Turkey: membership application, 12 April 1987

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In line with the previous strategy documents presented by the Commission which aim to set out the steps to be followed for the next enlargement, the Commission has published a new general document setting out the progress made by each of the candidate countries in view of accession. If for certain countries substantial progress has been made, considerable efforts still need to be made in the case of Turkey in order to ensure the effective application of the "acquis communautaire" and certain other fundamental criteria set out at Copenhagen. With regard to this country, the Commission proposes a new phase based on a more detailed preparation for EU membership requirements in particular the policy criteria (respect for democracy, rule of law, minorities and human rights of citizens). In this context, Turkey is encouraged to intensify and accelerate the process of political and economic reforms in line with the Accession Partnership priorities. It is also requested that it make fuller use of the enhanced political dialogue to further stimulate progress on key issues which are priorities of the Accession Partnership (adopted in March 2001), such as Human Rights, Cyprus and the peaceful settlement of border disputes. In addition, Turkey must also contribute to finding a comprehensive solution of the "Cyprus problem" and on the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). Moreover, the Commission proposes a detailed scrutiny of Turkish legislation and its timetable for alignment with the acquis. More attention should be paid to the capacity of the Turkish administration and judiciary to implement and enforce the acquis effectively. The Commission notes that the considerable parts of its economy are already competing on the EU market under the framework of the Customs Union. In conclusion, Turkey does not yet meet the Copenhagen political criteria and should not be included as one of the countries ready for accession to the European Union in 2002. In the meantime, Turkey should consider its reforms in line with the 2001 Accession Partnership and concentrate more on ensuring that human rights and fundamental freedoms are fully protected in law and practice, for all citizens, throughout the country.