



**H.E. Ane Halsboe-Jorgensen
Chairperson of the Foreign Affairs
Committee of the Danish Parliament**

Copenhagen, 22 March 2017

H.E. Ane Halsboe-Jorgensen,

I have the honour to forward to Your Excellency, the original letter of H.E. Taha Özhan, Chairperson of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Turkish Grand National Assembly, concerning the recent developments with regard to the campaigns to be held in Europe before the referendum, which will be held on 16 April 2017 in Turkey.

**Bora KERİMOĞLU
Charge D'Affaires of the Embassy
of the Republic of Turkey**

Encl.: 1



**Grand National Assembly of Turkey
Foreign Affairs Committee**

Ankara, 13th March 2017

Dear Mrs. Chairperson,

The referendum to be held on April 16 in Turkey aims to further democratize the political system, pluralize representation and stabilize the administrative processes. The referendum which will decide such necessary changes is as important for Turkey as it is for Europe which Turkey is a part of. All the political parties in Turkey are competing for votes both in Turkey and in Europe where approximately 3 million eligible Turkish voters live. To this end, they take part in events held in Europe regarding the referendum.

However, the past week we saw a disrespectful and anti-democratic interference to these events by the German and Dutch authorities, which is also against the diplomatic intercourse enshrined in the Vienna Conventions on Diplomatic Relations. Elected officials of the Turkish Government were prevented from taking part in events which were organized within the democratic and legal settings of the mentioned countries. Especially by preventing first the Minister of Foreign Affairs Çavuşoğlu and then the Minister of Family and Social Affairs Kaya, the Dutch authorities have taken the issue to a new anti-democratic and xenophobic level. The elected officials and Turkish diplomats with diplomatic immunity were disrespected, and ordinary people who gathered peacefully to show support were assaulted by the security forces. Not only the Dutch authorities showed an unprecedented interference to democratic rights, they also violated severely the diplomatic conventions and traditions.

This last incident underlines the point of irrationality that the European politics has reached against Turkey and AK party government. This is another worrying example illustrating the rise of xenophobia and Islamophobia throughout Europe. We should all remember the dire consequences of xenophobia in Europe in the last century, leading up to the death of millions of people and even genocide. Therefore, rising xenophobia and reappearance of fascism in mainstream politics throughout Europe in the last few years should be carefully examined and contained. This shift of axis in the mainstream politics has brought in alarming levels of animosity towards multiculturalism and minority communities. Such practices can only be referred to as discrimination and fascism, and to call such discrimination "populism" is a mere distraction from the harsh reality.

As Turkey, it is our sincere hope that Europe returns to the path of democracy where rights and freedoms, as well as true practices of politics are respected and protected without succumbing to the pressures of xenophobia and fascism. We call on all the Foreign Affairs Committees of the Parliaments throughout EU countries to condemn the anti-democratic practices and narratives of the German and Dutch authorities of the past week so that such unfortunate incident shall not be repeated.

Kind Regards,

Taha ÖZHAN
Chairperson of the Foreign Affairs Committee

Mrs. Ane HALSBOE-JØRGENSEN
Chairperson of the Foreign Affairs
Committee of Folketinget