

P7_TA-PROV(2014)0235

2013 progress report on Turkey

European Parliament resolution of 12 March 2014 on the 2013 progress report on Turkey (2013/2945(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Commission staff working document entitled ‘Turkey: 2013 progress report’ (SWD(2013)0417),
 - having regard to the Commission communication of 16 October 2013 entitled ‘Enlargement strategy and main challenges 2013-2014’ (COM(2013)0700),
 - having regard to its previous resolutions, in particular those of 10 February 2010 on Turkey’s progress report 2009¹, of 9 March 2011 on Turkey’s 2010 progress report², of 29 March 2012 on the 2011 progress report on Turkey³, of 18 April 2013 on the 2012 progress report on Turkey⁴ and of 13 June 2013 on the situation in Turkey⁵,
 - having regard to the Negotiating Framework for Turkey of 3 October 2005,
 - having regard to Council Decision 2008/157/EC of 18 February 2008 on the principles, priorities and conditions contained in the Accession Partnership with the Republic of Turkey⁶ (‘the Accession Partnership’), and to the previous Council decisions of 2001, 2003 and 2006 on the Accession Partnership,
 - having regard to the Council conclusions of 14 December 2010, 5 December 2011, 11 December 2012 and 25 June 2013,
 - having regard to the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union,
 - having regard to the conclusions of the report of 26 November 2013 by the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, which highlighted the inappropriate conduct of law enforcement officials during the Gezi protests,
 - having regard to Rule 110(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas accession negotiations with Turkey were opened on 3 October 2005 and the opening of such negotiations is the starting point for a long-lasting and open-ended process based on fair and rigorous conditionality and the commitment to reform;
- B. whereas Turkey has committed itself to the fulfilment of the Copenhagen criteria, adequate and effective reforms, good neighbourly relations and progressive alignment with the EU;

¹ OJ C 341 E, 16.12.2010, p. 59.

² OJ C 199 E, 7.7.2012, p. 98.

³ OJ C 257 E, 6.9.2013, p. 38.

⁴ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2013)0184.

⁵ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2013)0277.

⁶ OJ L 51, 26.2.2008, p. 4.

whereas these efforts should be viewed as an opportunity for Turkey to continue its process of modernisation;

- C. whereas the EU should remain the benchmark for reforms in Turkey;
- D. whereas full compliance with the Copenhagen criteria and the EU's integration capacity, in accordance with the conclusions of the December 2006 European Council meeting, remains the basis for accession to the EU;
- E. whereas, in its conclusions of 11 December 2012, the Council endorsed the Commission's new approach to the negotiating frameworks for new candidate states whereby the rule of law is placed at the heart of enlargement policy, and confirmed the centrality in the negotiating process of Chapters 23 (judiciary and fundamental rights) and 24 (justice, freedom and security), which should be tackled early in the negotiations so as to allow clear benchmarks and sufficient time to carry out the necessary legislative changes and institutional reforms, and thus to establish a solid track record as regards implementation;
- F. whereas in its communication entitled 'Enlargement strategy and main challenges 2013-2014' the Commission concluded that Turkey, on account of its economy, strategic location and important regional role, is a strategic partner for the EU and a valuable component of EU economic competitiveness and that important progress on reforms had been made in the preceding 12 months; whereas the Commission called for further reforms and the promotion of dialogue across the political spectrum in Turkey and in Turkish society at large;
- G. whereas Turkey, for the eighth consecutive year, has still not implemented the provisions stemming from the EC-Turkey Association Agreement and the Additional Protocol thereto;
- H. whereas, for its own benefit and with a view to enhancing stability and promoting good neighbourly relations, Turkey needs to step up its efforts to resolve outstanding bilateral issues, including unsettled legal obligations and disputes with its immediate neighbours over land and maritime borders and airspace, in accordance with the provisions of the UN Charter and with international law;
- I. whereas Turkey has the potential to play a pivotal role in diversifying energy resources and routes for oil, gas and electricity transit from neighbouring countries to the EU, and whereas there is potential for both Turkey and the EU to benefit from Turkey's rich renewable energy resources in order to create a sustainable low-carbon economy;
- J. whereas tackling corruption at all levels is an important element of a functioning rule of law system;
- K. whereas Turkey continues to be actively involved in its wider neighbourhood and is an important regional player;

Credible commitment and strong democratic foundations

1. Welcomes the 2013 progress report on Turkey and shares the Commission's conclusion that Turkey is a strategic partner for the EU and that important progress on reforms was made in the preceding 12 months ; underlines the importance of, and urgent need for, further reforms with a view to ensuring greater accountability and transparency in the Turkish

administration and the promotion of dialogue across the political spectrum and in society more broadly, in particular through the proper involvement, and a process of empowerment, of civil society, together with full respect for fundamental rights and the rule of law in practice; recalls the centrality for any democracy of the principle of separation of powers, the rule of law and fundamental rights, and stresses the importance of an impartial and independent judiciary for a truly democratic state;

2. Notes the transformative power of negotiations between the Union and Turkey, and stresses the importance of close dialogue and cooperation between Turkey and the EU on the reform process, so that negotiations can continue to provide Turkey with a clear reference and credible benchmarks; stresses, therefore, the importance of credible negotiations, conducted in good faith and based on a mutual commitment by Turkey and the Union to effective reforms furthering the democratic foundations of Turkish society, promoting fundamental values and producing positive change in Turkey's institutions, its legislation and the mentality of its society; welcomes, therefore, the opening of Chapter 22;
3. Welcomes the signing of the readmission agreement between the EU and Turkey and the initiation of the visa liberalisation dialogue on 16 December 2013; stresses the importance of achieving a common understanding between Turkey and the EU on the relevance for both parties of the readmission agreement and the roadmap leading to visa liberalisation; calls, in this connection, for the EU to provide full technical and financial support to Turkey for the implementation of the readmission agreement, and on Turkey to put in place adequate policies aimed at providing effective international protection to asylum-seekers and securing respect for the human rights of migrants; takes the view that the establishment of the General Directorate of Migration Management and the implementation of the Law on Foreigners and International Protection are a first positive step in that direction; recalls that Turkey is one of the key transit countries for irregular migration to the EU and stresses the importance of swift ratification of the readmission agreement and its effective implementation vis-à-vis all the Member States; calls on Turkey to implement the existing bilateral readmission agreements fully and effectively; stresses the clear benefits of facilitating access to the EU for business people, academics, students and representatives of civil society and calls on Turkey and the Commission to move forward in dialogue with a view to making substantial progress on visa liberalisation;

Fulfilling the Copenhagen criteria

4. Expresses deep concern at the recent developments in Turkey with regard to allegations of high-level corruption; regrets the removal of the prosecutors and police officers in charge of the original investigations, as this goes against the fundamental principle of an independent judiciary and deeply affects the prospects for credible investigations; considers regrettable the serious breakdown of trust between the government, the judiciary, the police and the media; urges the Government of Turkey, therefore, to show full commitment to democratic principles and to refrain from any further interference in the investigation and prosecution of corruption;
5. Reminds the Government of Turkey of the commitment made to eradicate corruption, in particular by implementing the majority of the recommendations issued in the 2005 evaluation reports by the Council of Europe Group of States against Corruption (GRECO); calls on the Government of Turkey to ensure the good functioning of the Court of Auditors in compliance with applicable international standards and to secure full access to its reports,

including those on the security forces, for the public and the institutions concerned, with particular reference to the Turkish Grand National Assembly; calls on Turkey to secure the cooperation of all ministries with the Court of Auditors; stresses, once again, the need to put in place a judicial police force, working under the authority of the judiciary;

6. Points to the crucial role of a system of checks and balances for any modern democratic state and to the fundamental role that the Turkish Grand National Assembly must play at the centre of Turkey's political system in providing a framework for dialogue and consensus-building across the political spectrum; expresses concern about political polarisation and the lack of readiness on the part of government and opposition to work towards consensus on key reforms and the drafting of a new constitution for Turkey; urges all political actors, the government and the opposition to work together to enhance a pluralistic vision within state institutions and to promote the modernisation and democratisation of the state and of society; emphasises the crucial role of civil society organisations and the need for adequate communication with the public on the reform process; calls on the political majority to actively involve other political forces and civil society organisations in the deliberation process on relevant reforms and to take into consideration their interests and views in an inclusive manner; emphasises that constitutional reform must remain the top priority for the process of further modernisation and democratisation of Turkey;
7. Is worried about the allegations of systematic profiling of civil servants, the police and security forces by the authorities on the basis of religious, ethnic and political affiliations;
8. Stresses the urgent need for further progress in implementing the 2010 constitutional amendments, in particular the adoption of laws on protection of personal data and military justice, and of laws introducing affirmative-action measures to promote gender equality; underlines the importance of strictly implementing these legislative changes once they are adopted;
9. Commends the Conciliation Committee for reaching consensus on 60 constitutional amendments, but expresses concern at the suspension of its work and the current lack of progress; strongly believes that work on a new constitution for Turkey should be continued, as this is essential for the reform process in Turkey; stresses the importance of achieving consensus, within the framework of the constitutional reform process, on an effective system of separation of powers and an inclusive definition of citizenship in order to arrive at a fully democratic constitution which guarantees equal rights for all the people of Turkey; underlines the fact that Turkey, as a member state of the Council of Europe, would benefit from active dialogue with the Venice Commission on the constitutional reform process; underlines the fact that the constitutional reform process should be carried out in a transparent and inclusive manner, with full involvement of civil society at all stages;
10. Expresses deep concern at the new law on the High Council of Judges and Prosecutors and points to the strong, central role conferred on the minister of justice, which is not in line with the principle of an independent judiciary as a necessary precondition for a fully functioning democratic system of checks and balances; stresses that the rules governing the election, composition and functioning of the High Council of Judges and Prosecutors should be fully in line with European standards, and calls on the Government of Turkey to consult closely with the European Commission and the Venice Commission and to revise the new law on the High Council of Judges and Prosecutors in accordance with their recommendations;

11. Welcomes the democratisation package presented by the government on 30 September 2013 and calls on the government to implement it rapidly and fully, to duly consult the opposition and relevant civil society organisations in the preparation of implementing legislation and to continue with its reform efforts towards the revision of the electoral system (including the lowering of the 10 % electoral threshold) and the adequate inclusion of all components of Turkish society, in order to strengthen democracy and better reflect the existing pluralism in the country; stresses the urgent need for comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation and the establishment of an anti-discrimination and equality board; calls on the government, therefore, to ensure that the legislation on hate crimes offers protection for all citizens and communities, including LGBTI people; encourages the government to take steps to improve the rights of the Alevi community without delay; calls for further efforts to address the discrimination faced by the Roma minority, and to increase employability and reduce school drop-out rates;
12. Welcomes the establishment of new institutions, namely the Ombudsman Institution and the Turkish National Human Rights Institution, which became operational in 2013, thus creating additional mechanisms enabling individuals to apply for protection of their fundamental rights and freedoms;
13. Deeply regrets the loss of life among protesters and police, the excessive use of force by police and the violent acts by some marginal groups; takes the view that the protests in Gezi Park testify both to the existence in Turkey of a vibrant civil society and to the need for further vital dialogue and reforms, as a matter of urgency, on the promotion of fundamental values; considers regrettable the apparent failure of the courts to penalise all those state officials and police officers responsible for excessive violence, loss of life, and serious injuries to Gezi Park protesters, and therefore welcomes the ongoing administrative investigations (launched by the Ministry of the Interior), the judicial investigations and the inquiries by the Ombudsman into complaints relating to the events in Gezi Park, as a new opportunity to show full commitment to the rule of law and bring those responsible to justice; expects these investigations and inquiries to address the concerns fully and without delay; calls on Turkey to adopt adequate internal review procedures and to establish an independent supervisory body for police offences; takes the view that the Gezi Park events underline the need for far-reaching reforms in order to ensure respect for freedom of assembly; encourages the Ministry of the Interior and the police to establish methods for dealing with public protests in a more restrained way and calls on them, in particular, not to arrest or hinder the work of medical staff, lawyers and other professionals ensuring the basic rights of protesters; is concerned about the action taken against health professionals, lawyers, academics, students and professional associations in connection with their non-violent actions during the Gezi events;
14. Observes that the unprecedented wave of protests also reflects the legitimate aspirations of many Turkish citizens for deeper democracy; reiterates that, in a democratic polity, governments must promote tolerance and guarantee freedom of religion and belief for all citizens; calls on the government to respect the plurality and richness of Turkish society;
15. Expresses great concern at the very limited coverage of the Gezi Park events by Turkish media and the dismissal of journalists who criticised the government's reactions to those events; recalls that freedom of expression and media pluralism, including digital and social media, are at the heart of European values and that an independent press is crucial to a democratic society, as it enables citizens to take an active part in the collective decision-

making processes on an informed basis and therefore strengthens democracy; expresses deep concern at the new internet law which introduces excessive controls on, and monitoring of, internet access and has the potential to significantly impact on free expression, investigative journalism, democratic scrutiny and access to politically diverse information over the internet; points to the serious concerns expressed by the EU and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe and asks the Government of Turkey to revise the law in line with European standards on media freedom and freedom of expression; reiterates once again its concern at the fact that most media are owned by, and concentrated in, large conglomerates with a wide range of business interests, and points to the worrying and widespread phenomenon of self-censorship by media owners and journalists; is concerned about the dismissal of journalists from positions in the media as a result of their criticising the government; is deeply concerned about the procedures used to punish the owners of critical media; raises concerns about the implications of accreditation by state institutions, mainly targeting the opposition media; expresses deep concern at the particularly high number of journalists currently in pre-trial detention, which undermines freedom of expression and of the media, and calls on Turkey's judicial authorities to review and address these cases as soon as possible; highlights the special role of public service media in strengthening democracy and calls on the Government of Turkey to ensure the independence and sustainability of public service media in compliance with European standards;

16. Expresses deep concern and dissatisfaction at the lack of genuine dialogue and consultation on the draft internet law and the draft law on the High Council of Judges and Prosecutors, and notes that this starkly departs from previous instances of good cooperation; is deeply concerned that the law on the internet and the law on the High Council of Judges and Prosecutors are taking Turkey away from its path towards the fulfilment of the Copenhagen criteria, and calls on the Government of Turkey to engage in true, constructive dialogue on the two laws and on future legislation, in particular, on the media and the judiciary, and to do its utmost to rekindle the negotiation process and show true commitment to its European perspective, including through a reform of the laws on the internet and the High Council of Judges and Prosecutors;
17. Expresses its concern over the Turkish Prime Minister's recent statements that he might go beyond the existing internet law and ban Facebook and YouTube;
18. Notes that Parliament's Ad Hoc Delegation for the Observation of Trials of Journalists in Turkey, established in 2011 and referred to in Parliament's resolutions on the 2011 and 2012 progress reports on Turkey, presented its interim activity report in 2013, based on factual observations, and will deliver its final activity report on 1 April 2014;
19. Notes the concerns in Turkish society about the excessively wide scope of the Ergenekon case, the shortcomings as regards due process, and allegations of the use of inconsistent evidence against the defendants, which, as in the Sledgehammer case, have undermined acceptance of the ruling; stresses once again, in light of the above, that the KCK case must demonstrate the strength and the proper, independent, impartial and transparent functioning of Turkey's democratic institutions and judiciary, as well as a firm, unconditional commitment to respect for fundamental rights; calls on the EU Delegation in Ankara to closely monitor further developments in these cases, including a possible appeal process and detention conditions, and to report back to the Commission and Parliament;

20. Draws particular attention to the trials of Füsün Erdoğan and Pinar Selek; takes the view that these trials are an example of the shortcomings of Turkey's justice system and expresses concern at the fact that the proceedings against Pinar Selek have lasted 16 years; insists that any trials should be carried out in a transparent manner, respecting the rule of law and ensuring appropriate conditions;
21. Expresses concern over the deepening cultural division in Turkey on so-called 'lifestyle issues', which runs the risk that the authorities will start to intrude into citizens' private lives, as exemplified by recent statements on the number of children women should have, on mixed-sex student residences and on the selling of alcohol;
22. Notes that the implementation of the third judicial reform package has led to the release of a significant number of detainees, and welcomes the fourth judicial reform package as another important step towards a Turkish judiciary that is in line with EU standards and values; notes, in particular, (i) the new, important distinction between freedom of expression, of the press and of assembly and incitement to violence or to acts of terrorism, (ii) the limitation of the offence of praising a crime or a criminal to instances where there is a clear and imminent danger to public order, and (iii) the narrowing of the scope of the offence of committing a crime in the name of an organisation, without being a member of it, to armed organisations only;
23. Welcomes the initiatives taken by the High Council of Judges and Prosecutors to promote the training of a large number of judges and prosecutors in the field of human rights and to promote a thorough, operational understanding of the case law of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR); notes the adoption of the Action Plan on the Prevention of Violations of the European Convention on Human Rights and calls on the government to ensure the rapid and effective implementation thereof so that all issues raised in ECtHR judgments in which Turkey was found to have violated provisions of the European Convention on Human Rights can be addressed once and for all; encourages the government to continue with ambitious judicial reforms built on the need to advance the defence and promotion of fundamental rights; stresses, in this connection, the need to reform the anti-terror law as a matter of priority;
24. Calls on Turkey to commit itself to combating impunity and bringing to a successful conclusion efforts to accede to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC);
25. Reaffirms the importance of opening Chapters 23 (judiciary and fundamental rights) and 24 (justice and home affairs) early in the negotiation process and closing them at the end; stresses that this would be consistent with the Commission's new approach for new candidate countries; recalls that the opening of these chapters is based on the fulfilment of the conditions defined in the official benchmarks and stresses, therefore, that delivering to Turkey the official benchmarks for the opening of Chapters 23 and 24 would provide a clear roadmap for, and give a boost to, the reform process and, in particular, would provide a clear anchor for the reform process in Turkey, on the basis of European standards, with particular reference to the judiciary; calls on the Council, therefore, to make renewed efforts for the delivery of the official benchmarks and ultimately, upon fulfilment of the criteria set, for the opening of Chapters 23 and 24; calls on Turkey to cooperate as much as possible to this end; calls on the Commission to promote without delay further dialogue and cooperation with Turkey in the fields of the judiciary and fundamental rights and of justice and home affairs in the framework of the Positive Agenda;

26. Commends the decision by the Assembly of Foundations to return the lands of the historic Mor Gabriel Monastery to the Syriac community in Turkey, in compliance with the pledge made by the government in the democratisation package; stresses the importance of continuing to provide an appropriate legal framework for the restoration of the property rights of all religious communities; stresses the importance of continuing the process of reform in the area of freedom of thought, conscience and religion by enabling religious communities to obtain legal personality, by eliminating all restrictions on the training, appointment and succession of clergy, by complying with the relevant judgments of the ECtHR and the recommendations of the Venice Commission and by eliminating all forms of discrimination or barriers based on religion; calls on the Government of Turkey to consider the request by the Alevi community to recognise the Cemevis as places of worship in their own right; underlines the importance of lifting all obstacles to a speedy reopening of the Halki Seminary and to public use of the ecclesiastical title of the Ecumenical Patriarch; calls on the Yargitay court to reverse its decision converting the historic Hagia Sophia Church in Trabzon as a mosque and push for its immediate re-opening as a museum.
27. Expresses support for the database on violence against women currently being compiled by the Ministry for Family and Social Policies; asks that existing legislation on the creation of shelters for women who are victims of domestic violence be complemented with adequate follow-up mechanisms where municipalities fail to establish such shelters; supports the efforts of the Ministry for Family and Social Policies to raise penalties for forced early marriages, which must be eradicated, and encourages it to continue on this path; calls for further efforts to eradicate so-called ‘honour killings’; expresses renewed concern at the low level of social and economic inclusion of women and of participation by women in the labour force, in politics and at senior level in the administration, and encourages the government to adopt appropriate measures to promote a more central role for women in Turkey’s economic and political fabric; calls on all political parties to take specific action to further encourage women’s empowerment as regards active participation in politics; stresses the key role of education and professional training in promoting the social and economic inclusion of women, and the importance of mainstreaming gender equality in the legislative process and in the implementation of laws;
28. Strongly supports the government’s initiative of striving for a settlement of the Kurdish issue on the basis of negotiations with the PKK, with the aim of putting a definitive end to the PKK’s terrorist activities; welcomes the fact that education in Kurdish is now allowed in private schools and encourages the government to put in place the necessary reforms aimed at promoting the social, cultural and economic rights of the Kurdish community, including through education in Kurdish in public schools, on the basis of adequate consultation of relevant stakeholders and of the opposition, and with the overall aim of facilitating a real opening to the claims for basic rights for all citizens in Turkey; asks Turkey to sign the Council of Europe’s European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages; expresses concern at the large number of cases launched against writers and journalists writing on the Kurdish issue and at the arrest of several Kurdish politicians, mayors and members of municipal councils, trade unionists, lawyers, protesters and human rights defenders in connection with the KCK trial; calls on the opposition to actively support negotiations and reforms as an important step for the benefit of Turkish society at large; calls on the Turkish authorities and the Commission to cooperate closely on assessing which Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) programmes could be used to promote sustainable development in the south-east in the framework of negotiations on Chapter 22;

29. Welcomes the expected speedy implementation of the statement of intent by the Turkish Government regarding the reopening of the Greek-minority school on the island of Gökçeada (Imbros), which constitutes a positive step towards the preservation of the bicultural character of the islands of Gökçeada (Imbros) and Bozcaada (Tenedos), in line with Resolution 1625(2008) of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe; notes, however, that further action is needed to address the problems faced by members of the Greek minority, in particular with regard to property rights; calls on the Turkish authorities, in this regard, given the dwindling number of members of the minority, to encourage and assist expatriate minority families who wish to return to the island;
30. Is of the opinion that social dialogue and the involvement of social partners are vital to the development of a prosperous and pluralistic society, and as a way to promote social and economic inclusion in society at large; underlines the importance of further progress in the areas of social policy and employment, in particular with a view to removing all obstacles to the effective functioning and unhindered work of trade unions, especially in small and medium-sized enterprises, establishing a national employment strategy, addressing undeclared work, widening the coverage of social protection mechanisms, and increasing employment rates among women and people with disabilities; notes the implementation of new legislation on trade union rights in both the public and the private sectors, and calls on Turkey to make every effort to bring legislation fully into line with ILO standards, especially the right to strike and the right to collective bargaining; stresses the importance of opening Chapter 19 on social policy and employment;

Building good neighbourly relations

31. Notes the continuing efforts by Turkey and Greece to improve their bilateral relations, including through bilateral meetings; considers it regrettable, however, that the casus belli threat declared by the Grand National Assembly of Turkey against Greece has not been withdrawn; urges the Turkish Government to end the repeated violations of Greek airspace and territorial waters, as well as Turkish military aircraft flights over Greek islands;
32. Calls on the Turkish Government to sign and ratify the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), which is part of the *acquis communautaire*, without further delay, and recalls the full legitimacy of the Republic of Cyprus' exclusive economic zone; calls on Turkey to respect the sovereign rights of all Member States, including those relating to the exploration and exploitation of natural resources in territories or waters under their sovereignty;
33. Reiterates its strong support for the reunification of Cyprus, on the basis of a fair and viable settlement for both communities, and welcomes, in this regard, the joint declaration by the leaders of the two communities on relaunching the talks on the reunification of Cyprus and the commitment by both sides to a settlement based on a bi-communal, bi-zonal federation with political equality, and that the united Cyprus, as a member of the UN and the EU, will have a single international legal personality, single sovereignty and single united-Cyprus citizenship; commends the commitment by both sides to creating a positive atmosphere in order to ensure that the talks succeed, and to confidence-building measures to support the negotiation process; asks Turkey to actively support these negotiations aimed at a fair, comprehensive and viable settlement under the auspices of the UN Secretary-General and in accordance with the relevant UN Security Council resolutions; calls on Turkey to begin withdrawing its forces from Cyprus and to transfer the sealed-off area of Famagusta to the

UN in accordance with UNSC Resolution 550 (1984); calls on the Republic of Cyprus to open the port of Famagusta, under EU customs supervision, in order to promote a positive climate conducive to the successful resolution of the ongoing reunification negotiations, and to allow Turkish Cypriots to trade directly in a legal manner that is acceptable to all; takes note of the proposals by the Cypriot Government to address the abovementioned issues;

34. Welcomes the joint statement of 10 December 2013 by Mayor Alexis Galanos and Mayor Oktay Kayalp in which they express strong support for a reunited Famagusta;
35. Welcomes Turkey's decision to grant the Committee on Missing Persons access to a fenced military area in the northern part of Cyprus and encourages Turkey to allow the committee to access relevant archives and military zones for exhumation; calls for special consideration for the work done by the Committee on Missing Persons;
36. Stresses the importance of a coherent and comprehensive security approach in the Eastern Mediterranean, and calls on Turkey to allow political dialogue between the EU and NATO by lifting its veto on EU-NATO cooperation including Cyprus, and calls, in parallel, on the Republic of Cyprus to lift its veto on Turkey's participation in the European Defence Agency;
37. Urges Turkey and Armenia to proceed to a normalisation of their relations by ratifying, without preconditions, the protocols on the establishment of diplomatic relations, by opening the border and by actively improving their relations, with particular reference to cross-border cooperation and economic integration;

Advancing EU-Turkey cooperation

38. Deplores Turkey's refusal to fulfil its obligation of full, non-discriminatory implementation of the Additional Protocol to the EC-Turkey Association Agreement towards all Member States; recalls that this refusal continues to have a profound effect on the negotiation process;
39. Notes that Turkey is still the EU's sixth biggest trading partner and that the EU is Turkey's biggest, with 38 % of Turkey's total trade going to the EU and almost 71 % of foreign direct investment coming from the EU; welcomes the ongoing Commission evaluation of the EU-Turkey Customs Union aimed at assessing its impact on both parties and ways to update it, and urges Turkey to remove the remaining restrictions on the free movement of goods;
40. Believes that, in view of Turkey's strategic role as an energy hub and source of plentiful renewable energy resources, consideration should be given to close cooperation between the EU and Turkey on energy and to the value of opening negotiations on Chapter 15 on energy in order to provide an adequate regulatory framework; stresses, further, the importance of involving Turkey in the process of shaping Europe's energy policy; underlines the fact that climate change, renewable energy and energy efficiency priorities need to be addressed, and stresses, in this regard, the potential for cooperation between the EU and Turkey on green energy issues; asks the Commission to prioritise financing in favour of renewable energy projects, the energy grid and interconnectivity in Turkey; asks Turkey to fully implement legislation on environmental impact assessment, without any exception for large projects;
41. Notes Turkey's increased engagement in south-east Europe, particularly in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and encourages the Turkish authorities to align their positions with the EU's

Common Foreign and Security Policy, to coordinate diplomatic activities with the VP/HR and to further strengthen cooperation with Member States;

42. Welcomes Turkey's commitment to the provision of humanitarian assistance to almost one million Syrian refugees; asks Turkey to closely monitor its borders to prevent the entry of fighters and arms to the benefit of groups credibly found to be implicated in systematic human rights violations or not committed to the democratic transition of Syria; believes that the EU, Turkey and other international stakeholders should actively seek to develop a joint strategic vision to promote a political and democratic solution in Syria without delay and support political and economic stability in the region, with particular reference to Jordan, Lebanon, Iran and Iraq; points, in particular, to the difficult conditions of the Syrian Alawite refugee community, which has sought refuge at the margins of large cities, and asks Turkey to ensure that assistance can effectively reach them; stresses the importance of securing access to education and employment for the refugee population and expresses, at the same time, concern at the socio-economic impact of refugee communities on cities and villages near the refugee camps; asks the Commission, the Member States and the international community to cooperate closely with Turkey on providing assistance to the refugee population;

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43. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the VP/HR, the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, the President of the ECtHR, the governments and parliaments of the Member States and the Government and Parliament of the Republic of Turkey.