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MEPs sharply criticize human rights violations in Turkey

Turkey

In a parliamentary report approved today, the European Parliament has strongly criticised the Turkish government. As well as outlining the systematic violation of human rights and the persecution of opposition, the report calls for the suspension of EU accession talks should the proposed constitutional reforms supported in the recent referendum be implemented unchanged.

Bodil Valero, shadow rapporteur for the Greens/EFA group in the European Parliament, comments:

"The Greens want to see Turkey return to democracy and a shared future with the EU. However, it is clear than accession negotiations cannot progress as long as Erdogan continues down such an anti-democratic path. It is now up to Erdogan, the Turkish Parliament and Turkish voters to forge a new direction.

"On terrorism and migration, the EU needs to drastically reconsider its relationship with Turkey. We cannot cooperate on terrorism with a country whose own laws can impact on anyone whose views differ from those of the president. The EU-Turkey migration deal has to end. Not only has it failed to protect refugees who find themselves stuck in Turkey, it leaves the EU worryingly dependent on Erdogan. Member States must show solidarity and share the responsibility of receiving refugees."

Ska Keller, President of the Greens/EFA group in the European Parliament, comments:

"The European Parliament has today strongly condemned the dramatic human rights situation in Turkey. MEPs have made clear that there can be no negotiations with Turkey as long as President Erdogan continues the brutal persecution of opposition members and independent journalists. President Erdogan cannot expect the EU to hold the door open while he tramples on European values.

“The clear criticism on President Erdogan is also a clear message to those Turkish people who are standing up against the authoritarian course of the Turkish president. The EU must not forget these people and has to continue to remain in close contact with Turkish civil society and support it.

“The Greens demand that negotiations for the deepening of economic relations may only begin when President Erdogan stops violently oppressing the opposition and imprisoning critical journalists. Instead of capitulating out of economic interest, the EU should use Erdogan's interest in trade as leverage to push him to

recognise and protect human rights. It is a mistake that the majority of the European Parliament has not yet come round to this position."

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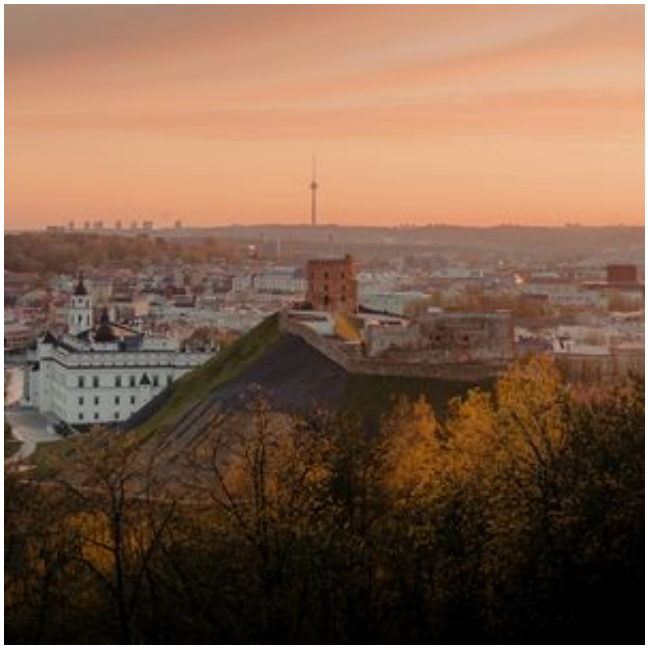
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