Resolution on the repression of the opposition in Turkey, specifically the Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP)

2021/2788(RSP) - 08/07/2021 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 603 votes to 2, with 67 abstentions, a resolution on the repression of the opposition in Turkey, specifically the Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP).

The text adopted in plenary was tabled by the EPP, S&D, Renew, Greens/EFA and the Left groups.

Against the backdrop of a general backsliding affecting fundamental freedoms and the rule of law, opposition parties in Turkey – and particularly the People's Democratic Party (HDP) – have been continuously and increasingly targeted by the Turkish authorities. Parliament remained deeply concerned by the constant attacks and pressure on opposition parties in Turkey, and particularly by the way that the HDP, including its youth organisation, has been specifically and increasingly targeted by the Turkish authorities. It condemned this repression against the HDP and any other Turkish opposition parties, which undermines the proper functioning of the democratic system.

Furthermore, the resolution strongly condemned the appalling killing of HDP member and worker Deniz Poyraz and the attack on the party's offices in zmir. It urged the authorities to investigate this case thoroughly and bring those responsible to justice.

The Turkish government is urged to:

- put an end to this situation and ensure that all political parties in the country can freely and fully exercise their legitimate activities in accordance with the basic principles of a pluralist and democratic system;

- refrain from fuelling incitement against the HDP and to take the necessary measures to protect the party' s offices and officials, including MPs and elected local councillors and co-mayors;

- align their anti-terrorism legislation with international standards in order to ensure the effective protection of fundamental rights and freedoms and proportionality and equality before the law;

- ensure pluralism and to respect the freedoms of association and expression.

Parliament strongly condemned the indictment refiled by Turkey's Chief Public Prosecutor at the Constitutional Court seeking the dissolution of the HDP and a political ban on nearly 500 HDP members, including most of its current leadership, which would prevent them from conducting any kind of political activity in the next five years. It noted with grave concern that the HDP dissolution case is the culmination of a crackdown on the party that has been going on for several years, and which has seen thousands of party members, executives, MPs, local councillors and co-mayors tried, mainly on terrorism related charges.

The resolution also condemned the arbitrary application of the rule of law during the ongoing Kobanî trial, which led to the reopening of the case, and during its proceedings, in particular the lack of judicial independence, impartiality, total fairness and procedural safeguards.

As regards the issue of removing democratically elected mayors from office and replacing them with unelected trustees, Parliament condemned this decision made by the Turkish authorities.

Lastly, Parliament stressed that these actions continue to undermine the ability of the political opposition to exercise their rights and fulfil their democratic roles. It is deeply concerned by this serious backsliding on the freedom of the opposition parties to function, which reveals the dire human rights situation in Turkey and the continued erosion of democracy and the rule of law, in violation of the Copenhagen criteria.