



**REPUBLIC OF TURKEY  
MINISTRY FOR EU AFFAIRS**

**STATEMENT BY EGEMEN BAĞIS**  
**MINISTER FOR EU AFFAIRS AND CHIEF NEGOTIATOR**  
**ON THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION**  
**ON TURKEY'S 2012 PROGRESS REPORT**

The European Parliament (EP) Resolution on Turkey's 2012 Progress Report, on the progress achieved by Turkey during the EU accession process, was adopted at the General Assembly of the EP on 18 April 2013.

This Resolution, which is the sixth one adopted at the General Assembly to this day was prepared by Ria Oomen-Ruijten, Dutch Christian Democrat EP Rapporteur on Turkey and submitted to the General Assembly, following its discussion twice in the Foreign Affairs Committee with 415 amendments proposed by MEPs.

Prior to the voting in the General Assembly, the political groups in the EP proposed a total of 40 amendments which were discussed on 17 April 2013.

Due to the efforts of Rapporteur Ria Oomen-Ruijten, as well as the positive approach of the majority of the political groups in the EP and MEPs, the significant political reforms and transformation process being realised in Turkey are referred to in the Resolution. The spirit and language of the Resolution in general terms confirm and acknowledge the determination of our Government regarding the reforms. Within this framework, preparing Turkey's own progress report under the coordination of our Ministry and the report itself has been evaluated as a decision well-taken.

On this occasion, we would like to thank all our friends, foremost Stefan Füle, EU Commissioner responsible for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy and Rapporteur Ria Oomen-Ruijten for their constructive and positive speeches on Turkey's accession to the EU throughout the discussions on the EP Resolution. We would also like to congratulate Rapporteur Ria Oomen-Ruijten on her nomination by the European People's Party for the Office of European Ombudsman whose term will expire in October. Furthermore, the recently enacted Law on the Ombudsman Institution, the Law on the Human Rights Institution, the Fourth Judicial Reform Package and the Law on Foreigners and International Protection, as well as progress achieved by Turkey on women's rights have also been referred to favourably in the Resolution.

The initiatives of the extreme right and left wing political groups in the EP and the MEPs from the Southern Greek Cypriot Administration proposing amendments that would distort the balanced nature of the Resolution were counteracted with a compromise by the Rapporteur and the representatives of the EP political groups, and thus, it would be feasible to say that the 2012 EP Resolution is more objective than that of the previous year. Thus, the approach in the EU Commission's 2012 Progress Report that has disregarded the developments in Turkey to a great extent has been partially remedied by this Resolution, which has been prepared by the MEPs representing the peoples of the EU.

The MEPs have reiterated the call for opening Chapters 23 and 24 to negotiations this year as before and have also called for the opening of Chapter 15 (Energy), Chapter 19 (Social Policy and Employment) and Chapter 22 (Regional Policy and Coordination of Structural Instruments) to negotiations.

During this period in which several EU Member States continue to block Turkey's negotiation process for political reasons, Turkey welcomes the support given by the EP regarding the reforms realised in Turkey, as well as the recently initiated reconciliation process and the call for this process to be concluded successfully. Turkey also welcomes EU's strong condemnation of terrorist activities of the PKK.

Nevertheless, the reference to the activities of the PKK, which is on the EU's list of terrorist organisations, as "conflict" points to faulty perception and evaluation by the EU regarding this issue.

Furthermore, Turkey's strategic position and importance as a regional actor are also emphasized in the Resolution. In this context, noting the humanitarian aid Turkey has provided to Syrians fleeing to our country, the EP has called for building a joint strategic vision between the EU and Turkey regarding the situation in Syria.

However, there are also unfair criticisms in the Resolution that overlook certain developments in our country.

Whereas the EU has not fulfilled its obligations regarding the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) since 2005, criticism of Turkey's justified stance during the EU Presidency of the Southern Greek Cypriot Administration and disregard for the sovereignty rights of Turkish Cypriots are elements that distort the impartiality of the Resolution.

In addition, amendments proposed during the discussions on the Resolution for lifting the political and economic isolation of the TRNC, in particular for the implementation of the General Affairs Council's decision of 26 April 2004

regarding the Direct Trade Regulation, have not been adopted as a result of the efforts of the MEPs representing the Southern Greek Cypriot Administration.

Furthermore, the way that the Uludere incident has been presented is unacceptable for Turkey.

The Resolution attaches importance to the signing of the Readmission Agreement. However, we would like to remind that the Road Map towards a Visa Free Regime with Turkey should include Turkey's concerns.

As a candidate country carrying out accession negotiations, Turkey expects the EP, the representative of the European people and voice of EU public opinion, to be fair and impartial. Turkey will value and take into consideration this Resolution to the extent that this expectation is met.

Our Government's determination for the reform process is unquestionable. It is important though not sufficient that our determination has recently started to find response from the European Union and that messages have been exchanged concerning the acceleration of the process.

In particular, the acknowledgement and explicit statements on the contributions that would be made by Turkey to the EU is noteworthy. Even the exploitative efforts by certain circles that oppose Turkey cannot conceal these facts.

We would like to once again remind our European friends that "the night is a friend to the thief, the light to the truth." The best option for all is to continue Turkey's EU accession process in the light of truth, not in the darkness of the night.