

Brussels, 13 September 2010

Statement by Commissioner Štefan Füle on the result of the referendum in Turkey

The Commission welcomes the approval, by the Turkish people, of the Constitutional reforms in the referendum which took place on 12 September. It demonstrates the continued commitment of Turkish citizens to reforms in view of enhancing their rights and freedoms. As we consistently said in the past months, these reforms are a step in the right direction as they address a number of long-standing priorities in Turkey's efforts towards fully complying with the accession criteria.

However, their impact on the ground will depend on their actual implementation. A number of implementing laws will be needed and we will follow their preparation very closely. Meanwhile, we encourage the Turkish government to show utmost transparency as well as a spirit of dialogue on the substance of this implementing legislation.

We share the views of many in Turkey that the 12 September vote needs to be followed by other much needed reforms to address the remaining priorities in the area of fundamental rights, such as freedom of expression and freedom of religion. In this respect, we agree with those across the political spectrum in Turkey who believe that a new civilian Constitution would provide a solid base for a sustained development of democracy in Turkey, in line with European standards and the EU accession criteria.

Finally, the Commission emphasises that any future constitutional changes should be prepared through the broadest possible consultation, involving all political parties and civil society in a timely manner and a spirit of dialogue and compromise."