

The Rt Hon Theresa May MP
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London
SW1A 2AA

UNISON Centre,
130 Euston Road,
LONDON NW1 2AY

Tel: +44 20 7121 5767
Fax: +44 20 7121 5101

www.unison.org.uk
Email: I.Relations@unison.co.uk

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Dear Prime Minister,

Visit by President Erdogan

On behalf of UNISON's 1.3 million members working in public services in the UK, I am writing to express our deep concern over the continued erosion of democracy, human rights and the rule of law in Turkey.

Since the attempted coup in July 2016, the government of Turkey has used the state of emergency to silence its actual and perceived critics, including trade unionists, public service workers, journalists, the judiciary, politicians and academics. At least 120 journalists have been detained and 180 media outlets have been closed down. Over 50,000 people have been imprisoned and tens of thousands more subjected to criminal investigations and potential prosecution.

Public service workers and their unions have been particularly affected, with approximately 150,000 workers dismissed or suspended, mainly for alleged terrorist offences, with little or no right to appeal.

Whilst it was appropriate that the UK government condemned the coup in Turkey, UNISON is concerned that significantly more could be done to condemn the state of emergency, the dismissals of public service workers, mass imprisonment of journalists, trade unionists, human rights defenders and government critics, and the erosion of democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

We urge you and your government to use your meetings with President Erdogan in the coming days to call on the government of Turkey to:

- End the state of emergency
- Reinstate dismissed and suspended public service workers;
- And release trade unionists, human rights defenders, journalists and political prisoners.

Furthermore, we call on you to end the sale of arms produced in the UK to Turkey until international human rights standards are respected, and for democracy, social justice and workers and human rights to be embedded in any future trade deal.

Yours faithfully,



Dave Prentis

General Secretary