

26 October 2020

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Mr Eziz Bawermend
Kurdish Australia Lobby

PO Box 181 Strathfield
NSW 2135 Australia

By email: kurdishlobbyaus@gmail.com

Dear Mr Bawermend,

Support for elected local government officials in Turkey

Inner West Council at its meeting on 25 August 2020 Item 6, resolved to write to you in support of elected local government officials in Turkey.

The resolution included that Council:

1. Notes that twenty-three popularly elected Mayors in Turkey have been stripped of office and put on trial for alleged 'terrorist offences';
2. Notes that Humans Rights Watch has stated:
"Removing, detaining, and putting on trial local Kurdish politicians as armed militants with no compelling evidence of criminal activity seems to be the Turkish government's preferred way to wipe out political opposition," said Hugh Williamson, Europe and Central Asia director at Human Rights Watch. "These cases are not linked to any legitimate counterterrorism effort but trample the rights of the mayors and the 1.8 million voters who elected them."
3. Recognises that local government is an important layer of democracy in all countries;
4. Adopts part of the motion passed by the European Parliament in September 2019 that states:
 - a) *Condemns the decision made by the Turkish authorities to remove democratically elected mayors from office on the basis of questionable evidence; stresses that these actions continue to undermine the ability of the political opposition to exercise their rights and fulfil their democratic roles; and*
 - b) *Calls on the Turkish authorities to reinstate all mayors and other elected officials who won local elections on 31 March 2019 and were prevented from assuming office or were dismissed or replaced with unelected trustees on the basis of unsubstantiated allegations.*

5. Forwards a copy of this resolution to the Turkish Ambassador, the Turkish Consul General, the Australian Foreign Minister The Hon. Marise Payne MP, the local Federal Member and local Kurdish community organisations;
6. Provides for community references the following links to the European Parliament resolution: https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2019-0017_EN.pdf and the Human Rights Watch article: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/02/07/turkey-kurdish-mayors-removal-violates-voters-rights>
7. Refers the above motion to Local Government NSW for discussion at the forthcoming Local Government NSW Conference.

Yours sincerely,



Elizabeth Richardson

Acting Chief Executive Officer