

Members of the Foreign Affairs Committee discussed the motives and the possible consequences of Turkey's recent attempted coup with Enlargement Commissioner Johannes Hahn and representatives of the European External Action Service on Tuesday morning. MEPs emphasized that to ensure further accession talks, Turkey must stick to democracy, the rule of law and human rights.

Following the meeting, committee chair, Elmar Brok (EPP, DE) issued this statement:

"I noted with shock what happened during and after the attempted coup, including the listing and the swift removal of thousands judges and public servants. There is a danger now that Turkey could move further away from Europe. The introduction of the death penalty is a clear line, it could prevent further EU accession talks. It is important to stay calm though and make sure we are not creating myths. Turkey is a strategic partner and we will only get peace in Syria if Ankara is involved. But on the other hand, two-third of foreign direct investment in the country comes from Europe, so let us not pretend that we depend on Turkey. As for the meeting of the Turkish president with Russian president Vladimir Putin, I hope we won't see a festival of autocrats."

Kati Piri (S&D, NL), the rapporteur on Turkey added:

"After such a violent attack on Turkish democratic institutions, it's important that in the end democracy and rule of law come out of this strengthened, not weakened. The Turkish government has the right and the obligation to bring the people involved in the attempted coup to justice. But first reactions by the Turkish authorities raise the fear that the government of president Erdogan is pursuing a witch-hunt as thousands of military, police, judges and governors have been arrested or put on non-active. I ask the Turkish government for restraint and respect for the rule of law. In this situation, further Putinization of Turkey poses a risk to the EU and must be avoided at all costs. I sincerely hope that Turkey takes this as an opportunity for reconciliation and national unity after years of polarization."