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Press release | 16.04.2017

Turkish referendum

Reaction of the Greens/EFA group

Responding to reports that President Erdogan has claimed victory in the Turkish referendum on proposed constitutional reforms, Greens/EFA co-president **Ska Keller** said:

"This result is a devastating blow to democracy in Turkey. After a campaign that took place in a climate of intimidation and fear, with outrageous restrictions on freedom of the press, Erdogan is now on track to transform the country into a one-man authoritarian regime. The EU must now make clear that it stands on the side of those who, despite intimidation and prosecution, have stood up for democracy. It is now high time for the EU to increase the pressure on Erdogan to end his fight against the free press and the opposition.

"We must stand side by side with all those Turkish citizens who are still striving to bring their country towards a rapprochement with the EU. However, it is clear that the strengthened economic cooperation that Erdogan so aspires to cannot happen so long as he continues to lead Turkey in an ever more oppressive direction. Negotiations over the modernisation of the customs union must not be opened until Erdogan has proven he is willing to make concessions and return to democracy."

Greens/EFA co-president **Philippe Lamberts** added:

"It has long been clear to most that the EU-Turkey refugee deal was destined to failure; all must surely now agree that it cannot possibly continue. Rather than making deals with Erdogan, the EU must stand strong behind its commitment to democracy, press freedom and human rights.

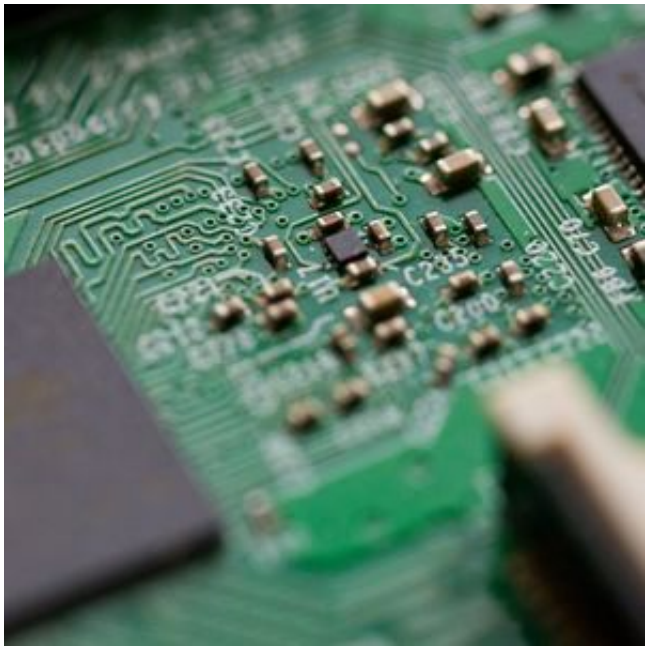
"Despite this result, now is not the time to turn our back on Turkey. We must continue a critical dialogue if we are to hope to influence developments in the country for the better. The EU must push for the freedom of

journalists and opposition politicians, and the hundreds of thousands Turkish citizens who have lost their jobs or been thrown in prison under the ongoing state of emergency."

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