



United States Mission to the OSCE
**On the Detention of Human Rights
Defenders in Turkey**

As delivered by Chargé d'Affaires, a.i. Kate M. Byrnes
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
July 13, 2017

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The United States remains deeply concerned by the arrest of prominent human rights defenders, journalists, academics, and activists in Turkey – including the July 5 detention of prominent human rights defenders from Amnesty International Turkey and other respected institutions. We reiterate our concerns over actions by the Turkish government that are incompatible with Turkey's commitments to uphold and defend fundamental freedoms. We hope to see an expeditious end to the state of emergency and, in this context, continue to underscore the importance of respecting due process and individual rights, as enshrined in the Turkish Constitution, and as consistent with Turkey's own international commitments. As we have expressed on numerous occasions, persistent curbs on freedom of expression erode the foundations of democratic society. More voices, not fewer, are necessary in challenging times.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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