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Press release | 04.11.2016

Turkey

Opposition arrests a further blow to democracy and rule of law

Several members of Turkey's opposition HDP party, including its leader Selahattin Demirtas, have been arrested and detained in Ankara.

Reacting to the arrests, Greens/EFA co-President **Rebecca Harms** said:

"I am deeply shocked by the unlawful detention of Selahattin Demirtas and his colleagues. I have known him for a long time and I have long been his chief supporter in the European Parliament. I met him earlier this week in Turkey to discuss the current situation.

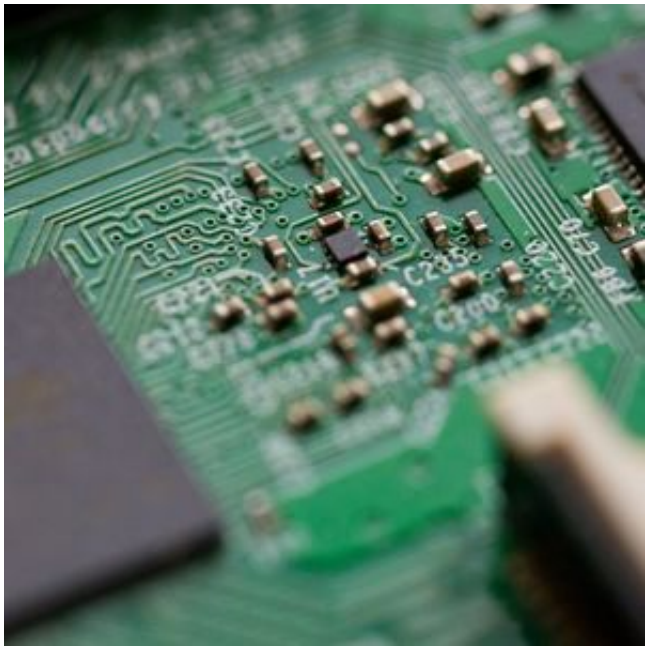
"Selahattin Demirtas stands for the peace process and reconciliation, and these arrests are another devastating blow to democracy in Turkey in what is effectively a coup by President Erdogan and his government against the lawful opposition. Just like a free press, opposition parties are a vital part of any functioning democracy, and Erdogan is systematically dismantling all these checks and balances to his power. Almost any form of opposition is effectively criminalised and labelled as terrorism. We demand the immediate release of Selahattin Demirtas and the other arrested HDP politicians.

"We demand that the presidents of the European Council and the European Commission are clear and unequivocal in their criticism of President Erdogan's actions. We request an immediate meeting of EU foreign ministers to decide on the EU's reaction and on how to shape future relations with Turkey. President Erdogan's current actions risk further destabilising the entire region."

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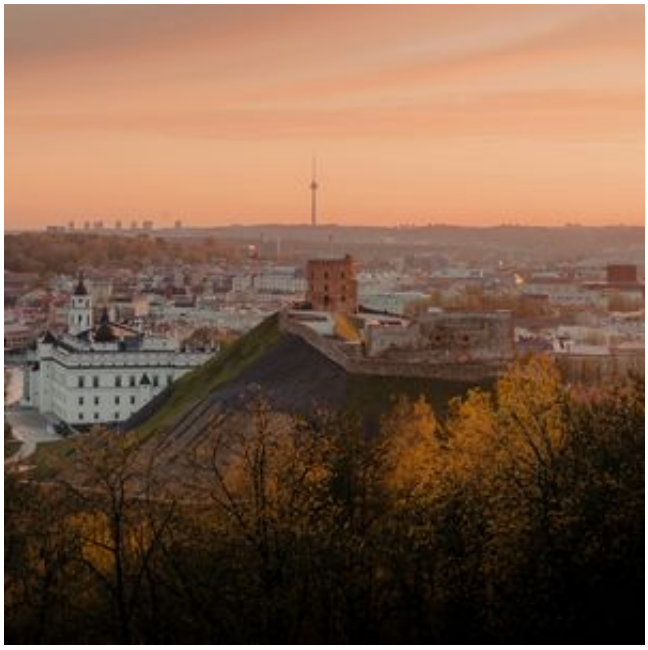
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Responsible MEPs



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