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Critical state of health of prisoners in Turkey during the Covid-19 pandemic

Written declaration No. 718

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:

The Covid-19 pandemic has created specific challenges for places of deprivation of liberty in all member States of the Council of Europe, but especially in Turkey.

A lot of people in places of deprivation of liberty in Turkey are in a very critical state of health, such as Mr Ismail Yilmaz (66 years old), who has been detained for political reasons for 16 years. He was largely isolated in solitary confinement for most of his prison term. Because of his chronic illnesses, he belongs to the highest risk group.

The Council of Europe anti-torture Committee points out in its "Statement of principles relating to the treatment of persons deprived of their liberty in the context of the coronavirus disease (Covid-19) pandemic", that the WHO guidelines on fighting the pandemic, as well as national health and clinical guidelines consistent with international standards, must be respected and implemented fully in all places of deprivation of liberty.

Therefore, the Parliamentary Assembly should look into the conditions of places of deprivation of liberty in Turkey during the pandemic and pay a special attention to the most vulnerable groups of detainees. We urge the Turkish authorities to immediately look into the situation to comply with the international standards and guidelines and fighting the pandemic in places of deprivation of liberty.

Signed (see overleaf)



*Signed*¹:

SCHWABE Frank, Germany, SOC
AKBULUT Gökay, Germany, UEL
AMTSBERG Luise, Germany, SOC
BAKOYANNIS Theodora, Greece, EPP/CD
BAYR Petra, Austria, SOC
BERLINGHIERI Marina, Italy, SOC
BOER Margreet, De, Netherlands, SOC
CHATZIVASILEIOU Anastasios, Greece, EPP/CD
COURSON Yolaine, de, France, ALDE
ESTRELA Edite, Portugal, SOC
FAMELLOS Sokratis, Greece, UEL
FASSINO Piero, Italy, SOC
GAVAN Paul, Ireland, UEL
HEINRICH Frank, Germany, EPP/CD
KAIRIDIS Dimitrios, Greece, EPP/CD
KOX Tiny, Netherlands, UEL
LEYTE Carmen, Spain, EPP/CD
LOPATKA Reinhold, Austria, EPP/CD
MAIRE Jacques, France, ALDE
MÖHRING Cornelia, Germany, UEL
NICOLINI Marco, San Marino, UEL
OOMEN-RUIJTEN Ria, Netherlands, EPP/CD
ÖZSOY Hişyar, Turkey, UEL
POCIEJ Aleksander, Poland, EPP/CD
RIZZOTTI Maria, Italy, EPP/CD
SZEJNA Andrzej, Poland, SOC

Total = 26

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