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17 February 2021

Protests at Boğaziçi University in Istanbul

Written declaration No. 716

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.

We, the undersigned, declare the following:

On 1 January 2021, the Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan appointed a new rector of the Boğaziçi University in Istanbul whilst previous rectors of the institution had been chosen by the university itself. The decision caused widespread protests by students whereupon the Turkish authorities answered with harsh crackdowns and arrests.

In connection with these events, the Turkish Government is requested to respect Articles 10 and 11 of the European Convention on Human Rights enshrining the rights to freedom of expression, assembly and association.

These events are in line with the general decline of academic freedom in Council of Europe member States which can be seen, for example, in the measures against the Central European University in Hungary. On 20 November 2020, the Standing Committee of the Parliamentary Assembly adopted [Resolution 2352 \(2020\)](#) on "Threats to academic freedom and autonomy of higher education institutions in Europe". In accordance with this resolution, the Turkish Government must take immediate action to reverse practices that limit the respect of principles of academic freedom and institutional autonomy. These principles are not only crucial for the quality of education and research; they are essential components of democratic societies.

Signed (see overleaf)



Signed¹:

KUHLE Konstantin, Germany, ALDE
AKBULUT Gökay, Germany, UEL
AMTSBERG Luise, Germany, SOC
BAYR Petra, Austria, SOC
BENNING Sybille, Germany, EPP/CD
BEYER Peter, Germany, EPP/CD
ÇEVİKÖZ Ahmet Ünal, Turkey, SOC
CORBYN Jeremy, United Kingdom, SOC
COTTIER Damien, Switzerland, ALDE
DE TEMMERMAN Jennifer, France, ALDE
HARDT Jürgen, Germany, EPP/CD
HOFFMANN Christoph, Germany, ALDE
HUNKO Andrej, Germany, UEL
JENSEN Gyde, Germany, ALDE
KERN Claude, France, ALDE
KLICH Bogdan, Poland, EPP/CD
KRAVCHUK Yevheniia, Ukraine, ALDE
KRISPER Stephanie, Austria, ALDE
LINK Michael, Germany, ALDE
MAIRE Jacques, France, ALDE
MÖHRING Cornelia, Germany, UEL
MOTSCHMANN Elisabeth, Germany, EPP/CD
NICK Andreas, Germany, EPP/CD
ÖZSOY Hişyar, Turkey, UEL
PETRY Christian, Germany, SOC
POCIEJ Aleksander, Poland, EPP/CD
SCHENNACH Stefan, Austria, SOC
SCHWABE Frank, Germany, SOC
SZEJNA Andrzej, Poland, SOC
TRISSE Nicole, France, ALDE
ULLRICH Volker, Germany, EPP/CD

Total = 31

1. ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party
SOC: Socialists, Democrats and Greens Group
UEL: Group of the Unified European Left