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REPORT

on the 2022 Commission Report on Türkiye
(2022/2205(INI))

Committee on Foreign Affairs

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MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

on the 2022 Commission Report on Türkiye (2022/2205(INI))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the European Council conclusions of 23 June 2022, 24 June 2021 and 1 October 2020, and to all relevant previous Council and European Council conclusions,
- having regard to the statement of the members of the European Council of 25 March 2021 on Türkiye,
- having regard to the ‘EU-Turkey statements’ of 18 March 2016 and 29 November 2015,
- having regard to the ‘Turkey Negotiating Framework’ of 3 October 2005 and the mandate included therein that, as with all accession countries, Türkiye’s eventual accession to the EU depends on full compliance with the Copenhagen criteria and on its normalisation of relations with all EU Member States, including the Republic of Cyprus,
- having regard to the declaration issued by the then European Community and its Member States on 21 September 2005 following the declaration made by Türkiye upon its signature of the Additional Protocol to the Ankara Agreement on 29 July 2005, including the provision laying down that the recognition of all Member States is a necessary component of the negotiations, as well as the full implementation of the Additional Protocol to the Ankara Agreement in respect of all Member States by the removal of all obstacles to the free movement of goods, including restrictions on means of transport, without prejudice or discrimination,
- having regard to the Commission communication of 12 October 2022 on EU Enlargement Policy (COM(2022)0528) and to the accompanying Türkiye 2022 Report (SWD(2022)0333),
- having regard to the Commission communication of 24 May 2022 entitled ‘Sixth Annual Report on the Facility for Refugees in Turkey’ (COM(2022)0243),
- having regard to the restrictive measures framework established by the EU on 11 November 2019 in response to Türkiye’s illegal drilling activities in the Eastern Mediterranean, as most recently renewed by Council Decision (CFSP) 2022/2186 of 8 November 2022 amending Decision (CFSP) 2019/1894 concerning restrictive measures in view of Turkey’s unauthorised drilling activities in the Eastern Mediterranean¹,
- having regard to the results of the presidential and parliamentary elections held in Türkiye on 14 May 2023 and the second round of the presidential elections of

¹ OJ L 288, 9.11.2022, p. 81.

28 May 2023,

- having regard to the statements of preliminary findings and conclusions of 14 May 2023 and 28 May 2023 of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) international election observation mission to the Republic of Türkiye,
- having regard to Resolution 2459 (2022) of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe of 12 October 2022 entitled ‘The honouring of obligations and commitments by Türkiye’ and to the related report by its Monitoring Committee of 14 September 2022,
- having regard to Article 46 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), which states that the contracting parties undertake to abide by the final judgment of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) in any case to which they are parties, and, therefore, having regard to the obligation of Türkiye to implement all judgments of the ECtHR,
- having regard to the relevant resolutions of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe (CoE), including the interim resolutions of 2 February 2022 and 2 December 2021 on the execution of the judgment of the ECtHR in *Kavala v. Turkey*, the interim resolutions of 9 March 2023 and 2 December 2021 on the execution of the judgment of the ECtHR in *Selahattin Demirtaş v. Turkey (No. 2)*, as well as the CoE’s demand of 8 June 2023 for the immediate release of Osman Kavala, Figen Yüksekdağ and Selahattin Demirtaş,
- having regard to the Initiative on the Safe Transportation of Grain and Foodstuffs from Ukrainian Ports (Black Sea Grain Initiative) of 22 July 2022,
- having regard to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development’s economic survey of Türkiye of 27 February 2023,
- having regard to the 2023 World Press Freedom Index published by Reporters Without Borders, which ranks Türkiye 165th out of 180 countries,
- having regard to the UNESCO statement of 10 July 2020 on Hagia Sophia, Istanbul, and to the UNESCO World Heritage Committee decision of 31 July 2021,
- having regard to its previous resolutions on Türkiye, in particular those of 7 June 2022 on the 2021 Commission Report on Turkey², of 19 May 2021 on the 2019-2020 Commission Reports on Turkey³ and of 26 November 2020 on escalating tensions in Varosha following the illegal actions by Türkiye and the urgent need for the resumption of talks⁴,
- having regard to its resolution of 5 May 2022 on the case of Osman Kavala in Turkey⁵,

² OJ C 493, 27.12.2022, p. 2.

³ OJ C 15, 12.1.2022, p. 81.

⁴ OJ C 425, 20.10.2021, p. 143.

⁵ OJ C 465, 6.12.2022, p. 112.

- having regard to its resolution of 7 October 2021 on the implementation report on the EU Trust Funds and the Facility for Refugees in Turkey⁶,
 - having regard to its previous resolutions, in particular that of 15 April 2015 on the centenary of the Armenian Genocide⁷,
 - having regard to Rule 54 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs (A9-0247/2023),
- A. whereas Türkiye held presidential and parliamentary elections in May 2023;
- B. whereas the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) and the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE were invited to observe the elections held in Türkiye on 14 May 2023; whereas the European Parliament was not invited due to allegations of unfair treatment;
- C. whereas the joint observation mission from the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), the OSCE and PACE found that the legal framework for the presidential and parliamentary elections did not fully provide a basis for holding democratic elections and that continued restrictions on fundamental freedoms of assembly, association and expression hindered the participation of some opposition politicians and parties, as well as civil society and independent media;
- D. whereas devastating earthquakes struck south-eastern Türkiye on 6 February 2023, causing numerous fatalities and extensive infrastructure damage and resulting in 1.7 million people being in dire need of humanitarian assistance in Türkiye and northern Syria; whereas 21 EU Member States promptly dispatched search and rescue teams to Türkiye; whereas the EU and its international partners pledged EUR 6.05 billion during the International Donors Conference to provide aid to Türkiye following the earthquake;
- E. whereas Türkiye remains a candidate for EU accession, a NATO ally and a key partner in security, trade and economic relations and migration; whereas Türkiye is expected to respect democratic values, the rule of law and human rights and abide by EU law;
- F. whereas the European Union and its Member States are partners of Türkiye and its people, with whom Europe shares deep commercial, cultural and historical links; whereas Türkiye is the EU's sixth largest trade partner and the EU is Türkiye's largest trade partner;
- G. whereas Türkiye has been gradually but steadily moving further away from the EU's values and normative framework for a number of years, which shows a most worrying and deepening trend, as exemplified by an increasing number of laws and measures curtailing the rule of law, fundamental freedoms, human rights and civil liberties, as well as by its actions going against international law and good neighbourly relations;
- H. whereas the downward spiral in terms of human rights and the rule of law has

⁶ OJ C 132, 24.3.2022, p. 88.

⁷ OJ C 328, 6.9.2016, p. 2.

continued, evidenced by the fact that Türkiye ranks 165th out of 180 countries in the 2023 World Press Freedom Index, 16 places lower than in 2022; whereas Türkiye was ranked 48th out of 49 countries for the human rights of LGBT people, according to the 2022 Rainbow Europe Map published by ILGA-Europe – the European region of the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association;

- I. whereas the positive agenda put forward by the EU in 2021 is currently practically at a standstill; whereas EU accession negotiations have effectively been at a standstill since 2018, due to the deterioration of the rule of law and democracy in Türkiye; whereas Türkiye needs to credibly demonstrate its commitment to closer relations and alignment with the EU;
- J. whereas Türkiye is a member of the Council of Europe and is therefore bound by the judgments of the ECtHR;
- K. whereas according to the report of the We Will Stop Femicide Platform (KCDP), 334 women were killed by men and 245 women were found dead under suspicious circumstances in 2022 in Türkiye; whereas in its 2021 report, the platform noted that 280 women were killed and 217 women were found dead under suspicious circumstances;
- L. whereas the Russian war of aggression is causing unprecedented geopolitical shifts in Europe; whereas Türkiye's key location allows it to play an instrumental, strategic role; whereas Türkiye has been the only facilitator accepted by both Ukraine and Russia and was instrumental in finding agreement on the vital Black Sea Grain Initiative; whereas Türkiye has, however, decided not to align with EU sanctions against Russia; whereas, mainly as a result of this non-alignment, Türkiye's foreign policy alignment with the EU's common foreign and security policy (CFSP) statements has deteriorated from 14 % to only 7 % between 2021 and 2022, which is by far the lowest among all of the enlargement countries; whereas trade between Türkiye and Russia has nearly doubled since the EU's imposition of sanctions against Russia;;
- M. whereas now more than ever before in the EU-Türkiye relationship, a concerted effort must be made to support the legally recognised status quo ante wherever the Russian Federation has waged wars of aggression or infringed international law or internationally recognised borders;
- N. whereas Türkiye remains a key partner for stability in the wider Eastern Mediterranean region and whereas tensions between the EU and Türkiye in relation to the situation in the Eastern Mediterranean have de-escalated but not ceased;
- O. whereas Türkiye has been repeatedly asked to refrain from all actions which violate the sovereignty and sovereign rights of all EU Member States and are in breach of international and EU law;
- P. whereas after a long delay, the Turkish Grand National Assembly ratified Finland's NATO membership in March 2023, allowing the country to join NATO; whereas the Turkish Government has been deliberately putting pressure on Sweden and delayed its accession to NATO at a moment of historical Russian aggressiveness;

- Q. whereas 2022 saw a substantial deepening of financial and economic integration between Türkiye and Russia, which is visible in many areas and markets including banking, real estate, tourism and energy;
- R. whereas while economic growth in Türkiye has remained steady, inflation remains at a 20-year high and external imbalances in the economy are being exacerbated;
- S. whereas Türkiye hosts the largest refugee population in the world, with almost 4 million registered refugees mainly from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan; whereas there are credible reports of refugees residing in Türkiye being deported and of summary push-backs of refugees at Türkiye's borders following little or no examination of their claims for international protection;

General assessment and latest developments

1. Takes note of the results of the recent presidential and parliamentary elections in Türkiye and considers them a sign foretelling political continuity in the country; welcomes the high turnout and notes that the elections were largely peaceful, despite isolated instances of violence primarily against opposition supporters;
2. Regrets, however, that, as reflected by the OSCE/ODIHR election observation mission, the lack of a level playing field gave an unjustified advantage to the incumbent, as demonstrated, among other issues, by the overly biased and unequal media coverage; regrets, further, that harsh rhetoric, inflammatory and discriminatory language, including against minorities, the continued intimidation and harassment of supporters of some opposition parties and false claims by ruling parties affiliating the opposition with terrorism undermined the process; highlights the fact that for a long period before the elections the Turkish Government used its power over state institutions and regulatory bodies to control narratives and debates in both traditional and social media, to imprison journalists and politicians and to remove elected officials in Kurdish majority areas from office, in order to disadvantage the opposition;
3. Reiterates its profound sadness about the deadly, devastating earthquakes that shook south-eastern Türkiye and Syria on 6 February 2023 and its heartfelt condolences to the victims' families; welcomes the international relief and recovery effort, in particular by the EU and its Member States, and the swift activation of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism to assist affected areas, which is a demonstration of strong European solidarity with the Turkish people; believes that the EU should continue to support the people of Türkiye in addressing their humanitarian needs and in their reconstruction efforts; welcomes, in particular, the substantial pledges made at the donors' conference convened by the Commission and the Swedish Council Presidency and calls for the EU and the Member States, as well as all other international donors, to deliver on their pledges and ensure that the design, implementation and oversight of the reconstruction and disaster response is transparent, sustainable and safe; underlines that European solidarity could lead to a tangible improvement in relations between the EU and Türkiye; is concerned that the earthquake uncovered failings such as government unpreparedness, crumbling infrastructure and widespread corruption; regrets that during the critical hours following the earthquake, access to the internet and social media was significantly limited, which affected rescue efforts, and journalists were targeted, which

impeded the free flow of information;

4. Is of the opinion that the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine has impacted and added another dimension to EU-Türkiye relations as Türkiye attempts to uphold ties both with the West and Russia simultaneously; welcomes Türkiye's vote in favour of condemning the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine in the UN General Assembly and its commitment to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine; regrets, at the same time, that Türkiye does not support sanctions outside the UN framework; underlines that Türkiye's CFSP alignment rate has slipped to an all-time low of 7 %, compared to 11 % in 2021; calls on Türkiye to make significant steps in aligning with the EU's CFSP as soon as possible, including on sanctions and the anti-circumvention of sanctions;
5. Welcomes Türkiye's efforts in facilitating talks between Ukraine and Russia and reiterates its appreciation for the key part played by Türkiye together with the UN in brokering and keeping alive the Black Sea Grain Initiative, which has been crucial in helping to counter a global shortage of essential food supplies, in particular grain; notes that with regard to hybrid threats, in the context of international conflicts and crises, the circulation of false information and propaganda on social and mainstream media has also been observed in the Turkish information environment; condemns the fact that Türkiye has not restricted the operations of Russian media outlets in the context of the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine;
6. Notes that trade between Türkiye and Russia has nearly doubled since the start of the war in Ukraine and that there is an elevated risk that sanctioned goods and technologies, such as semiconductors, could pass through Turkish territory; underlines the particular risk posed by sanction evasion allowing for dual-use technology transfers to Russia, which could ultimately be used by Russia's army in Ukraine; takes note of the partial measures taken in recent months by the Turkish authorities to prevent the re-exportation and direct transit to Russia of goods covered by EU sanctions; urges Türkiye, however, to go further in order to ensure that it ceases to be a hub for entities and individuals wishing to circumvent sanctions, to fully ensure, by legal and regulatory means, that sanctions are never circumvented on its territory, and to take all necessary steps in this regard, including by punishing entities and individuals; deplores the fact that circumvention of EU sanctions by Türkiye undermines collective efforts and calls on the Commission to examine the increase in trade between Russia and Türkiye and assess the relevant trade flows that could indicate circumvention of sanctions; expresses concern, further, over the fact that increasing numbers of Russian citizens, including oligarchs, are taking up residency in major Turkish cities and coastal regions, contributing to sharp price increases on the rental and property markets, from where they continue their business and trade operations bringing large amounts of Russian capital into the Turkish system; highlights its expectation that Türkiye will avoid becoming a safe haven for Russian capital and investments; expresses concern about Türkiye's close cooperation with Russia in developing large nuclear power plants, including Akkuyu Nuclear Power Plant, which is being built and will be operated by Russia's State Atomic Energy Corporation Rosatom, which also owns it;
7. Strongly deplores, in the context of the Russian invasion of Ukraine and changing security architecture on the European continent, the delaying of the ratification of

Sweden's NATO accession, following the previous delay of Finland's NATO accession, which has only played into Russia's hands and undermines relations between Türkiye and its NATO allies; denounces in this context, further, attempts to undermine democratic freedoms in EU Member States through the instrumentalisation of granting consent to Sweden's NATO accession; takes note that, following further consultations, the President of Türkiye finally agreed on 10 July 2023 to forward the NATO Accession Protocol of Sweden to the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye as soon as possible and to work closely with the Assembly to ensure ratification; urges Türkiye to ratify Sweden's NATO membership without any further delay; urges the Turkish authorities to deliver on their promise of a more constructive partnership in NATO, including in the Eastern Mediterranean; stresses that the NATO accession process of one country can in no way be linked to the EU accession process of another, as the EU accession process of the other country remains based on its own merits;

8. Considers that, in terms of human rights and the rule of law, the desolate picture painted in its resolution of 7 June 2022 on the 2021 Commission Report on Turkey remains valid, and reiterates the content of that resolution; fully endorses the resolution of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe of 12 October 2022, and the related report by its Monitoring Committee, on the honouring of obligations and commitments by Türkiye, as well as the resolutions adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe pending the execution of judgments of the ECtHR, which depict in detail the wide range of serious shortfalls in human rights constantly reported by locally and internationally renowned human rights organisations;
9. Is dismayed by the fact that the negative trend is far from stopping or being reversed and that the democratic backsliding in Türkiye has continued over the last year, with several laws being amended that tighten online censorship and restrict access to information under the guise of preventing misinformation; is dismayed also by the relentless crackdown on any critical voice, particularly ahead of and during the recent elections; deplors the fact that the Turkish Government, with a battery of laws, including the 2020 social media law, the 2021 anti-money laundering law and the 2022 disinformation law, has built a complex web of legislation serving as a tool to systematically control and silence journalists, media workers, civil society organisations, political activists, academics and artists; affirms with regret that Türkiye has now become one of the global showcases for authoritarian practices; is worried by the increasing amount of fake news in the Turkish social media environment, but expresses its deep concern about the draconian disinformation law adopted in October 2022 that tightens government control over social media platforms and online news sites, introducing prison sentences for the publishing of 'disinformation and fake news'; holds that the bill's vague definition of 'disinformation' and 'intent' puts millions of Türkiye's internet users, including small and medium-sized enterprises, at risk of prosecution for posting information with which the government disagrees; holds that the Turkish Government hence instigates self-censorship through intimidation; is worried about the spread of state propaganda, in particular from the state-run news agency Anadolu;
10. Condemns the lack of independence of the judiciary and the political instrumentalisation of the judicial system and stresses that this area is of highest concern to the EU, as independence of the judiciary represents the keystone of a functioning

democratic system that works in the service and for the benefit of the population; remains concerned about the serious restrictions on fundamental freedoms – particularly freedom of expression and of association of which the Gezi case remains emblematic – and the constant attacks on the fundamental rights of members of the opposition, human rights defenders, lawyers, trade unionists, members of minorities, journalists, academics and civil society activists, including through judicial and administrative harassment, the arbitrary use of anti-terror laws, stigmatisation and the closure of associations; expects that all sectors of organised Turkish society will have the possibility to carry out their work and activities freely, as this could strengthen Turkish democracy; expresses concern about reports of excessive violence being perpetrated against prisoners; strongly stresses the need to ensure the humane treatment of all prisoners in accordance with basic human rights;

11. Calls on Türkiye to fully implement all judgments of the ECtHR in line with Article 46 of the ECHR, which is an unconditional obligation deriving from Türkiye's membership of the Council of Europe; is appalled by the Turkish authorities', especially the judiciary's, continuous disregard for and failure to apply landmark ECtHR rulings, such as on the cases of Selahattin Demirtaş and Osman Kavala, for which Türkiye is facing historical infringement proceedings at the Council of Europe;
12. Condemns the continued prosecution, censorship and harassment of journalists and independent media in Türkiye; is also concerned about the targeting in the EU of journalists and political opponents originating from Türkiye; calls on the Turkish authorities to allow civil society organisations, lawyers and other legal representatives and the press to function in accordance with their duties and within their remit and scope and to practise their profession freely, as this provides for an overall healthier democracy and society;
13. Deplores the targeting of political parties and members of the opposition who have come under increasing pressure; is concerned that following the latest elections, repression and persecution of political opposition will intensify due to the country's worsening economic situation; is particularly worried about the continued crackdown on Kurdish politicians, journalists, lawyers and artists, including mass detentions prior to the elections, as well as the ongoing closure case against the People's Democratic Party; is concerned about the use of the judiciary to influence political decisions of opposition parties, such as the case against the mayor of Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality;
14. Expresses its deep concern about the deterioration of the rights of women, gender-based violence and the increase in femicides, reflecting the grave deficiencies in providing effective protection for women in Türkiye; is worried, in particular, about 'honour killings'; regrets the lack of reliable official data on femicides, although coherent reporting by women's rights organisations exists; calls on the Turkish authorities to support survivors of violence against women and hold perpetrators to account; expresses concern about the clashes between marchers and the police on 8 March 2023, when hundreds of women and LGBT+ activists participated in the 20th annual Women's March in Istanbul; reiterates its strong condemnation of Turkey's withdrawal, by presidential decree, from the Istanbul Convention as a major setback to efforts to promote women's rights in the country and reiterates its call on Türkiye's Government

to reverse this unacceptable decision and to abide by and act in conformity with the international treaties, covenants and obligations to which it is party; calls on Türkiye to rapidly adopt an effective national action plan to combat child marriages and forced marriages;

15. Expresses concern about widespread hate speech and discrimination against the LGBTI+ community; deplors the constant targeting and harassment of LGBTI+ people and in particular the use of anti-LGBTI+ rhetoric by politicians and high-level public officials, including the President of the Republic; regrets that, since 2014, the authorities have banned Pride parades in major cities, including in Istanbul; recalls that Türkiye's obligations under the ECHR entail a responsibility to combat discrimination and violence against LGBTI+ persons and urges the Turkish authorities to deliver on their commitments and add sexual orientation, gender identity and sex characteristics as protected grounds to anti-discrimination provisions;
16. Remains highly concerned about the so-called Kurdish question and reiterates the urgency of resuming a credible political process involving all relevant parties and democratic forces in order to lead to its peaceful settlement; calls on the new Turkish Government to move in that direction by promoting dialogue and reconciliation; is alarmed about the severe and worsening repression against the Kurdish community, especially in the south-east of the country, including the further shrinking of cultural rights and legal restrictions on the use of the Kurdish language as a language of instruction in education;
17. Takes note of the entry in the latest election into the Turkish Parliament of far-right Islamist parties as part of the ruling coalition; is concerned by the increasing weight of the Islamist agenda in law-making and in many spheres of public administration, including through an extension of the influence of the Directorate of Religious Affairs (Diyanet) in the education system;
18. Notes that no significant progress has been registered with regard to the protection of the rights of ethnic and religious minorities; calls on Türkiye to fully implement all relevant ECtHR rulings and Council of Europe recommendations on protecting minorities' property rights and to introduce legislation which makes it possible for all religious communities and ethnic minorities to acquire legal personality, by implementing the relevant recommendations of the Venice Commission; calls on the Turkish authorities to effectively investigate and prosecute people responsible for any hate speech against minorities or vandalism against religious sites;
19. Expresses its strong concern over the continued hyper-concentration of power in the Turkish presidency, without any effective checks and balances, which has seriously eroded the democratic institutions in the country; stresses that the lack of autonomy in multiple levels of the administration due to extreme dependency on the president for all sorts of decisions under a one-man rule can lead to the system becoming dysfunctional, as demonstrated by the slow reaction to the devastating consequences of the February earthquakes;
20. Concludes that the Turkish Government has no interest in closing the persistent and growing gap between Türkiye and the EU on values and standards, as it has shown, for

the past few years, a clear lack of political will to carry out the necessary reforms, in particular regarding the rule of law, fundamental rights and the protection and inclusion of all ethnic, religious and sexual minorities; concludes, further, that the Turkish Government has not shown any interest in respecting and upholding the Copenhagen criteria and in aligning itself with EU policies and objectives;

21. Expresses concerns about the flawed functioning of Türkiye's market economy, particularly with regard to the conduct of monetary and fiscal policies, and the institutional and regulatory environment, as well as about the direct interference by the Turkish President in monetary policy; is of the opinion that the government will now need to address the economic vulnerabilities and high levels of inflation; invites the government to reinstate the credibility of key institutions such as the Turkish Central Bank and the Turkish Statistical Institute; believes that a stronger and more honest relationship with the EU would help to alleviate some of the hardships and assist with improving the living standards of the Turkish population;
22. Calls on Türkiye to make progress with its alignment with the EU directives and body of laws related to the environment and climate action; commends the work of Turkish environmental rights defenders; welcomes the Turkish Government's decision to ratify the Paris Climate Agreement and its pledge to become carbon neutral by 2053; regrets that this commitment is not being followed through by specific action; regrets, further, that although Türkiye has established ambitious goals in areas including pollution control, waste management and combating climate change, enforcement remains weak and the management of the ongoing economic crises has taken precedence over efforts to achieve a sustainable economy; calls on Türkiye to increase its contribution to climate and biodiversity protection and prioritise the adoption of its climate law; reiterates its call on the Turkish Government to halt its plans for the Akkuyu Nuclear Power Plant, which is located in a region prone to severe earthquakes, therefore posing a major threat not only to Türkiye, but also to the Mediterranean region; invites Türkiye, in this regard, to join the UN Economic Commission for Europe Espoo and Aarhus Conventions and reiterates its call on the Turkish Government to involve the governments of its neighbouring countries in relation to any further developments in the Akkuyu venture;
23. Welcomes, after a confrontational period, Türkiye's recent steps towards normalising relations with several countries, such as Armenia, Egypt, Israel and the Gulf states; invites Türkiye to follow through with these positive developments in the form of concrete action in respect of all neighbours; welcomes Türkiye's participation in the summits of the European Political Community; remains, however, concerned by the fact that Türkiye's foreign policy still clashes in many aspects with EU interests and, far from growing closer to the EU, it has further diverged in the last year, reaching a record low of alignment with just 7 % of common foreign and security policy decisions, according to the latest Commission report on Türkiye;
24. Condemns Türkiye's military interventions in Syria and its illegal occupation of areas in northern Syria and denounces the fact that Türkiye and local Syrian factions abuse civilians' rights and restrict their freedoms with impunity in the Turkish-occupied territories; regrets that the occupation was accompanied by the flight of a large part of the population there, whose return to this day is made impossible due to the Turkish

occupiers and their allied local Islamist militias; reiterates that a new ground incursion into Syria would have grave implications for international security;

25. Expresses concern about Turkish airstrikes in northern Syria and Iraq, in particular against the Sinjar region, which is home to the Yazidi population which suffered genocide at ISIS' hands in 2014, and the continued military presence on Iraqi territory; reiterates that civilian populations should never be the victim of military self-defence; calls on the Turkish authorities to exercise restraint in full respect of international standards;
26. Regrets that Türkiye's positions and policy in respect of Libya have remained vastly unchanged; notes with concern that in October 2022 Türkiye signed a new Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on hydrocarbons with the Libyan Government of National Unity, which could have serious consequences for regional stability to the extent that it would entail a direct or indirect implementation of the two illegal 2019 MoUs on military cooperation and maritime delimitation; calls on Türkiye to cooperate with Operation IRINI in enforcing the arms embargo on Libya and in fighting against human smuggling and trafficking;
27. Underlines the increasing relevance of the Western Balkans in Türkiye's foreign policy and its special ties with countries like Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia, which is Türkiye's most important interlocutor on Balkan affairs;
28. Is concerned about interference by Türkiye in EU Member States, which is directed towards European citizens of Turkish origins; calls on the Commission to implement the recommendations of the Special Committee on Foreign Interference (ING2) in the Defence of Democracy Package in order to counter interference by foreign authorities; calls on the European External Action Service's StratCom divisions to document suspicions of Turkish disinformation directed against the EU and to report its findings to the European Parliament;
29. Recalls that as a NATO member, Türkiye plays a geostrategic role ensuring regional and European security and is expected to act in line with its NATO obligations;
30. Supports the normalisation of relations between Armenia and Türkiye in the interest of reconciliation, regional stability and security, as well as socio-economic development, and welcomes the progress achieved so far; notes with appreciation the presence of the Prime Minister of Armenia at the inauguration of the newly-elected President of Türkiye; calls for the speedy implementation of agreements reached by the Turkish and Armenian Governments' special representatives, such as opening the airspace and the border between the two countries; calls on both sides to engage in the process in good faith and without preconditions; expresses the hope that this may give impetus to the normalisation of relations in the South Caucasus region; encourages Türkiye once again to recognise the Armenian Genocide in order to pave the way for genuine reconciliation between the Turkish and Armenian peoples and to fully respect its obligations to protect Armenian cultural heritage;
31. Commends Türkiye's efforts to continue hosting the largest refugee population in the world of almost 4 million people; welcomes, in this regard, the continued provision of EU funding for refugees and host communities in Türkiye and expresses its strong

commitment to sustain this in the future; calls on the Commission to put forward a proposal for the continuation of financing for Syrian refugees and host communities in Türkiye after 2024; calls on the Commission to ensure the utmost transparency and accuracy in the allocation of funds under the successor to the Facility for Refugees in Türkiye, ensuring that the funds are primarily given directly to the refugees and host communities and managed by organisations that guarantee accountability and transparency; supports an objective assessment of the cooperation between the EU and Türkiye on matters concerning refugees and migration and underlines the importance of both sides complying with their respective commitments under the EU-Turkey Joint Statement of 2016 and the EU-Turkey Readmission Agreement in respect of all Member States, including the resumption of the readmission of returnees from the Greek islands and the activation of the Voluntary Humanitarian Admission Scheme; reiterates that Turkish authorities should only carry out returns on a voluntary basis and only if they carry them out safely; firmly objects to any instrumentalisation of migrants by the Turkish Government; underlines the need to ensure the protection of all refugees' and migrants' rights and freedoms; notes that as a result of Türkiye's regrettable instrumentalisation of refugees, a continuing increase in asylum applications has been registered in Cyprus over recent years; recalls Türkiye's obligation to take any necessary measures to prevent the creation of new sea or land routes for illegal migration from Türkiye to the EU; is highly concerned by credible reports of arbitrary deportations and summary push-backs of persons apprehended while attempting to cross the border; condemns xenophobic attacks against refugees in Türkiye and the fuelling of anti-refugee and anti-immigration rhetoric by Turkish politicians; deplors the lack of access to the over 30 removal centres in Türkiye for international and national organisations in order to monitor and provide assistance; calls on the Commission to ensure that EU-funded projects are accessible and properly monitored;

32. Welcomes the de-escalation of tensions observed in the Eastern Mediterranean in recent times, and the positive momentum that appears to be developing recently, particularly in the wake of the February earthquakes expresses its hope that a possible new era in Türkiye's foreign policy might yield positive results in the bilateral relations between Türkiye and all EU Member States; remains fully aware that any positive dynamics can be easily reversed at any moment while the underlying issues remain unresolved; expresses its concern about certain Turkish officials' statements contesting the sovereignty of Greek islands; calls on Türkiye to respect the sovereignty of all EU Member States over their territorial sea and airspace, as well as their sovereign rights, including, inter alia, the right to explore and exploit natural resources, in accordance with EU and international law; expresses its full solidarity with Greece and the Republic of Cyprus; reiterates its call on Türkiye to show genuine collective engagement regarding the settlement of the delimitation of exclusive economic zones and the continental shelf in both the Aegean Sea and the Eastern Mediterranean, in good faith and in line with international law and the principle of good neighbourly relations, and to refrain from any unilateral illegal actions or threats; expresses deep concern that Türkiye continues to uphold a formal threat of war against Greece (Causus Belli), should the latter exercise its lawful right to extend its territorial waters up to 12 nautical miles in the Aegean Sea, in accordance with Article 3 of the United Nations Convention on the Law On the Sea; urges all stakeholders involved to engage in good faith in the peaceful settlement of disputes;

33. Regrets the fact that the Cyprus problem persists; strongly reaffirms its view that the only sustainable solution to the Cyprus issue is a fair, comprehensive and viable settlement, including of its external aspects, within the UN framework, on the basis of a bi-communal, bi-zonal federation with a single international legal personality, single sovereignty, single citizenship and political equality, as set out in the relevant UN Security Council resolutions and in accordance with international law and on the basis of respect for the principles on which the Union is founded; deplores the fact that the Turkish Government has abandoned the agreed basis of a solution and the UN framework in order to defend on its own a two-state solution in Cyprus; calls on Türkiye to abandon this unacceptable proposal for a two-state solution; strongly condemns any action to facilitate or assist in any way the international recognition of the illegal secessionist entity in Cyprus and stresses that such actions severely damage efforts to create an environment conducive to resuming settlement talks under the auspices of the United Nations; supports all constructive proposals which aim at breaking the stalemate in the settlement process and calls for the EU to have a more active engagement in this regard; condemns the fact that Türkiye continues to violate UN Security Council resolutions 550(1984) and 789(1992), which call on Türkiye to transfer the area of Varosha to its lawful inhabitants under the temporary administration of the UN, by supporting the opening of the town of Varosha to the public; takes the view that this violation undermines mutual trust and hence the prospect of a resumption of direct talks on a comprehensive solution to the Cyprus problem; strongly urges Türkiye once more to reverse its illegal and unilateral actions in Varosha; further calls on Türkiye to withdraw its troops from Cyprus and refrain from any unilateral action which would entrench the permanent division of the island and from action altering the demographic balance; calls urgently for negotiations on the reunification of Cyprus to be resumed under the auspices of the UN Secretary-General as soon as possible from where they left off at Crans-Montana in 2017; reiterates its call on Türkiye to fulfil its obligation of the full, non-discriminatory implementation of the Additional Protocol to the Ankara Agreement towards all Member States, including the Republic of Cyprus; remains concerned about the education restrictions faced by the enclaved Greek Cypriots; regrets the fact that Türkiye has still not made progress towards normalising its relations with the Republic of Cyprus; underlines the fact that cooperation remains essential in areas such as justice and home affairs, as well as aviation law and air traffic communications, with all EU Member States, including the Republic of Cyprus; regrets Türkiye's continued refusal to comply with aviation law and its denial of access to vessels under the flag of one Member State to the Straits of Bosphorus and the Dardanelles; takes the view that this could be an area where Türkiye could prove its commitment to confidence-building measures;
34. Reiterates its call on Türkiye to give the Turkish Cypriot community the necessary space to act in accordance with its role as a legitimate community of the island, which is a right guaranteed by the constitution of the Republic of Cyprus; reiterates its call on the Commission to step up its efforts to engage with the Turkish Cypriot community, recalling that its place is in the European Union; calls for all parties involved to demonstrate a more courageous approach to bringing the communities together; stresses the need for the EU body of law to be implemented across the entire island following the comprehensive solution of the Cyprus problem; highlights, meanwhile, that the Republic of Cyprus is responsible for stepping up its efforts to facilitate the engagement of Turkish Cypriots with the EU; praises the important work of the bi-communal

Committee on Missing Persons and reiterates its call on Türkiye to enhance its efforts in providing crucial information from its military archives, as well as access to witnesses in closed-off areas; calls on Türkiye to cooperate with the relevant international organisations, especially the Council of Europe, in preventing and combating illicit trafficking and the deliberate destruction of cultural heritage; condemns the repeated attempts by Türkiye to intimidate and gag Turkish Cypriot journalists and progressive citizens in the Turkish Cypriot community, thus violating their right to freedom of opinion and expression;

The way forward for EU-Türkiye relations

35. Reiterates its firm conviction that Türkiye is a country of strategic relevance in political, economic, energy and foreign policy terms, a key partner for the stability of the wider region and an important ally, including within NATO; reaffirms that the EU is committed to pursuing the best possible relations with Türkiye based on dialogue, respect and mutual trust, in line with international law and good neighbourly relations; calls for the EU-Türkiye relations to be based on a long-term vision and built upon cooperation and not confrontation;
36. Considers, in view of all the above, that in the absence of a drastic change of course by the Turkish Government, Türkiye's EU accession process cannot be resumed in the current circumstances; urges the Turkish Government and the European Union's institutions and Member States to break the current deadlock and move forward towards a closer, more dynamic and strategic partnership; recommends approaching this matter with the highest level of responsibility and dedication and to start a reflection process to find a parallel and realistic framework for EU-Türkiye relations that encompasses the interests of all parties involved; calls on the Commission, therefore, to explore possible formats for a mutually appealing framework through a comprehensive and inclusive process, such as a modernised association agreement;
37. Insists that democracy, the rule of law and fundamental rights, as well as mutual respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity and respect for the rights of minorities, should remain at the heart of good neighbourly relations between the EU and Türkiye, and that any framework for those relations should be firmly underpinned by the principles of international law and multilateralism;
38. Acknowledges and commends the democratic and pro-European aspirations of the majority of Turkish society (particularly among Turkish youth), whom the EU will not forsake; expresses its utmost commitment to sustaining and increasing the support for Türkiye's independent civil society, including direct financial assistance, in whatever circumstances and under whatever framework for relations that the future may bring, including by regularly monitoring the situation of the right to freedom of assembly and association in Türkiye, as well as the protection of human rights defenders and shrinking civic space; reiterates its call to strengthen and deepen mutual knowledge and understanding between Turkish and EU Member States' societies, promoting cultural growth, socio-cultural exchanges and combating all manifestations of social, religious, ethnic or cultural prejudice; encourages Türkiye and the EU to promote shared values by supporting young people, promoting youth participation and by building on prior experience in their cooperation in research and education; welcomes, in this regard, the

agreements granting Türkiye association status for Horizon Europe, Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps for the period 2021-2027 and calls for increasing EU support for these programmes;

39. Reaffirms its support for an upgraded customs union with a broader, mutually beneficial scope, which could encompass a wide range of areas of common interest, including digitalisation and Green Deal alignment; insists that such a modernisation would need to be based on strong conditionality related to human rights and fundamental freedoms, respect for international law and good neighbourly relations, and that it can only be envisaged upon Türkiye's full implementation of the Additional Protocol on extending the Ankara Agreement towards all Member States without reserve and in a non-discriminatory fashion; stresses that both parties must be fully aware of this democratic conditionality from the outset of any negotiations, as Parliament will not give its consent to the final agreement if no progress is made in this field; regrets that the current customs union will not achieve its full potential until Türkiye fully and effectively implements the Additional Protocol in relation to all Member States in a non-discriminatory manner; remains ready to advance towards visa liberalisation as soon as the Turkish authorities fulfil the six outstanding benchmarks and these are effectively met in a non-discriminatory manner towards all Member States; deeply regrets the constant attempts by Turkish authorities to blame the EU for not advancing on this dossier, while not taking any necessary steps to comply with the six known benchmarks; encourages the Member States to introduce measures to establish a fast-track for visa procedures for Turkish Erasmus students;

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40. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the President of the European Council, the Council and the Commission; asks that this resolution be translated into Turkish and forwarded to the President, Government and Parliament of the Republic of Türkiye.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

The report argues that in the absence of a drastic change of course by the Turkish Government, Türkiye's EU accession process cannot be resumed in the current circumstances. It urges the Turkish government, the European Union's institutions and its Member States to break the current deadlock and move forward towards a closer partnership, MEPs recommend to start a reflection process to find a parallel and realistic framework for EU-Türkiye relations. The report also confirms that Türkiye remains a NATO ally and a key partner in security, trade and economic relations, and migration, stressing that Türkiye is expected to respect democratic values, rule of law, human rights and abide by the *acquis communautaire*. It also urges Türkiye to ratify Sweden's NATO membership without any further delay, and underlines that the NATO accession process of one country can in no way be linked to the EU accession process of another.

The report welcomes Türkiye's vote in favour of the condemnation of the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine in the UN General Assembly and its commitment to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country, regretting that Türkiye does not support sanctions outside the UN framework.

Finally, the report commends Türkiye's efforts to continue hosting the largest refugee population in the world of almost 4 million people, and welcomes, in this regard, the continued provision of EU funding for refugees and host communities in Türkiye and expresses its strong commitment to sustain this in the future. Expressing its heartfelt condolences to the families of the victims of the devastating earthquakes of 6 February 2023, the report states that EU should continue to support the people of Türkiye for its humanitarian needs and reconstruction efforts.

After subsequent efforts in previous years to depict in detail developments regarding many aspects of Türkiye's accession process and EU-Türkiye relations, in particular in the field of fundamental freedoms and the rule of law, the report this year intends to offer a more concise political assessment of the way forward for our relations. It is also worth noting that the calendar of this report has been modified in order to avoid it coinciding with any electoral processes in Türkiye.

INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE

Date adopted	18.7.2023
Result of final vote	+: 47 -: 0 0: 10
Members present for the final vote	Alexander Alexandrov Yordanov, François Alfonsi, Maria Arena, Petras Auštrevičius, Traian Băsescu, Anna Bonfrisco, Reinhard Bütikofer, Susanna Ceccardi, Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz, Katalin Cseh, Michael Gahler, Kinga Gál, Giorgos Georgiou, Klemen Grošelj, Dietmar Köster, Andrius Kubilius, Ilhan Kyuchyuk, Jean-Lin Lacapelle, David Lega, Miriam Lexmann, Leopoldo López Gil, Antonio López-Istúriz White, Lukas Mandl, Thierry Mariani, Pedro Marques, David McAllister, Vangelis Meimarakis, Sven Mikser, Alessandra Moretti, Matjaž Nemec, Gheorghe-Vlad Nistor, Kostas Papadakis, Tonino Picula, Thijs Reuten, Nacho Sánchez Amor, Isabel Santos, Andreas Schieder, Dragoș Tudorache, Viola von Cramon-Taubadel, Witold Jan Waszczykowski, Charlie Weimers, Isabel Wiseler-Lima, Salima Yenbou, Tomáš Zdechovský, Željana Zovko
Substitutes present for the final vote	Attila Ara-Kovács, Malik Azmani, Jakop G. Dalunde, Georgios Kyrtos, Sergey Lagodinsky, Nikos Papandreou, Javier Zarzalejos
Substitutes under Rule 209(7) present for the final vote	Theresa Bielowski, Franc Bogovič, Gilles Boyer, Othmar Karas, Samira Rafaela

FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE

47	+
PPE	Alexander Alexandrov Yordanov, Franc Bogovič, Michael Gahler, Othmar Karas, Andrius Kubilius, David Lega, Miriam Lexmann, Leopoldo López Gil, Antonio López-Istúriz White, David McAllister, Lukas Mandl, Vangelis Meimarakis, Gheorghe-Vlad Nistor, Isabel Wiseler-Lima, Javier Zarzalejos, Tomáš Zdechovský, Željana Zovko
Renew	Petras Auštrevičius, Malik Azmani, Gilles Boyer, Katalin Cseh, Klemen Grošelj, Georgios Kyrtos, Ilhan Kyuchyuk, Samira Rafaela, Dragoș Tudorache, Salima Yebou
S&D	Attila Ara-Kovács, Maria Arena, Theresa Bielowski, Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz, Dietmar Köster, Pedro Marques, Sven Mikser, Alessandra Moretti, Matjaž Nemeč, Nikos Papandreou, Tonino Picula, Thijs Reuten, Nacho Sánchez Amor, Isabel Santos, Andreas Schieder
Verts/ALE	François Alfonsi, Reinhard Bütikofer, Jakop G. Dalunde, Sergey Lagodinsky, Viola von Cramon-Taubadel

0	-

10	0
ECR	Witold Jan Waszczykowski, Charlie Weimers
ID	Anna Bonfrisco, Susanna Ceccardi, Jean-Lin Lacapelle, Thierry Mariani
NI	Kinga Gál, Kostas Papadakis
PPE	Traian Băsescu
The Left	Giorgos Georgiou

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention