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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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

Written declaration No. 643

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.

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[1]*:*

KÜRKÇÜ Ertuğrul, Turkey, UEL
ÅBERG Boriana, 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
THÓRARINSSON Birgir, Iceland
TORNARE Manuel, Switzerland, SOC
WIECHEL Markus, Sweden, NR
WURM Gisela, Austria, SOC

Total = 27

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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