



Европейски парламент Parlamento Europeo Evropský parlament Europa-Parlamentet Europäisches Parlament
Euroopa Parlament Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο European Parliament Parlement européen Parlaimint na hEorpa
Europski parlament Parlamento europeo Eiropas Parlaments Europos Parlamentas Európai Parlament
Parlament Ewropew Europees Parlement Parlament Europejski Parlamento Europeu Parlamentul European
Európsky parlament Evropski parlament Euroopan parlamentti Europaparlamentet

Thursday, 3rd October 2024

To Mr. Numan Kurtulmuş, Speaker of the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye,

Subject: take up of parliamentary mandate of Can Atalay

Honorable Numan Kurtulmuş,

As the new parliamentary session commences, it is deeply concerning to observe the glaring absence of Mr. Can Atalay, the duly elected representative of Hatay, from his rightful seat in the Turkish Parliament.

Mr. Atalay is a human rights lawyer who has defended many political prisoners, journalists, and victims of work accidents, among several other major court cases in the recent history of Türkiye. He has been unjustly detained in prison since 2022 on the grounds of politically charged “Gezi Park Trials”.

Despite being elected as a deputy in the 2023 General Elections, registered in the records of the Parliament, and having received his mandate, he has not been released from prison. Thus, he has not been able to take the parliamentary oath and claim parliamentary immunity.

Following Atalay’s applications, the Constitutional Court has twice ruled that his rights had been violated and that he should be released immediately and retried. However, the relevant authorities have not implemented these decisions.

ASP 8 H 153- Rue Wiertz 60 - B-1047 Brüssel - Tel: +32 (0)2 28 45589 - Fax: +32 (0)2 28 49589

ozlem.demirel@europarl.europa.eu | www.ozlem-alev-demirel.de | www.dielinke-europa.eu | www.left.eu

His deputyship was revoked in the Parliament in January 2024. The Constitutional Court has ruled that the revocation of his deputyship is “non-existent” and that Can Atalay should get his parliamentary seat.

His still-ongoing detention violates not only the rights of an MP but also of the fundamental democratic rights of the people of Hatay, a region still grappling with the aftermath of catastrophic earthquakes, and of the universal understanding of the rule of law by not abiding by the Constitutional Court’s rulings.

We strongly condemn that despite all the decisions in Atalay’s favour, the Turkish authorities, including you as the Speaker of the Parliament, have not implemented the Constitutional Court’s unequivocal rulings.

Concerning your crucial role in the Parliament, we, the undersigned Members of the European Parliament, call on you to follow the decisions of the Constitutional Court to which you have declared loyalty in your parliamentary oath, to respect the electoral will of the people of Hatay, to let Can Atalay receive his justly earned parliamentary seat, and to take the necessary steps needed to address the severe constraints on the rule of law, fundamental rights, and freedoms in the country.

Signatories

Özlem Alev Demirel, THE LEFT - Germany

Marco Tarquinio, S&D - Italy

Martin Schirdewan, THE LEFT - Germany

Anthony Smith, THE LEFT - France

Sebastian Everding, THE LEFT - Germany

Leila Chaibi, THE LEFT - France

Jonas Sjöstedt, THE LEFT - Sweden

Damian Careme, THE LEFT - France

Catarina Martins, THE LEFT - Portugal

Irene Montero, THE LEFT - Spain

Isa Serra, THE LEFT - Spain

ASP 8 H 153- Rue Wiertz 60 - B-1047 Brüssel - Tel: +32 (0)2 28 45589 - Fax: +32 (0)2 28 49589

ozlem.demirel@europarl.europa.eu | www.ozlem-alev-demirel.de | www.dielinke-europa.eu | www.left.eu

ASP 8 H 153- Rue Wiertz 60 - B-1047 Brüssel - Tel: +32 (0)2 28 45589 - Fax: +32 (0)2 28 49589

ozlem.demirel@europarl.europa.eu | www.ozlem-alev-demirel.de | www.dielinke-europa.eu | www.left.eu