



**Meeting of the Bureau
of PES Local | Socialist Local Representatives in Europe
8 March 2017, in Brussels**

Resolution on the situation in Turkey

PES Local | Socialist Local and Regional Representatives follows developments in Turkey with great concern. PES Local wishes for good relations based on a partnership between the EU and Europe, especially among people.

We condemn all terrorist attacks in Turkey which have caused many victims. We also strongly condemn the military coup attempt on 15 July 2016. Those responsible for terror in the cities and the military coup attempt must be identified and tried in court. The rule of law which, as one of the Copenhagen criteria, is a basic precondition to EU accession also applies to the alleged perpetrators in accordance with democratic principles.

Europe shouldn't turn a blind eye to the disproportionate counter-measures taken by the Turkish government. Freedom of the press and freedom of expression are in danger. More than ten members of the Turkish Grand National Assembly belonging to the opposition party HDP and over 150 journalists, as well as 2,300 judges and prosecutors have been arrested. 129,000 public employees have been either suspended (66,000) or dismissed (63,000) - in most cases without any charges being brought. The European Parliament, in its resolution of 24 November 2016, "strongly condemns the disproportionate repressive measures taken in Turkey since the failed military coup attempt in July 2016" and called for a temporary halt to the current accession negotiations with Turkey. The European Parliament noted that "the Turkish Government's repressive measures under the state of emergency are disproportionate and in breach of basic rights and freedoms protected by the Turkish Constitution, of democratic values upon which the European Union is founded".

As local representatives, we take a particularly close interest in the situation of municipalities and their citizens. We note with great concern the serious limitations and dangers, due to the conflicts in Southeastern Turkey, that citizens in cities and municipalities face in their daily lives, as well as the limitations imposed on local authorities and local democracy.

In Southeastern Turkey, armed conflicts have been taking place since 2015 which seriously affect the local population. Civilians, soldiers and police officers die on a daily basis. The European Commission estimates that more than 350,000 people have had to leave their homes. Human rights organisations speak of up to half a million internally displaced persons. In many cities, curfews lasting several days at a time have impeded access to health care and education. In many cities, there has been extensive destruction of private and municipal property, in part due to the use of heavy artillery. Large parts of the inner city and old town of Sur in Diyarbakir, which was declared a UNESCO world heritage site a year ago, has been destroyed. The Turkish state has since expropriated churches and mosques, as well as land and buildings in Sur and wants to rebuild the old town without involving the city administration.

In almost all towns of Southeastern Turkey, the government has forcibly appointed government officials. In many municipalities in this region, freely-elected local representatives are no longer allowed to meet. Over 60 mayors have been arrested. They are alleged to have ties with terrorist organisations. Among the detained are the two co-mayors of the city of more than a million inhabitants, Diyarbakir, Firat Anli and Gültan Kışanak. Firat Anli gave an impressive account of the situation in his town and region at the PES Local Bureau meeting on 1 July 2016 in Luxembourg.



PES Local notes with great concern that fighting in inhabited areas and the repressive measures, as described in reports from the European Commission and the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe, have serious consequences on people's daily lives and urges all parties involved in the conflict to stop military operations and resume the peace process.

PES Local is greatly concerned that the arrest of numerous mayors and local representatives, and the use of state administrators, endangers local self-governance and local democracy.

PES Local urges the Turkish government to respect fundamental democratic principles and the rule of law. We expect proceedings against detained local representatives to be conducted in accordance with the rule of law and for trial observers to be accepted.

PES Local welcomes the aid projects initiated in some European cities which support cities in Southeastern Turkey.

Moreover, PES Local recommends that mayors of European cities contact the mayors detained in Turkey and sponsor them, like many members of the European Parliament and the German federal parliament have done for detained members of parliament.