Parliamentary Assembly
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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Turkey must free Pastor Brunson

Written declaration No. 651

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.

Andrew Brunson, a United States citizen, who has served as a pastor in Turkey over 23 years, is being unjustly held in a Turkish prison for now more than 405 days, without any reasons, and in blatant violation of his rights. There, he has lived under inhumane conditions and lost over 50 pounds. While no evidence had ever been set forth to substantiate any crime from him, the Turkish authorities have systematically denied the multiple appeals contesting his detention. Access to his file remains impossible as it has been sealed and proceedings are stuck at the investigation stage. There is no indication if or when an indictment may be coming.

Truth is that Brunson's incarceration has become a bargaining chip for Turkey since the Turkish President lastly demanded a swap of Brunson for Fethullah Gülen, the person Erdoğan blames for the failed coup attempt in July of 2016, and who has now found refuge in the United States. Such blackmailing on behalf of a human life must never take place within the European human rights arena and it is urgent that Turkey respects its European commitments in putting an immediate end to this scandalous situation.

Signed (see overleaf)

Signed[1]*:*

GHILETCHI Valeriu, Republic of Moldova, EPP/CD
ÅBERG Boriana, Sweden, EPP/CD
ARIEV Volodymyr, Ukraine, EPP/CD
BADEA Viorel Riceard, Romania, EPP/CD
BEREZA Boryslav, Ukraine, EPP/CD
CROWE Seán, Ireland, UEL
FARMANYAN Samvel, Armenia, EPP/CD
GARCÍA HERNÁNDEZ José Ramón, Spain, EPP/CD
GATTI Marco, San Marino, EPP/CD
HALICKI Andrzej, Poland, EPP/CD
KOVÁCS Elvira, Serbia, EPP/CD
LEIGH Edward, United Kingdom, EC
MERGEN Martine, Luxembourg, EPP/CD
MULLEN Rónán, Ireland, EPP/CD
MUNYAMA Killion, Poland, EPP/CD
NÉMETH Zsolt, Hungary, EPP/CD
O'REILLY Joseph, Ireland, EPP/CD
OMTZIGT Pieter, Netherlands, EPP/CD
SANTA ANA María Concepción, de, Spain, EPP/CD
SOBOLEV Serhiy, Ukraine, EPP/CD
STIER Davor Ivo, Croatia, EPP/CD
STROE Ionuț-Marian, Romania, EPP/CD
SVENSSON Michael, Sweden, EPP/CD
YEMETS Leonid, Ukraine, EPP/CD

Total = 24

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1. EC: European Conservatives Group
   EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party
   UEL: Group of the Unified European Left