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Brussels, 13. September 2019

Honourable President Erdoğan,

On August 19, the authorities removed the elected mayors of the cities Diyarbakır (Adnan Selçuk Mızraklı), Mardin (Ahmet Türk) and Van (Bedia Özgökce Ertan) from office and replaced them with government-appointed provincial governors.

The elected officials are accused of spreading terrorist propaganda and financing terrorism. This accusation is false. So far the authorities have not presented any evidences for these claims.

It seems that the accusations have been made, because the Turkish central government does not want to accept the results of the local elections, in which the HDP was successful in the above-mentioned cities. Already during the local election campaign in these provinces mainly inhabited by Kurds, there were indications that President Erdogan will not accept the possible successes of the HDP in the election.

We, Members of the European Parliament, are addressing you, because we are extremely concerned about these recent events. Free and independent elections are one of the fundamental principles of modern democracy. Now, under pretexts the result of the elections in the three cities is ignored.

Adnan Selçuk Mızraklı, Ahmet Türk and Bedia Özgökce Ertan were officially admitted as candidates for the local elections and were elected by a clear majority of the population. These election results must be respected and implemented.

Already in the past, elected mayors belonging to the HDP were removed, imprisoned or forced into exile. The arrest of Selahattin Demirtaş and Figen Yüksekdağ, the former co-chairman of the HDP and the persecution of other opposition members is a threat to democracy and cannot be justified. The sentencing of Canan Kaftancıoğlu (CHP) to almost 10 years imprisonment for some tweets is unacceptable.

You, Mr. President Erdogan, have already announced that there will be further orders to remove elected officials. This threat applies now obviously also to those mayors, who belong to the CHP, like the elected mayor of the city of Istanbul, Ekrem İmamoğlu. The CHP has also won local elections in many other big cities in the west of the country.

We, the representatives of various parties and political groups in the European Parliament, stand firmly on the side of democracy and human rights and wish to express our solidarity with our colleagues in Turkey affected by repression.

We urge you, the Turkish government, to end the repression against members of the HDP and the CHP, to accept the results of the local elections and to refrain from another round of repression against the opposition in Turkey.

Respectfully,

Demirel Özlem Alev (GUE/NGL)
Abed Rego Sira (GUE/NGL)
Anderson Martina (GUE/NGL)
Arvanitis Konstantinos (GUE/NGL)
Aubry Manon (GUE/NGL)
Barrena Fernando (GUE/NGL)
Benifei Brando (S&D)
Björk Malin (GUE/NGL)
Bompard Manuel (GUE/NGL)
Burkhardt Delara (S&D)
Buschmann Martin (GUE/NGL)
Cavazzini Anna (Greens/EFA)
Chaibi Leila (GUE/NGL)
Carthy Matt (GUE/NGL)
Daly Clare (GUE/NGL)
Ernst Cornelia (GUE/NGL)
Ferreira Joao (GUE/NGL)
Georgoulis Alexis (GUE/NGL)
Georgiou Giorgos (GUE/NGL)
Glucksman Raphaël (S&D)
Guetta Bernard (RENEW)
Guillaume Sylvie (S&D)
Incir Evin (S&D)
Kizilyürek Niyazi (GUE/NGL)
Kouloglou Stelios (GUE/NGL)
Marquardt Erik (Greens/EFA)
Matias Marisa (GUE/NGL)
Mavrides Costas (S&D)
Michels Martina (GUE/NGL)
Omarjee Younous (GUE/NGL)
Papadakis Demetris (S&D)
Papadimoulis Dimitrios (GUE/NGL)
Pereira Sandra (GUE/NGL)
Pineda Marin Manuel (GUE/NGL)
Piri Kati (S&D)
Reintke Terry (Greens/EFA)
Ritchie Sheila (RENEW)
Schirdewan Martin (GUE/NGL)
Scholz Helmut (GUE/NGL)
Sojdrova Michaela (EPP)
Strik Tineke (Greens/EFA)
Urban Crespo Miguel (GUE/NGL)
Van Sparrantak Kim (Greens/EFA)

Villanueva Ruiz Idoia (GUE/NGL)

Villumsen Nikolaj (GUE/NGL)

Vollath Bettina (S&D)

Wallace Mick (GUE/NGL)

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