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## MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the statement by the Commission

pursuant to Rule 110(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on the 2012 Progress Report on Albania  
(2012/0000(RSP))

**Nikolaos Chountis**

on behalf of the Committee on Foreign Affairs

**European Parliament resolution on the 2012 Progress Report on Albania  
(2012/0000(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to the Presidency conclusions of the Thessaloniki European Council of 19 and 20 June 2003, concerning the prospect of the Western Balkan countries joining the European Union,
- having regard to the Commission communication entitled ‘Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2012-2013’ (COM(2012)...) and the accompanying Progress Report on Albania (SEC(2012)...) of 10 October 2012,
- having regard to Council Decision 2008/210/EC of 18 February 2008 on the principles, priorities and conditions contained in the European Partnership with Albania and repealing Decision 2006/54/EC<sup>1</sup>,
- having regard to the conclusions of the 4th meeting of the Stabilisation and Association Council between Albania and the EU of 15 May 2012,
- having regard to the recommendations adopted by the European Union-Albania Stabilisation and Association Parliamentary Committee (SAPC) during its 5th meeting held on 11 and 12 July 2012,
- having regard to the political agreement between the government and opposition in the Conference of Chairpersons of 14 November 2011 and the revised Action Plan of the Government of Albania on the 12 key priorities of the Commission Opinion, dated March 2012,
- having regard to its resolution of 8 July 2010 on Albania<sup>2</sup>,
- having regard to Rule 110(2) of its Rules of Procedure,

- A. whereas Albania's future lies in the European Union;
- B. whereas the country's EU accession should not only be the objective of the government and opposition but it should be for the common interest of all Albanians;
- C. whereas the EU accession process should remain a driving force for continued reforms and the main factor unifying the country's political establishment;
- D. whereas visible progress has been achieved in the reform agenda; whereas challenges continue to persist and need to be addressed in order to advance on the path to EU membership;

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 80, 19.3.2008, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Texts adopted, P7\_TA(2010)0282.

- E. whereas Albania continues to play a stabilising role in the Western Balkans;
- F. whereas Albania, thanks to its reform efforts, has a real perspective to advance to the next stage of its accession process in 2012 provided it delivers the critical mass of concrete results in the pending key reform areas;

### ***General considerations***

- 1. Reiterates its full support for Albania's future accession to the European Union;
- 2. Commends the determined efforts by the government and opposition to cooperate on reforms;
- 3. Calls on all political forces to continue to adopt concrete reforms leading to tangible results for the benefit of the citizens; considers important that the Albanian civil society holds its leaders accountable for specific policy outcomes;
- 4. Stresses the need to proceed further with necessary reforms in a sustainable manner and by means of a gradual process;

### ***Consolidating democracy and reinforcing human rights***

- 5. Strongly supports constructive political dialogue, which is not only a crucial element of the 12 key priorities but a pre-requisite of a functioning democracy; urges the political elite to sustain cross-party dialogue and consensus on reforms in order to allow the country to make accession-related progress;
- 6. Urges the political forces to complete the pending reform on Parliament's Rules of Procedure, to further strengthen the parliament's oversight role, to improve legislative drafting and to reinforce consultation with civil society, trade unions and social organizations;
- 7. Notes some progress in judicial reform; urges the authorities to ensure the real independence and integrity of the judiciary free of political interference and corruption, to ensure citizens' equal access to the courts, to accelerate progress in the implementation of the judicial reform strategy including the reform of the High Court; considers important that the judicial reform shall be a gradual process involving solid consultation mechanisms and that the judiciary is provided with sufficient funding to enable it to operate effectively throughout the country;
- 8. Stresses the need to eliminate the risks of politicising public administration, to create, an independent, merit-based and professional public administration; welcomes the procedures for the creation of the University Department for Public Administration;
- 9. Is concerned that, corruption continues to widely prevail in the life of the citizens; strongly recommends to further apply zero tolerance on issues concerning corruption and abuse of public funds;
- 10. Underlines the need of a solid track record of investigations and convictions, including in cases of high-level corruption; welcomes the commitment of all political forces to fight

impunity and the adoption by consensus in parliament of the reform of the immunity system; calls for its consistent implementation;

11. Welcomes progress in the implementation of the anti-mafia law including the increased confiscation of criminal assets; invites the authorities to further step up police and judicial cooperation with neighbouring countries;
12. Underlines that efforts need to be maintained for making police work fully respectful of human rights and results-oriented; calls for more pro-active and effective actions to prosecute the perpetrators and to protect the victims of human trafficking;
13. Calls on the authorities to strengthen the freedom of information to ensure transparency in media ownership and its finances; regrets the absence of statutory employment rights for journalists and that many of them do not receive their salaries from the media owners;
14. Calls for measures to improve the quality of life of citizens belonging to minority groups also by ensuring the use of minority languages in education and by tackling any kind of discrimination against them;
15. Welcomes measures to strengthen gender equality but calls for effective implementation so as to ensure women's access to political life, education and the labour market; urges the authorities to take actions against domestic violence and the trafficking of women and children;
16. Emphasizes the need to establish a modern education system; considers important that all children especially those from low-income families, should have secure access to education and school equipment;
17. Calls on the government to fully guarantee the respect for the labour law and to respect trade unions' rights; encourages the strengthening of mediation practice to settle labour disputes; recalls that respect for workers' rights, the proper exercise of the right to strike and labour freedom are European values;
18. Calls on the authorities to further improve the treatment of detained persons and prisoners in line with international human rights standards because cases of ill-treatment are still being reported;

#### ***Pursuing socio-economic reforms***

19. Invites the government to launch and implement structural reforms and the rule of law in order to enhance an economic environment conducive to investment and economic growth; encourages the adoption and implementation of measures to increase state revenues, to improve the tax collection system as well as to tackle the large informal economy and the unregulated labour market;
20. Stresses the need to pay particular attention to energy security, the diversification of energy sources, and the improvement of public transportation networks; urges the government to develop policies on renewable energy sources, to deal more effectively with the problem of waste management and to develop an environmentally sustainable

tourism;

21. Is greatly concerned about the high unemployment rate as well as the persisting number of Albanians living below the poverty line; urges the government to take all possible measures for the immediate treatment of extreme poverty and to create a social safety net for the financially weaker citizens;
22. Recommends the adoption of modern public investment to target sustainable growth, reduce unemployment and increase state revenues;

***Fostering regional and international cooperation***

23. Commends Albania for fostering good-neighbourly relations; welcomes the government's policies towards Albanian communities in neighbouring states, notably for advising them to cooperate with their respective governments in resolving problems;

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24. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the government and parliament of Albania.