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Cyprus: EPP President "astonished" by the arrest of MEPs in Famagusta

Brussels, 14 March 2011



The President of the European People's Party (EPP), **Wilfried Martens**, was briefed yesterday by the President of the Democratic Rally of Cyprus (DISY), **Nicos Anastasiades**, on the weekend arrest of EPP MEPs, former MEP Yannakis Matsis, civilians, and clerics in occupied Famagusta, by Turkish military forces. The group was visiting abandoned churches and monuments. The MEPs and clerics have been released but former MEP Yannakis Matsis remains in detention:

"I am astonished by this incident. The Turkish military forces do not have the right to arrest current and former European parliamentarians and other European citizens, who were there on a mission to examine the current state of religious monuments in the ghost-town of Famagusta. I call on the immediate release of former MEP Yannakis Matsis and all those who remain in detention," the EPP President stated.

ENDS

Note to editors:

The EPP is the largest and most influential European-level political party of the centre-right, which currently includes 73 member-parties from 39 countries, the Presidents of the Commission, Council, and Parliament, 15 EU and 6 non-EU heads of state and government, 13 members of the European Commission and the largest Group in the European Parliament.

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