MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the statements by the Council and the Commission pursuant to Rule 132(2) of the Rules of Procedure on opening accession negotiations with North Macedonia and Albania (2019/2883(RSP))

Jörg Meuthen, Lars Patrick Berg, Guido Reil on behalf of the ID Group
European Parliament resolution on opening accession negotiations with North Macedonia and Albania
(2019/2883(RSP))

The European Parliament,

– having regard to the European Council’s decision of 17 October 2019 to delay the start of accession talks with Albania and North Macedonia,
– having regard to the statements by the Commission and the Council of 23 October 2019 on opening accession negotiations with North Macedonia and Albania,
– having regard to Rule 132(2) of its Rules of Procedure,

A. whereas for two consecutive years, the Commission has concluded that both countries are ready to open accession negotiations;
B. whereas the European Council refuses to give the green light to the opening of accession negotiations;
C. whereas the European Council’s refusal reflects Member States’ concerns about the security and well-being of their citizens, and about the proper use of their social protection systems;

1. Welcomes the European Council’s decision;
2. Stresses that the economic situation in Albania and North Macedonia is dire, does not meet European standards, and is characterised by high unemployment and very low wages;
3. Notes that institutions in Albania and North Macedonia are very fragile, and that little progress has been made in judicial reform aimed at increasing the independence, accountability, and professionalism of judicial institutions;
4. Notes with concern that very little progress has been made in the fight against corruption and organised crime, which are widespread;
5. Stresses that high-level corruption, serious deficiencies in the rule of law, and cumbersome regulatory procedures continue to deter investment in Albania and North Macedonia, and hinder their development;
6. Highlights that Albania and North Macedonia perform particularly poorly in education and employment policies;
7. Notes that the extraordinarily high levels of dissatisfaction of citizens in Albania and North Macedonia with the situation in their countries are reflected in the desire to emigrate of many of their citizens; highlights that according to Gallup’s latest
worldwide survey 60 % of the adult population in Albania wants to leave the country\(^1\);

8. **Underlines that both countries are suffering from a brain drain, and that Albania is at the top of the brain drain index in the aforementioned survey; notes in this regard that 32 % of highly-educated young adults in Albania and 30 % of the same group in Northern Macedonia want to leave their country; emphasises that a brain drain will have further serious implications for productivity, leaving Albania and North Macedonia with a poorly qualified labour force;**

9. **Notes that the Governments of Albania and North Macedonia have still not proposed a plan to counteract this trend and change the situation;**

10. **Regrets that the Commission has still not learned from its past policies; notes in this regard that the accession of Romania and Bulgaria has not only led to a brain drain but also to high numbers of poor migrants relocating to wealthier countries in western and northern Europe; highlights that this has led to many social problems in cities and countries;**

11. **Notes that, 12 years after their accession, Romania and Bulgaria are still part of the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism, a transitional instrument for monitoring and assisting both countries with judicial reform and the fight against corruption and organised crime;**

12. **Notes that Romania and Bulgaria still have serious problems with the absorption of EU funds, mainly because of corruption and a lack of administrative capacity;**

13. **Calls on the European Council, in light of these issues and fundamental problems, to stop holding out the prospect of accession negotiations and to request a Commission proposal for a new partnership with these countries;**

14. **Highlights that Albania and North Macedonia benefited from financial assistance under Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance I (IPA I 2007-2013), and receive funding from IPA II (2014-2020), and that other financial instruments will be created under IPA III (2021-2027);**

15. **Calls on the Commission to monitor the use of funding in Northern Macedonia and to provide a detailed report to Parliament;**

16. **Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the Council, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, and the governments and parliaments of Albania and North Macedonia.**