Resolution on the 2014 progress report on Albania

2014/2951(RSP) - 30/04/2015 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament resolution adopted a resolution prepared by the Committee on Foreign on the 2014 Progress Report on Albania.

Members recalled that Albania has made impressive progress over the last few years on its path to EU accession and was therefore granted candidate country status in June 2014. Challenges still persist and need to be addressed swiftly and efficiently in order to make further progress on the path to EU membership.

Members expressed their continuous support for Albania's EU integration process but believed that concrete measures and sustained political commitment to implementing them are necessary to address the challenges of successfully consolidating democratic transformation and pursuing EU-related reforms.

Improvements are necessary in public administration in order to enhance administrative capacities, depoliticise public administration and fight corruption in the civil service. The same goes for the judicial system which should be reformed.

Corruption and the fight against criminality: Parliament is concerned about corruption and urged Albania to seriously strengthen its efforts to fight corruption at all levels and to enhance the legislative framework, institutional capacity and interinstitutional information exchange and cooperation. It is also concerned that, despite a positive trend in the fight against organised crime, particularly in the fight against the trafficking and production of narcotics, this fight remains an important challenge. It commended efforts to fight trafficking of human beings.

Internal peace: Members commended the religious harmony and the climate of religious tolerance and overall good inter-ethnic relations in the country. It called on the competent authorities to continue improving the climate of inclusion and tolerance for all minorities in the country. It encouraged further steps to improve the living conditions of Roma by improving their access to registration, housing, education, the labour market and social and healthcare services.

Parliament welcomed measures taken on the recognition of the LGBTI community.

Economic development: Parliament welcomed the improvement of the business climate and the pursuit of a functioning market economy, but called on the government to continue addressing weaknesses in contract enforcement and the rule of law and tackling the **large informal economy**.

Measures are necessary to reduce youth employment, improve energy strategies and improve the protection of protected areas.

Lastly, Parliament stressed its instrumental role in strengthening regional stability and called for **improved relations with Serbia**. Members are disturbed by statements made by the Albanian Prime Minister in which he speculated about the unification of Albanians from Albania and Kosovo.