

23 AOUT 2013

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MEMBER OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Mr Mogens Blicher Bjerregård
EFJ President
European Federation of Journalists
Residence Palace
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Brussels, 22 July 2013

Ans (2013) 2744659

Dear Mr Bjerregård,

Thank you for your letter to President Barroso and myself. President Barroso has asked me to reply.

The Commission is very much aware of the issues you raise and follows the developments in Turkey closely.

The Commission has strongly condemned the excessive use of force to silence peaceful protests, which has no place in a democratic society. The Commission has underlined with the Turkish authorities that a swift and transparent investigation into police violence needs to be followed through and those responsible need to be brought to account.

The Commission recalled on numerous occasions, notably at the Speak-Up 2 conference on freedom of expression in the media on 20 June 2013, that democracy requires dialogue between all sectors of society, including those not represented by the parliamentary majority.

Any country negotiating its EU accession needs to guarantee human rights, including freedom of expression and freedom of assembly and association, in line with Article 10 and 11 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and the jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR).

I can ensure you that the Commission is committed to ensure adherence to these principles and will continue to raise this in its permanent dialogue with the Turkish authorities.

Yours sincerely,

