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Press release | 17.02.2018

Turkish Green co-chairs Eylem Tuncaelli and Naci Sönmez are released

Turkish Greens

The co-chairs of the Turkish Greens and the Left Party of the Future (Yesiller ve Sol Gelecek Partisi) Eylem Tuncaelli and Naci Sönmez were released on Saturday morning at 5am after having been held in custody for just over one week. They have been charged with supporting terrorism as well as signing a press release calling for peace and criticising Turkey's military action in Afrin, Syria. They are banned from leaving the country and will be placed on parole. The announcement came amid a series of verdicts by Turkish authorities, including the release of journalist Deniz Yücel, who had been held for over one year in a Turkish jail.

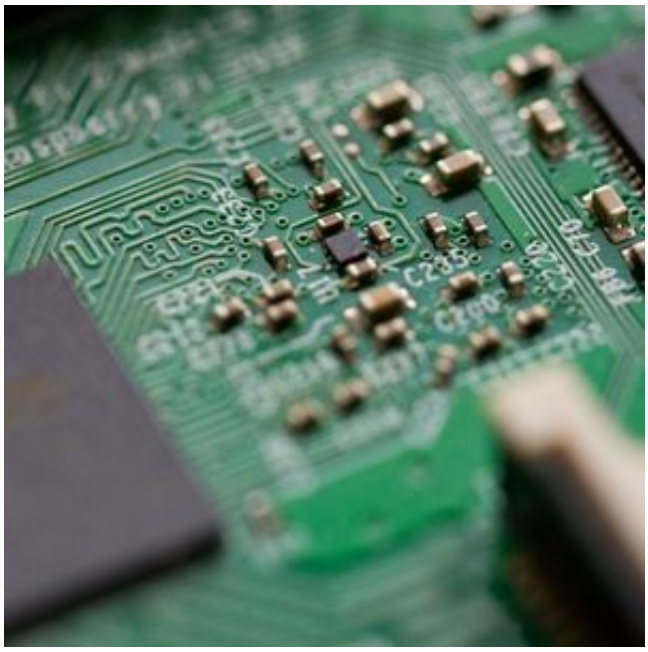
Commenting on their release, European Green Party co-chairs **Monica Frassoni** and **Reinhard Bütikofer**, as well as the co-president of Greens/EFA Group in the European Parliament **Philippe Lamberts** said :

"We are delighted to hear that Eylem Tuncaelli and Naci Sönmez have finally been released after being held in custody for one week without any formal charges. We hope they are now resting in the company of friends and family. However, the charges against them are baseless and completely nonsensical. Both Eylem and Naci support peace in Turkey and neighboring Syria as do the vast majority of Turkish citizens and people around the world. Placing them on parole and banning them from leaving the country is completely inappropriate and disproportionate. We also remember the 6 journalists who have been sentenced to life in prison. Trying to crush every dissenting voice is ultimately counterproductive for the security of the Turkish people and the country's economic stability. We demand the Turkish authorities guarantee the release of those still being held. We will continue to relentlessly campaign for their release. Europe cannot remain silent in the face of such a violation of the freedom of speech. We must do everything in our power to show that this cannot and will not be tolerated."

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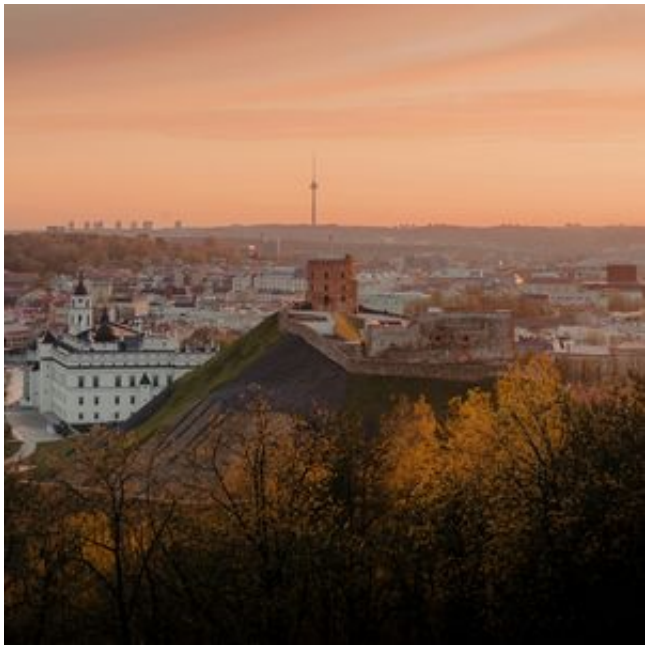
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Responsible MEPs



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