Turkey: membership application, 12 April 1987

2000/2014(COS) - 10/10/2001

The committee adopted the report by Alain LAMASSOURE (EPP-ED, F) on Turkey's progress towards accession to the EU. The committee welcomed the wide-ranging economic and political reforms recently carried out in Turkey, in particular the National Programme for the Adoption of the "acquis communautaire" adopted in March 2001. It called on Turkey to adhere to the Copenhagen political, institutional, economic and social criteria as quickly as possible. Although considerable progress had been made on respect for human rights, the committee said there was still some way to go. While noting the reforms that had already taken place, it urged Turkey to comply with the principles laid down in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, to step up its efforts to improve the treatment of prisoners and eliminate the use of torture completely, to ensure respect for freedom of expression and democratic principles - in particular in connection with demonstrations and the activities of political parties and elected office-holders - and to declare a broad political amnesty. The report also noted the progress achieved on reforming criminal law but urged the Turkish authorities to bring their criminal law procedures into line with EU norms. As regards domestic politics, MEPs urged the Turkish authorities to address the issue of national minorities - in particular the Kurds - in a spirit of dialogue and openness. The committee fully supported the civil initiative aimed at resuming a constructive dialogue with Armenia. On the Cyprus question the report emphasised the need for the Turkish Cypriot side to rejoin the proximity talks in order to reach a comprehensive settlement before accession. Lastly the report called on Turkey to increase its measures to combat corruption and to pursue its efforts at macroeconomic adjustment. MEPs were, however, concerned about the possible repercussions of a prolonged economic and financial crisis and therefore called for increased aid from the EU to accompany Turkey's reforms.