



1118th Permanent Council of the OSCE, 10 November 2016

Current issue: the situation of human rights in Turkey

Statement by Switzerland on behalf of Canada, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland

Mr. Chair,

This statement is delivered on behalf of Canada, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland.

The recent increase in tensions and violence in Turkey is alarming. We strongly condemn all terrorist attacks, including the one that took place on 4th of November 2016 in Diyarbakir. We extend our sincere condolences to the victims and their relatives.

The arrests of several members of Parliament of the Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP), including its two co-chairs, are of grave concern. This was made possible by the lifting of parliamentary immunity in June 2016. These arrests do not reflect the democratic values that Turkey has committed to uphold. Our delegations will also follow closely the investigations against the Members of Parliament of the Republican People's Party of Turkey (CHP) following the charges brought against them on 8th of November. We are further concerned about the detention of the two co-mayors of Diyarbakir.

Mr. Chair,

Democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights are crucial to stable and peaceful societies. In this context, the inclusion of individuals and civil society organizations in civil and political life is paramount. We are concerned about reports of dissolution by force of peaceful demonstrations, as allegedly occurred on 5th of

November 2016 in Istanbul, as well as about the reprisals and intimidation against media, journalists and human rights defenders. The closure of several publishing houses and broadcasters and the detention of dozens of journalists since the attempted coup d'Etat are detrimental to the fundamental freedoms, including freedom of expression and opinion as well as the freedom of media, to which Turkey is committed as State party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), in the conventional framework of the Council of Europe and through relevant OSCE commitments. Our delegations call on Turkey to respect its international obligations and commitments in this regard.

In addition, we are concerned about reports of a large number of suspensions or arrests, of judges and prosecutors in particular, as well as allegations of ill-treatment against detainees. We call on Turkey to ensure that justice is done in an independent and impartial manner, respecting fair trial guarantees and the fundamental rights enshrined in the ICCPR, the European Convention on Human Rights and the relevant OSCE commitments.

We recall in this respect that the abolition of the death penalty is part of the commitments made by Turkey under the Second Optional Protocol to the ICCPR as well as under Protocols 6 and 13 to the European Convention on Human Rights. Our delegations are very concerned about the various calls for the reintroduction of the death penalty. Turkey has shown positive commitment in recent years for the abolition of the death penalty worldwide, including by joining the Task Force of the Resolution on a moratorium on the use of the death penalty of the General Assembly of the United Nations. We call on Turkey to eliminate all uncertainties concerning this issue and clearly state that there is no intention of re-introducing the death penalty.

Mr. Chair,

Our delegations fully support the legitimate and democratically elected government of Turkey and express our solidarity with the Turkish people in the aftermath of the attempted coup d'Etat. We encourage the Turkish authorities to exercise restraint to preserve the national unity of the country and to work towards dialogue and reconciliation within Turkish society. It is of utmost importance that any measures taken by the government of Turkey strictly abide by the human rights obligations and

commitments of Turkey, to the rule of law and to the principle of proportionality. We acknowledge Turkey's necessity to prevent and counter terrorism. However, we call on Turkey not to use its terrorism provisions or the state of emergency as a pretext to restrict in a disproportionate and unnecessary manner fundamental freedoms and human rights.

In the spirit of the multidimensional understanding of security of the OSCE, doing so is not only the responsibility of Turkey; it is also in its interest to ensure the security and stability of the country in a sustainable manner.

Thank you.