



**REPUBLIC OF TURKEY  
MINISTRY FOR EU AFFAIRS**

**MINISTER FOR EU AFFAIRS AND CHIEF NEGOTIATOR  
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TALKING POINTS FOR PRESS CONFERENCE**

**FIRST PHASE OF THE NATIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR THE EU ACCESSION  
(November 2014-June 2015)**

**30 October 2014, Ankara**

Distinguished Members of the Press,

- I am pleased to share with you today the “First Phase of the National Action Plan for the EU Accession”, prepared in the framework of Turkey’s New European Union Strategy.
- As I have stated in earlier press conferences, the New European Union Strategy, which may well be seen as the constitution of Turkey’s EU reform process, is based on the concepts of reform, transformation and communication.
- The roadmaps that we need to implement our EU Strategy, which sets forth our main approach and objectives, are the “ National Action Plan for the EU Accession” and the “EU Communication Strategy.”
- We announced the “EU Communication Strategy” in Brussels on 16 October to the public.

- Today, I would like to share with you the National Action Plan, which is significant for the continuity of our political reform process and the socio-economic transformation during the EU accession process.
- As you may recall, in the past, the National Programme was prepared in response to the Accession Partnership Document published by the European Union. The National Programme prepared following the publication of the most recent Accession Partnership Document in 2008 is no longer up to date, although it was an important roadmap for alignment with the EU *acquis*. An Action Plan prepared was for 2010-2011, but it also needs an update. Thus, the National Action Plan for the EU Accession has been prepared to address this necessity.
- The National Action Plan for the EU Accession consists of two phases. Priorities with respect to the alignment of primary and secondary legislation in the negotiation chapters, as well as institutional capacity building initiatives along with other relevant work, have been set out in the First Phase of the Action Plan (November 2014-June 2015).
- Following its approval by the Council of Ministers, the National Action Plan for the EU Accession has been conveyed to the European Commission. I am pleased to say that the Commission did not make any further recommendations regarding the Action Plan.
- We will share the Second Phase of the National Action Plan (2015-2019) with you in November.

Distinguished Members of the Press,

- The National Action Plan is a roadmap that sets forth our priorities regarding the political reforms, as well as sustaining of the current socio-economic transformation.
- National Action Plan determines the steps that Turkey will take in the forthcoming period with regard to alignment with the EU *acquis*, as well as institutional and administrative capacity-building.
- The National Action Plan clearly outlines the laws and secondary legislation to be enacted in each negotiation chapter.
- Furthermore, the National Action Plan sets out in detail the legislative arrangements for alignment with the EU *acquis*, the purpose, the stage of the preparations, the responsible institution for the legislative arrangement, as well a timetable for its publication.
- I would like to particularly emphasize that, through this Action Plan, we are introducing a concrete framework regarding legal arrangements for alignment with the EU *acquis*.
- As our Prime Minister has indicated, EU standards will be taken into account in all areas - whether or not they are referred to in this Action Plan - when carrying out reforms for protecting the rights and interests of our citizens.
- The opinion of the Ministry for EU Affairs will be sought regarding all arrangements on these matters, in accordance with the Circular issued by

the Prime Ministry. Furthermore, these will also be submitted to the approval of the TGNA EU Harmonisation Committee.

An important number of the arrangements set out in the Action Plan have already been submitted to the TGNA. The draft legislation for the remaining arrangements will be prepared and submitted to the TGNA. We are aware that the TGNA's legislative schedule will be tight to due to the budgetary work and upcoming parliamentary elections. The timing for enactment of these arrangements will be subject to the discretion of the TGNA.

Distinguished Members of the Press,

- In the past twelve years, Turkey has adopted over 2000 pieces of legislation, for alignment with the EU *acquis*, nearly 170 of which have been enacted in the past year. Thus, we have taken many critical steps which have direct impacts on our daily lives and Turkey has moved closer to the achievement of EU standards.
- The First Phase of the National Action Plan for the EU Accession, which we have shared with you today, is a proof to our commitment to continue with the reforms introduced so far, which have increased the welfare and living standards of our citizens. The Action Plan will act as a guarantee for the reform process.
- The enactment of 36 laws and 142 pieces of secondary legislation, as well as 39 institutional capacity-building initiatives, have been envisaged for the First Phase of the National Action Plan (November 2014-June 2015).
- I would like to give a few examples to these measures.

- We will enact a number of laws that are significant for the political reform process, to the extent allowed by the schedule of the TGNA. Among these are laws that are critical for Chapter 23 on “Judiciary and Fundamental Rights” and Chapter 24 on “Justice, Freedom and Security”, such as the Law on the Protection of the Personal Data, Law on Anti-Discrimination and Equality, Law on the Establishment of the Law Enforcement Monitoring Commission and Law on the Fight Against Human Trafficking and Protection of Victims.
- Furthermore, the “Judicial Reform Strategy”, implemented since 2009, will be updated according to the needs of the judiciary and changes in the conditions, as well as with consideration to new developments in Turkey and in the world.
- Accordingly, the Reform Monitoring Group has been renamed as the Reform Action Group, with a view to increasing its effectiveness in the political reform process. The Reform Action Group will not only be responsible for monitoring the reforms but also for the preparation and implementation of legislative arrangements. It will hold its first meeting on 8 November 2014.
- A number of arrangements to further serve our citizens in their daily lives will be introduced, not only in the political area, but almost in all areas of social life.
- For example, with the amendment to the By-law on Road Traffic, Turkish driving licences will be internationally recognised, in EU member states in particular. Thus, Turkish driving licences will be valid in all EU member states.

- Furthermore, by legislation on increasing the quality of fuel types used in motor vehicles, the emissions from motor vehicles will be reduced and our citizens will enjoy better air quality.
- Furthermore, the implementation of the National Market Surveillance Strategy Document will ensure more effective use of resources and increase capacity for inspection. This will reduce the number of accidents caused by the use of unsafe goods, helping more effectively protect the lives and property of consumers.
- Law on the Regulation of Electronic Commerce will be another significant legal arrangement. The law was adopted by the TGNA last week but has not yet been published in the Official Gazette. This law will protect consumers and those carrying out electronic transactions, and ensure greater security for electronic commerce.
- The National Action Plan includes important arrangements not only for the reform process, but also for EU accession negotiations. For example, the preparation of the “Strategy Paper on Improving the Agricultural Statistics System in Turkey” will be a significant step taken towards meeting the closing benchmarks of Chapter 18 on Statistics.

Distinguished Members of the Press,

- I would like to underline the following issues at this point.
- Whereas Turkey needs to adopt new legislation to achieve EU standards, enacting new legislation is not sufficient. What is equally or even more important than enacting a law is its implementation. Laws, by-laws, and

communiqués are meaningful only when they are effectively implemented.

- Public institutions assume great responsibility for the implementation of the legislation. However, this is indeed a social responsibility, a culture, and a life style. Thus, various segments of society and individuals in Turkey all have significant roles to play. The EU accession process can only be finalised with the participation and contributions of our people.
- As I have pointed out before, Turkey's EU accession process is not simply a technical process in which the chapters are opened and closed during negotiations. On the contrary, it is finally a political decision. However, whether the chapters are opened to negotiations or not, Turkey's reform process is the essence of its EU accession process.

Distinguished Members of the Press,

- Even while the current instability in our region was a priority issue, similar to other countries, since our Government has taken office, Turkey's EU accession process has been a priority item on the agenda of the Council of Ministers' meetings.
- We have overcome the stall in the EU accession process thanks to the Communication Strategy and the National Action Plan for the EU accession, which we have prepared within the framework of our New EU Strategy.
- New Turkey reflects its strength and self-confidence at the EU level with the steps we have taken and will take.

- We will push forward to timely and fully implement the arrangements referred to in the National Action Plan and closely follow all the necessary work.
- I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the public institutions which contributed to the National Action Plan and all my colleagues for their work.
- Thank you for your participation.