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EU-Turkey Relations

Press release from EFA MEPs Maragall and Terricabras

EFA MEPs **Ernest Maragall** and **Josep-Maria Terricabras** have voiced their concerns about the situation in Turkey as the European Parliament prepares to vote on freezing EU accession negotiations.



Maragall & Terricabras

This follows the deteriorating state of Turkish democracy and human rights following the attempted coup of 15 July, which the MEPs also condemned.

They also expressed concerns at the ongoing oppression of Turkey's Kurdish population, which has seen democratically elected lawmakers forcibly removed from office and in some cases detained.

Ernest Maragall, a member of the European Parliament's Turkey delegation said:

"We are gravely concerned by the deteriorating situation in Turkey in respect of human rights and the rule of law. We have condemned the attempted coup of 15 July and support Turkey's right to bring those responsible to justice. But what we are now seeing is the regime using this as cover to arrest, detain and harass a vast

number of its opponents whether or not they had anything to do with the coup.

"Regrettably we now find it necessary to send a strong signal to the Turkish government by temporarily freezing EU accession talks.

"But channels of communication should remain open – it is very important for dialogue to continue."

Josep-Maria Terricabras, President of the EFA Group in the European Parliament said:

"I share the concerns of many of my colleagues about the serious deterioration in the state of Turkish democracy and human rights. Many of the arrests and detentions that are taking place seem to have little to do with bringing people to justice and more to do with clamping down on any opposition.

"The situation is grave, and I am particularly concerned about Turkey's treatment of its Kurdish minority in the current climate. We have seen Kurdish TV stations closed, and Kurdish law makers arrested and forced from office – apparently persecuted simply because of their opposition to the current government.

"This is not democracy and it cannot be tolerated. It is right to freeze accession negotiations now, but I very much hope that they can resume in the near future in a more peaceful and conciliatory climate."

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Responsible MEPs



Ernest Maragall



Josep Maria Terricabras

EFA President and first Vice President of the Greens/EFA Group

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