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## TEXTS ADOPTED

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### **P8\_TA(2016)0450**

#### **EU-Turkey relations**

##### **European Parliament resolution of 24 November 2016 on EU-Turkey relations (2016/2993(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to its previous resolutions, in particular those of 27 October 2016 on the situation of journalists in Turkey<sup>1</sup> and of 14 April 2016 on the 2015 report on Turkey<sup>2</sup>,
  - having regard to the 2016 annual report on Turkey, published by the Commission on 9 November 2016 (SWD(2016)0366),
  - having regard to the EU Negotiating Framework for Turkey, of 3 October 2005,
  - having regard to the Council conclusions of 18 July 2016 on Turkey,
  - having regard to Regulation (EU) No 231/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 establishing an Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA II)<sup>3</sup>,
  - having regard to the right to freedom of expression enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), to which Turkey is a state party,
  - having regard to the memorandums by the Council of Europe's Commissioner for Human Rights,
  - having regard to the statement of 26 July 2016 by the Council of Europe's Commissioner for Human Rights on measures taken under the state of emergency in Turkey,
  - having regard to Rule 123(2) and (4),
- A. whereas the European Union and the European Parliament have strongly condemned the failed military coup in Turkey and recognised the legitimate responsibility of the Turkish

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<sup>1</sup> Texts adopted, P8\_TA(2016)0423.

<sup>2</sup> Texts adopted, P8\_TA(2016)0133.

<sup>3</sup> OJ L 77, 15.3.2014, p. 11.

authorities to prosecute those responsible and involved in this attempt;

- B. whereas Turkey is an important partner and is expected as a candidate country to uphold the highest standards of democracy, including respect for human rights, the rule of law, fundamental freedoms and the universal right to a fair trial; whereas Turkey has been a member of the Council of Europe since 1950 and is therefore bound by the ECHR;
  - C. whereas the Turkish Government's repressive measures under the state of emergency are disproportionate and in breach of basic rights and freedoms protected by the Turkish Constitution, of democratic values upon which the European Union is founded and of the ICCPR; whereas since the attempted coup the authorities have arrested 10 members of the Turkish Grand National Assembly belonging to the opposition party HDP and some 150 journalists (the largest number of such arrests worldwide); whereas 2 386 judges and prosecutors and 40 000 other people have been detained, of whom more than 31 000 remain under arrest; whereas 129 000 public employees either remain suspended (66 000) or have been dismissed (63 000), according to the Commission's Turkey 2016 report, most of whom have had no charges brought against them to date;
  - D. whereas President Erdogan and members of the Turkish Government have made repeated statements on the reintroduction of the death penalty; whereas, in its conclusions of 18 July 2016 on Turkey, the Council recalled that the unequivocal rejection of the death penalty is an essential element of the Union acquis;
  - E. whereas serious concerns have been raised over the conditions of those detained and arrested following the attempted coup and over the severe restrictions on freedom of expression and on the press and media in Turkey;
  - F. whereas paragraph 5 of the Negotiating Framework stipulates that, in the case of a serious and persistent breach in Turkey of the principles of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and the rule of law on which the Union is founded, the Commission will, on its own initiative or on the request of one third of the Member States, recommend the suspension of negotiations and propose the conditions for eventual resumption;
  - G. whereas a temporary halt to negotiations would entail the current talks being frozen, no new chapters being opened and no new initiatives being undertaken in relation to Turkey's EU Negotiating Framework;
1. Strongly condemns the disproportionate repressive measures taken in Turkey since the failed military coup attempt in July 2016; remains committed to keeping Turkey anchored to the EU; calls on the Commission and the Member States, however, to initiate a temporary freeze of the ongoing accession negotiations with Turkey;
  2. Commits to reviewing its position when the disproportionate measures under the state of emergency in Turkey are lifted; will base its review on whether the rule of law and human rights are restored throughout the country; considers that an appropriate time to initiate such a review would be when the state of emergency is lifted;
  3. Reiterates that reintroduction of capital punishment by the Turkish Government would have to lead to a formal suspension of the accession process;
  4. Notes that to date Turkey has not fulfilled 7 out of 72 benchmarks of the visa

liberalisation roadmap, some of which are of particular importance;

5. Notes that upgrading the customs union is important for Turkey; stresses that suspending work on upgrading the customs union would have serious economic consequences for the country;
6. Is gravely concerned by statements disputing the Treaty of Lausanne, which defines the borders of modern Turkey and has contributed to safeguarding peace and stability in the region for almost a century;
7. Calls on the Commission to reflect on the latest developments in Turkey in the mid-term review report of the IPA scheduled for 2017; asks the Commission to examine the possibility of increasing support to Turkish civil society from the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights;
8. Encourages the European Commission, the Council of Europe and the Venice Commission to offer additional judicial assistance to the Turkish authorities;
9. Underlines the strategic importance of EU-Turkey relations for both sides; recognises that, while Turkey is an important partner of the EU, the political will to cooperate has to come from both sides of a partnership; believes that Turkey is not demonstrating this political will, as the government's actions are further diverting Turkey from its European path;
10. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the Council, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, and the Government and Parliament of Turkey.