



Martin Schulz
President of the European Parliament
Rue Wierz 60
B-1047 Brussels

Dear President Schulz,

I write to you again in my capacity as Human Rights Officer of the European Criminal Bar Association and do so to draw your attention to the break down of the rule of law in Turkey.

I enclose two letters. The first is from Mr Ceren Uysal, Advocate, which I received on 16 March 2016 and which describes the repressive measures taken by the Turkish authorities against academics who signed a petition on 10 January 2016 demanding inter alia that the state *“abandon its deliberate massacre and deportation of Kurdish and other peoples in the region”* and that *“the state lift the curfew, punish those who are responsible for human rights violations, and compensate those citizens who have experienced material and psychological damage.”*

The second is from the European Association of Lawyers for Democracy and World Human Rights dated 17 March 2016 which reports that on 16 March 2016, the police raided the houses of lawyers in Istanbul and arrested others without reasons being given.

According to the first letter academics in 105 Turkish universities have been dismissed, suspended, investigated and questioned, forced to resign, forced to retire and taken into custody. None of these acts of repression was conducted legally. All the academics signed the petition.

The harassment of lawyers described in the second letter is not a recent phenomenon, but rather one going on for several years now, whereby lawyers representing or defending persons critical of the state are mistreated, sometimes severely, for doing nothing other than performing their professional duties towards their clients.

These offences against basic rights have to be seen in the same light and as part of the same context as the recent arrest of Cumhuriyet journalists and the forced take-over of the Zaman newspaper, in addition to the fact that in general the number of journalists in prison in Turkey is reaching epidemic proportions, meaning that however badly the state behaves its citizens are unable to form an objective view, because to criticise the state results in criminal proceedings against journalists and the closure of newspapers.

Turkey is now being run as a repressive and increasingly violent dictatorship.



Turkey, is a member of NATO. It is also a member of the Council of Europe. It is a signatory of the European Convention of Human Rights. And the EU seems to need it. In other circumstances the human rights abuses of Turkey would result in EU sanctions against it.

The very least that the European Parliament can do is to condemn Turkey's actions and to warn the EU Member States to refrain from all action that would condone Turkey's contemptuous disregard for basic human right standards and for life itself.

Yours sincerely,

Scott Crosby
Human Rights Officer
ECBA