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# Turkish government must stop media restrictions

## Press release from EFA MEP Ernest Maragall

Catalan MEP and Member of the European Parliament's Turkey delegation **Ernest Maragall** has called on the Turkish government to stop interfering with media freedom and freedom of expression, which he says are core values for the European Union.

Mr Maragall spoke as MEPs vote on a resolution in Strasbourg on freedom of the press and media in Turkey. This follows the arrests of police officers, journalists and media workers in the country at the end of 2014, and comes amid renewed concerns about attacks on media freedom in Turkey.

Just this week, access to certain online news sites has been blocked and the printing press of a major daily newspaper were raided by police.

**Ernest Maragall** said:

*"With today's resolution we call on the Turkish government to stop restricting freedom of expression and media freedom, which are at the heart of EU values.*

*"Our resolution appears almost obsolete on the same day it is voted. So much is happening so fast in Turkey these days. This week, a Turkish court ruled to ban access to some online news portals showing Charlie Hebdo's latest front cover. Turkish police also raided Turkey's secular daily newspaper Cumhuriyet in search of Charlie Hebdo after the newspaper announced that it would distribute a four-page selection of the latest issue in an act of solidarity.*

*"Twitter and Facebook are once again under threat after the Turkish authorities warned that websites publishing alleged records related to Syrian-bound trucks belonging to Turkey's Intelligence agency will be banned.*

*"Recent developments cast serious doubts over Turkey's aspirations to join the European Union. We urge the Turkish government to work on reforms to reverse the undermining of judicial independence and fundamental rights.*

*"Making progress on negotiations, which we truly support, should be conditional on the effective adoption of*

*legislative reforms consistent with the principles of respect for the rule of law and fundamental rights. This includes freedom of expression and media freedom, which are core principles of democracy.*

*"The EU should adopt a firm stance towards the Turkish government and seek positive engagement with Turkish citizens."*

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Press release

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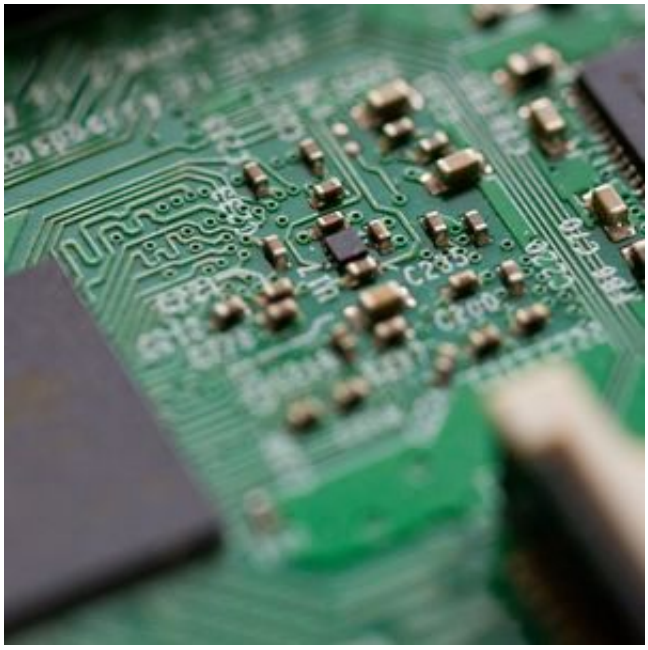


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