



**Doc. 14264**

01 February 2017

## The state of emergency and its limitations

### Motion for a resolution

tabled by Mr Jonas GUNNARSSON and other members of the Assembly

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This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only those who have signed it

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Last year's terrorist attacks in Europe and around the world have resulted in governments in for example France, Turkey, and Tunisia declaring a state of emergency.

Article 15.1 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) states that "In time of war or other public emergency threatening the life of the nation, any High Contracting Party may take measures derogating from its obligations under this Convention to the extent strictly required by the exigencies of the situation, provided that such measures are not inconsistent with its other obligations under international law".

In addition, article 17 underlines that "Nothing in this Convention may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein or at their limitation to a greater extent than is provided for in the Convention" and article 18 stipulates that "The restrictions permitted under this Convention to the said rights and freedoms shall not be applied for any purpose other than those for which they have been prescribed."

Restrictions to the ECHR are therefore allowed. However, some measures taken by governments during the state of emergency have been questioned as well as rules and policies being implemented that go counter to the obligations under international law. This highlights the importance of not exceeding what is stated in the ECHR and the importance of a political debate, in places such as the Parliamentary Assembly, on the implications of declaring a state of emergency in the present political context.

The Assembly should deepen the understanding of when it is acceptable to declare a state of emergency and which responsibilities still lie with the government, as stated in the ECHR, when imposing these measures.

*Signed (see overleaf)*



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

GUNNARSSON Jonas, Sweden, SOC  
ÅBERG Boriana, Sweden, EPP/CD  
BESELIA Eka, Georgia, SOC  
BILLSTRÖM Tobias, Sweden, EPP/CD  
BONNICI Charlò, Malta, EPP/CD  
CHUGOSHVILI Tamar, Georgia, SOC  
CORSINI Paolo, Italy, SOC  
DEBONO GRECH Joseph, Malta, SOC  
FARMANYAN Samvel, Armenia, EPP/CD  
GOGUADZE Nino, Georgia, EC  
HÜBNER Johannes, Austria, NR  
JANSSON Eva-Lena, Sweden, SOC  
JENSEN Mogens, Denmark, SOC  
JOHNSSON FORNARVE Lotta, Sweden, UEL  
KARAPETYAN Naira, Armenia, EPP/CD  
KARLSSON Niklas, Sweden, SOC  
KATSARAVA Sofio, Georgia, SOC  
KRONBICHLER Florian, Italy, SOC  
KVATCHANTIRADZE Zviad, Georgia, SOC  
LEITE RAMOS Luís, Portugal, EPP/CD  
LUNDGREN Kerstin, Sweden, ALDE  
MELKUMYAN Mikayel, Armenia, EC  
MENDES Ana Catarina, Portugal, SOC  
NAGHDALYAN Hermine, Armenia, EC  
NICOLETTI Michele, Italy, SOC  
OHLSSON Carina, Sweden, SOC  
ORELLANA Luis Alberto, Italy, SOC  
RUSTAMYAN Armen, Armenia, SOC  
SAMMUT Joseph, Malta, SOC  
SCHENNACH Stefan, Austria, SOC  
SCHIEDER Andreas, Austria, SOC  
TSKITISHVILI Dimitri, Georgia, SOC  
WURM Gisela, Austria, SOC  
ZOHRABYAN Naira, Armenia, EC

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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: Socialist Group  
UEL: Group of the Unified European Left  
NR: Representatives not belonging to a Political Group