Press release | 22.11.2016

# EU-Turkey relations

## Accession negotiations must be frozen

The European Parliament will today debate EU-Turkey relations. While there is expected to be support from a majority of MEPs for a freeze on accession negotiations with Turkey, the Greens/EFA group is also calling for pushback on Turkey's calls for enhancement of the Customs Union and Visa Liberalisation.

Commenting ahead of the debate, Greens/EFA co-president **Rebecca Harms** said:

*“In the past, EU parliamentarians have underlined the need to prosecute those responsible for the coup according to the principles of rule of law. But the current violations of human rights, repression of opposition, and criminalisation of journalism have nothing to do with rule of law. Any opposition against President Erdoğan seems reason enough for people to be arrested, prosecuted or sacked from their jobs. The EU needs to send a strong message that he cannot continue in this vein and should freeze the accession negotiations, giving a clear indication that the reintroduction of the death penalty would lead to negotiations being suspended indefinitely. At the same time, channels of communication with Turkey need to remain open."*

Green EU-Turkey relations spokesperson **Bodil Valero** added:

*“We need to be clear with President Erdoğan that he will not achieve the progress he wants to see on issues like the enhancement of the Customs Union or visa liberalisation as long as he continues to flout fundamental rights at home. However, it simply does not add up for the EU to condemn President Erdoğan's regime while at the same time looking to him to solve the refugee crises on our behalf. The EU must take matters into its own hands. If Member States are prepared to finally fulfil their commitments on the resettlement of refugees, and if the EU will stop returning refugees to Turkey, we will no longer find ourselves so reliant on President Erdoğan.”*

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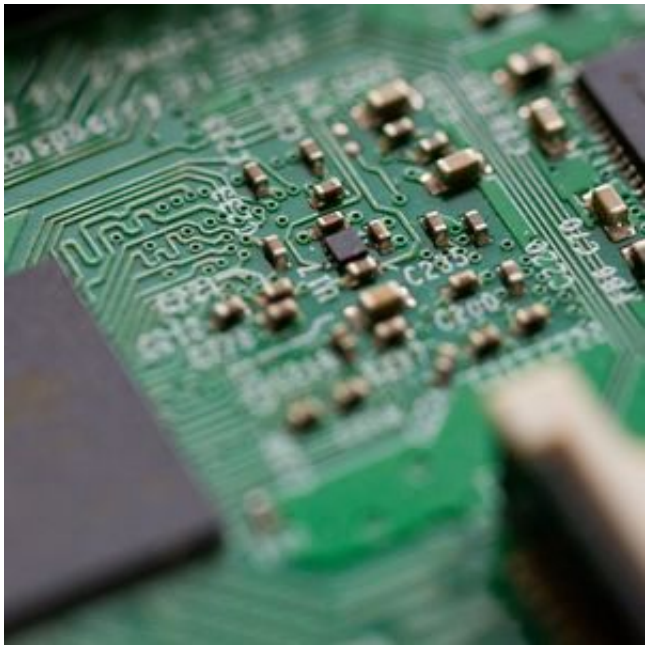


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Member



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