Basic information

2009/2769(RSP) RSP - Resolutions on topical subjects	Procedure completed
Resolution on the 2009 progress report on Turkey **Subject** 8.20 Enlargement of the Union 8.20.01 Candidate countries **Geographical area** Türkiye	

Key players

Council of the European Union

Council configuration	Meetings	Date
General Affairs	2984	2009-12-07

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
07/12/2009	Resolution/conclusions adopted by Council		Summary
10/02/2010	Decision by Parliament	T7-0025/2010	Summary
10/02/2010	Results of vote in Parliament		
10/02/2010	Debate in Parliament		
10/02/2010	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2009/2769(RSP)
Procedure type	RSP - Resolutions on topical subjects
Procedure subtype	Resolution on statement
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 136-p2
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary

Motion for a resolution		B7-0068/2010	10/02/2010	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T7-0025/2010	10/02/2010	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary	SP(2010)2011	02/06/2010	

Resolution on the 2009 progress report on Turkey

2009/2769(RSP) - 10/02/2010 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution tabled by the Committee on Foreign Affairs on Turkey.

It welcomes the broad public debate on a range of traditionally sensitive issues such as the role of the judiciary, the rights of citizens of Kurdish origin, the rights of the Alevi community, and the role of the military. However, Parliament notes that **progress in terms of concrete reforms remained limited in 2009**, and encourages the Government to translate its political initiatives into concrete amendments to legislation and their subsequent implementation. It regrets the fact that, where legislation relevant to the Copenhagen political criteria is in place, its implementation continues to be insufficient. Implementation should be strengthened especially in the areas of women's rights, non-discrimination, freedom of religion, freedom of speech, zero tolerance of torture and the fight against corruption.

Copenhagen political criteria

Democracy and the rule of law: Parliament draws attention once again to the crucial importance of a comprehensive reform of the Constitution which would place the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms at the core of the Turkish State and society. It goes on to discuss the reforms required with special reference to the electoral system, reform of the judiciary, and the establishment of the Ombudsman’s office. In addition, Parliament deeply regrets two recent decisions of the Constitutional Court:

- to close the Democratic Society Party (DTP) and ban a number of its democratically elected representatives from political activity, and the recent arrests of DTP members;
- to annul the legislation limiting the jurisdiction of military courts. This is a a serious setback in Turkey's reform efforts, and Parliament calls on the Turkish Grand National Assembly to establish a consensus in favour of constitutional reform. Parliament is concerned about the continuing involvement of the military in Turkish politics and foreign policy. The Turkish Grand National Assembly is asked to enhance its oversight of the military budget and expenditure and to engage in the development of security and defence policies.

Human rights: Parliament welcomes the initiatives taken by the Turkish Government to enable every citizen, irrespective of gender, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation, to enjoy equal rights and play an active role in Turkish society. It is aware that this is a historic debate, but strongly urges the Government to translate its political initiative into concrete reforms. Parliament also welcomes the adoption of legislation removing all restrictions on broadcasting in the Kurdish language. It condemns the continuing violence perpetrated by the PKK and other terrorist groups on Turkish soil, and urges the PKK to respond to the political initiative of the Turkish Government by laying down its arms and putting an end to violence.

The resolution deplores the fact that the Turkish Government continues to have reservations concerning the rights of minorities, as enshrined in international law, and that the legal framework does not provide sufficient guarantees regarding freedom of expression and religion. It expresses concern about the obstacles faced by the Ecumenical Patriarchate concerning its legal status, the recognition of Cem houses as Alevi places of worship, the difficulties encountered by Syriacs in relation to their property ownership; and the lack of progress regarding the Greek population of the islands Gökçeada (Imvros) and Bozcaada (Tenedos), which continues to encounter problems with property rights and education. Parliament is also concerned about continued restrictions on press freedom, particularly on reporting on the investigations into the Ergenekon network. In addition, further effort is required with regard to implementation of the policy of zero tolerance of torture, eradicating corruption, translating gender equality into practice, and trade union rights.

Ability to take on the obligations of membership: Parliament deplores the fact that, for the fourth consecutive year, the Additional Protocol to the EC-Turkey Association Agreement has not been implemented by Turkey. It calls on the Turkish Government to implement it fully without delay, in a non-discriminatory way, and recalls that failure to do so may further seriously affect the negotiating process.

Commitment to good-neighbourly relations: Parliament underlines Turkey’s undertaking together with all other parties to support the efforts to achieve a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem and to resolve any outstanding border disputes with neighbouring countries. The Turkish Government and all parties concerned are called upon actively to support the ongoing negotiations, and to contribute in concrete terms to the comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus issue, based on a bizonal, bicommunal federation. Turkey is asked to facilitate a suitable climate for negotiations by immediately starting to withdraw its forces from Cyprus, by addressing the issue of the settlement of Turkish citizens on the island and

also by enabling the return of the sealed-off section of Famagusta to its lawful inhabitants in compliance with UNSC Resolution 550(1984). Members commend the diplomatic efforts made to normalise relations with Armenia, asking for the relevant protocols to be ratified, and they welcome the continued improvement of relations with Iraq and with the Kurdish regional government.

Deepening EU-Turkey cooperation: Parliament notes the start of negotiations on Turkey's accession to the Energy Community. It welcomes Turkey's signing of the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Nabucco gas pipeline, the implementation of which remains one of the EU's highest energy security priorities, and calls for opening of the energy chapter in the accession negotiations. Members note Turkey's increasingly active foreign policy and acknowledge Turkey's role as an important partner of the EU with a view to the realisation of EU foreign policy goals in the Black Sea region, Central Asia and the broader Middle East. Parliament calls on the EU's High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy to analyse synergies between the EU's and Turkey's foreign policies and to make more intensive use of them in order to contribute to security and stability in the world.

It urges Turkey to act pragmatically and do its utmost to ensure the success of negotiations between the Greek and Turkish Cypriot leaders, which are now reaching a critical stage, noting that this is possibly the last opportunity to settle the long-running division of the island. A settlement of the Cyprus question will bring greater prosperity and security to the Eastern Mediterranean and allow a rapid improvement in EU-NATO relations as well as unblocking Turkey's own accession process to the EU.

Resolution on the 2009 progress report on Turkey

2009/2769(RSP) - 07/12/2009

The “General Affairs” Council adopted a series of conclusions on the enlargement strategy of the European Union. They may be summarised as follows:

- welcoming the Commission communication on Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2009-2010, the Council takes note of the conclusions and recommendations therein. The enlargement process gives strong encouragement to political and economic reform in the enlargement countries and reinforces peace, democracy and stability in Europe;
- the Council confirms that the EU will continue to help them to alleviate the impact of the crisis and prepare for sound recovery;
- it recalls that coherent implementation of the renewed consensus on enlargement which is based on consolidation of commitments, fair and rigorous conditionality, better communication and the EU’s capacity to integrate new members, continues to form the basis for EU action at all stages of the enlargement process, with each country being assessed on its own merits. The rule of law, in particular the fight against corruption and organised crime, as well as strengthening administrative capacity, remains a major challenge which the enlargement countries need to address from an early stage of the process;
- it points out that the negotiating chapters for which technical preparations have been concluded will be opened or closed provisionally in line with the rules of an Inter-Governmental Conference, according to established procedures and in line with the Negotiating Framework;
- on the financial front, the Council welcomes the support provided to the enlargement process through financial assistance, in particular in the form of the Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA), and emphasises the essential link between enlargement policy priorities and financial assistance.

As regards Turkey, the Council welcomes Turkey's positive steps in the areas of the judiciary, civil-military relations and cultural rights. It now expects that the implementation of the National Programme for the Adoption of the Acquis, as well as the appointment of a full-time Chief Negotiator, will further focus the Turkish government’s reform efforts. Furthermore, the Council is encouraged by the government’s democratic initiative, including on the Kurdish issue. This should lead to concrete measures guaranteeing all Turkish citizens full rights and freedoms and should significantly improve the situation in the South-East.

The Council invites Turkey to:

- step up the pace of reforms and to implement measures which have been started;
- ensure that Turkey fully meets the Copenhagen criteria are required in a number of areas, including freedom of expression, freedom of the press, freedom of religion in law and in practice for all religious communities, respect for property rights, trade union rights, rights of persons belonging to minorities, civilian oversight of the military and women's and children’s rights, anti-discrimination and gender equality. The Council welcomes the declared intention of the government to step up its efforts in the fight against torture and ill-treatment, including on the issue of impunity.

The Council notes that the **negotiations have reached a more demanding stage** requiring Turkey to step up its efforts in meeting established conditions. By advancing in the fulfilment of opening and closing benchmarks and of the requirements specified in the Negotiating Framework, which cover inter alia implementation of the Accession Partnership and compliance with the obligations stemming from the Association Agreement, Turkey will be able to accelerate the pace of the negotiations.

The Council recalls that Turkey is an important regional player, inter alia for the security in the Middle East and the Southern Caucasus and plays a key role in energy supply and the promotion of dialogue between civilisations. It thus welcomes the significant diplomatic efforts made to normalise relations with Armenia. The Council welcomes that in July

2009 Turkey signed the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Nabucco gas pipeline and underlines that the timely completion of the Southern corridor remains one of the EU's highest energy security priorities.

The Council further welcomes the beginning of the reinforced dialogue on migration with Turkey and calls for concrete steps to be taken rapidly, in particular as regards **readmission and border control**. The Council welcomes the start of a new round of talks on an EU/Turkey readmission agreement and stresses that adequate implementation of already existing bilateral readmission agreements remains a priority.

On the external front, new efforts are awaited in the following areas:

- unequivocal commitment to good neighbourly relations and to the peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with the United Nations Charter, having recourse, if necessary, to the International Court of Justice;

- recognition of all the sovereign rights of EU Member States which include, inter alia, entering into bilateral agreements, in accordance with the EU acquis and international law, including the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea;

The Council notes with deep regret that Turkey, despite repeated calls, **continues refusing to fulfil its obligation of full non-discriminatory implementation of the Additional Protocol to the Association Agreement**. In the absence of progress on this issue the Council will maintain its measures from 2006, which will have a continuous effect on the overall progress in the negotiations. Furthermore, Turkey has not made progress towards normalisation of its relations with the Republic of **Cyprus**. The Council invites the Commission to monitor closely and specifically report on all issues covered by the declaration of the European Community and its Member States of 21 September 2005 in its forthcoming annual report. On this basis, the Council will continue to closely follow and review progress made. **Progress is now expected without further delay**.

Lastly, the Council also expects Turkey to actively support the ongoing negotiations aimed at a fair, comprehensive and viable settlement of the Cyprus problem within the UN framework, in accordance with the relevant UN Security Council resolutions and in line with the principles on which the Union is founded. Turkey's commitment and contribution in concrete terms to such a comprehensive settlement is crucial.