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12.9.2016

## WRITTEN DECLARATION

submitted under Rule 136 of the Rules of Procedure

on defending freedom of speech and human rights in Turkey

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Lapse date: 12.12.2016

**Written declaration, under Rule 136 of Parliament's Rules of Procedure, on defending freedom of speech and human rights in Turkey<sup>1</sup>**

1. Respecting human rights and promoting democracy are among the founding values of the European Union, which has expressed its commitment to freedom of speech; the Member States are called upon to defend this freedom within the European Union and abroad.
2. There is increasing concern about the recent law, passed on 20 May 2016 by the Turkish parliament, which waives the immunity of members of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey and may also lead to political discrimination, in particular against members of the opposition and the Kurdish minority.
3. There is also serious concern regarding legislative and political procedures leading to the undisputed domination of the President of the Turkish state, by means of proposed constitutional amendments.
4. The Commission and the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR) are called upon to condemn such procedures, which violate the fundamental values of the European Union.
5. The VP/HR is called upon to respond to this situation with a view to ensuring respect for democracy and human rights in Turkey.
6. This declaration, together with the names of the signatories, is forwarded to the Commission and the VP/HR.

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<sup>1</sup> Under Rule 136(4) and (5) of Parliament's Rules of Procedure, where a declaration is signed by a majority of Parliament's component Members, it is published in the minutes with the names of its signatories and forwarded to the addressees, without however binding Parliament.