

**Question for written answer P-006701/2017
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Esther de Lange (PPE)

Subject: Position of Christians in Turkey and the construction of the Ilisu dam

1. Is the Commission aware of the report that discrimination against Christians in Turkey has increased in recent years and that, this year, Turkey has risen eight places in the Open Doors World Watch List, which records persecution of Christians around the world¹?
2. Is the Commission aware of the report that the Turkish Government intends to build the Ilisu dam on the upper reaches of the Tigris, as a result of which Hasankeyf, which was originally a Syriac Christian town, will be completely submerged and more than five thousand Syriac rock-dwellings are under threat?
3. Does the Commission consider that the above developments – especially after previous reports of seizures of 50 Syriac churches, monasteries and cemeteries in Mardin – do not accord with the European values of freedom of religion and respect for minorities and are therefore unacceptable for a candidate country? If so, what action will the Commission take to raise this issue with the Turkish Government? If not, why not?

¹ See <https://www.opendoorsusa.org/christian-persecution/world-watch-list/turkey/>