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# The Crackdown on Political Dissent in Turkey After July 15, 2016. A Challenge to European Values

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Turkey is a member of the Council of Europe, of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and a candidate to the accession to the European Union. As a transcontinental country, Turkey belongs both to Asia and Europe, and can be used as a benchmark to assess the narrowing of human rights and civil liberties in the fight against terrorism. While having become the central platform for action for Islamist groups in the Middle East, as a result of the gradually Islamized domestic and foreign policy of Ankara since 2011, Turkey demands its Western allies to stand by it in the fight against terrorism. Turkey has a concept of terrorism that clashes with the principles enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights, that should be obliged to comply, together with other international instruments. The authoritarian turn put in place by the Turkish government after the failed coup d'état of 15 July 2016 is a challenge to the values of European and Western civilization, and pillories all the contradictions and the limits of the latter concerning defending fundamental human rights while countering terrorism. This paper scrutinizes the policy of the Turkish authorities to counter terrorism within the country and at its external borders, and the inconsistencies of this policy with the international legal commitments and with the values of European and Western nations.

**Keywords:** Turkey, Terrorism, Fundamental Human Rights, European Court of Human Rights (ECHR), Council of Europe.

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