailed MPs in Turkey. We request the Turkish government to implement the recommendations included in the Venice Commission opinion on the lifting of parliamentary immunities.

*Signed (see overleaf)*



*Signed*<sup>1</sup>:

KÜRKÇÜ Ertuğrul, Turkey, UEL  
ÅBERG Boriána, Sweden, EPP/CD  
BILDARRATZ Jokin, Spain, ALDE  
BUSTINDUY Pablo, Spain, UEL  
GROTH Annette, Germany, UEL  
HANŽEK Matjaž, Slovenia, UEL  
HIGGINS Alice-Mary, Ireland, SOC  
HUNKO Andrej, Germany, UEL  
JANSSON Eva-Lena, Sweden, SOC  
JOHNSSON FORNARVE Lotta, Sweden, UEL  
KERESTECİOĞLU DEMİR Filiz, Turkey, UEL  
KIRAL Serhii, Ukraine, EC  
KOX Tiny, Netherlands, UEL  
LEITE RAMOS Luís, Portugal, EPP/CD  
NICOLINI Marco, San Marino, UEL  
NISSINEN Johan, Sweden, NR  
PSYCHOGIOS Georgios, Greece, UEL  
SANDBÆK Ulla, Denmark, UEL  
SCHENNACH Stefan, Austria, SOC  
SØNDERGAARD Søren, Denmark, UEL  
STRIK Tineke, Netherlands, SOC  
SUTTER Petra, De, Belgium, SOC  
THIÉRY Damien, Belgium, ALDE  
TORNARE Manuel, Switzerland, SOC  
WIECHEL Markus, Sweden, NR  
WURM Gisela, Austria, SOC

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Total = 26

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1. ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe  
EC: European Conservatives Group  
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party  
SOC: Socialists, Democrats and Greens Group  
UEL: Group of the Unified European Left  
NR: Representatives not belonging to a Political Group