Turkey: membership application, 12 April 1987

2000/2014(COS) - 15/11/2000 - Interim resolution adopted by Parliament

The European Parliament adopted, the resolution on Turkey's application for accession to the EU, with amendment by 429 votes to 24 with 78 abstentions. The Parliament endorsed the views of Mr Philippe MORILLON (EPP/ED, F) that Turkey does not currently meet all the Copenhagen political criteria and reiterated Parliament's proposal that discussion fora should be established consisting of political leaders and representatives from civil society from the EU and Turkey. However, the resolution welcomes the resumption of political dialogue in the Assocation Council and the establishment of eight subcommittees responsible for setting priorities for the incorporation of the acquis communautaire. The Turkish Government is encouraged to step up its efforts towards democratisation, and to implement the UN conventions on political, civil, social and cultural rights, which Ankara has recently signed. The resolution welcomes the adoption by the Turkish Council of Ministers as a 'reference and working document' of the report drawn up by the Turkish Supreme Co-ordination Council for Human rights, which proposes major constitutional reforms. However, concrete measures should be added to protect the rights of minorities. There is also a welcome for the adoption of the law suspending the prosecution of, and sanctions for, press and broadcasting offences. Pending from the criminal code to make it compatible with the principle of freedom of expression, the resolution calls for an amnesty for breaches of the law committed by the press. The death penalty should be abolished as soon as possible and, pending such abolition, the current moratorium on executions should continue. Turkey is urged to respect the rights of minorities such as the Armenians. An amendment that was adopted calls for the Turkish authorities to publicly recognise the genocide suffered by that minority before the establishment of the modern state of Turkey. There is also a need for a specific solution to the Kurdish people and an amendment that was adopted urges the Turkish authorities to engage in dialogue with the political representatives of the Kurdish community. The need to end political, social and cultural discrimination was highlighted. The European Parliament also demands the release of LEYLA ZANA, winner of the European Parliament Sakharov prize, and also of the former MEPs of Kurdish origin imprisoned because of the view they hold. The Turkish Government is called upon to take part in, without preconditions, talks between the Greek and Turkish Cypriot parties, with view to reaching a settlement that complies with the relevant UN Security Council resolutions and the recommendations of the UN General Assembly. It is also urged to withdraw its occupation forces from Northern Cyprus. Finally, there is a call for the continuation of the efforts to step up implementation of pre-accession aid and Council and the Commission are asked to reassess the volume of the EU financial assistance to Turkey. There is also a welcome for Turkey's willingness to contribute to improving European capabilties under the European security and defence policy, and an amendment welcomes the confidence-building measures recently agreed by the Greek and Turkish foreign affairsministers.