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*Plenary sitting*

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**B9-0263/2020**

14.9.2020

## 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 the preparation of the special European Council summit focusing on the dangerous escalation and the role of Turkey in the Eastern Mediterranean (2020/2774(RSP))

**Sergey Lagodinsky, Viola Von Cramon-Taubadel, Jordi Solé, Mounir Satouri, Hannah Neumann, Tineke Strik, François Alfonsi, Alviina Alametsä, Ernest Urtasun, Petra De Sutter, Monika Vana, Diana Riba i Giner, Reinhard Bütikofer**  
on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group

**European Parliament resolution on the preparation of the Special European Council summit focusing on the dangerous escalation and the role of Turkey in the Eastern Mediterranean  
(2020/2774(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Turkey, in particular those of 24 November 2016 on EU-Turkey relations<sup>1</sup>, of 27 October 2016 on the situation of journalists in Turkey<sup>2</sup>, of 8 February 2018 on the current human rights situation in Turkey<sup>3</sup>, of 13 March 2019 on the 2018 Commission Report on Turkey<sup>4</sup>, and of 19 September 2019 on the situation in Turkey, notably the removal of elected mayors<sup>5</sup>,
  - having regard to the Commission communication of 29 May 2019 on EU enlargement policy (COM(2019)0260), and its accompanying staff working document (SWD(2019)0220),
  - having regard to previous statements by the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs (VP/HR) on the drilling activities by Turkey in the Eastern Mediterranean,
  - having regard to the relevant Council and European Council conclusions on Turkey, in particular Council Decision (CFSP) 2020/275 of 27 February 2020 amending Decision (CFSP) 2019/1894 concerning restrictive measures in view of Turkey's unauthorised drilling activities in the Eastern Mediterranean<sup>6</sup>,
  - having regard to the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) to which Greece and Cyprus are parties and the UN Charter,
  - having regard to Rule 132(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas escalating tensions in the Eastern Mediterranean are fuelled by multiple factors, in particular unilateral measures by the parties concerned, including military action, the lack of inclusive diplomatic dialogue and the regrettable failure of efforts to mediate the conflict;
- B. whereas both sides have legitimate claims and the inherently complex developing Law of the Sea is interpreted differently by Greece and Turkey; whereas Turkey has not signed the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea to which Greece and Cyprus are parties, due to the ongoing maritime dispute over the delimitation of an Exclusive

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<sup>1</sup> OJ C 224, 27.6.2018, p. 93.

<sup>2</sup> OJ C 215, 19.6.2018, p. 199.

<sup>3</sup> OJ C 463, 21.12.2018, p. 56.

<sup>4</sup> Texts adopted, P8\_TA(2019)0200.

<sup>5</sup> Texts, adopted, P9\_TA(2019)0017.

<sup>6</sup> OJ L 56I, 27.2.2020, p. 5.

Economic Zone (EEZ); whereas the above-mentioned dispute over the delimitation of EEZs and the continental shelf between Turkey, on the one hand, and Greece and Cyprus, on the other hand, has not been resolved since November 1973;

- C. whereas the discoveries of significant gas reserves in the Mediterranean, including the discovery of the Leviathan field in 2010, followed by that of the Zohr gas field, the largest natural gas discovery ever made in the Mediterranean, offshore Egypt in 2015, have sparked interest in the region and led to further exploration and drilling in 2018 and 2019; whereas the areas where Turkey is undergoing exploration missions and gas drilling do not yet have proven reserves;
  - D. whereas Turkey and the Libyan Government of National Accord have signed a Memorandum of Understanding in November 2019 concerning the delimitation of maritime territories in the Eastern Mediterranean; whereas the Turkey-Libya Memorandum of Understanding on the delimitation of maritime jurisdictions in the Mediterranean Sea infringes the sovereign rights of third States, does not comply with the Law of the Sea and cannot produce any legal consequences for third States;
  - E. whereas the official establishment of the EastMed Gas Forum in Cairo on 16 January 2020 by Egypt, Israel, the Palestinian Authority, Jordan, Greece, Cyprus and Italy has been criticised by the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs as seeking to exclude Ankara from regional cooperation and coordination in the gas market;
  - F. whereas the regrettable failure of mediation attempts led by the German Council Presidency during July and August, resulted also from the conclusion of the maritime bilateral agreement between Egypt and Greece, delimiting an Exclusive Economic Zone for oil and gas drilling rights, signed by the Greek Foreign Minister on 6 August 2020;
  - G. whereas on 10 August, Turkey sent the research vessel Oruç Reis, accompanied by warships, into Greek waters to map out sea territory for possible oil and gas drilling in an area where also Turkey claims jurisdiction; whereas Greece responded by dispatching its own warships to track the Turkish vessels, one of which collided with a Greek ship; whereas on 31 August 2020 Turkey again extended its exploration in the Eastern Mediterranean by the Oruç Reis until 12 September; whereas Greece has declared Turkey's naval alert (Navtex) illegal as it concerns an area that is within Greece's continental shelf; whereas these activities by Turkey have led to a significant deterioration in relations between Greece and Turkey; whereas on 13 September Turkey's seismic research vessel Oruç Reis returned to waters near the southern province of Antalya, a move that could ease tensions between Ankara and Athens;
- 1. Is extremely concerned about the ongoing dispute and the related risk of further military escalation in the Eastern Mediterranean between EU Member States and an EU candidate country, which are also NATO allies; strongly believes that a sustainable conflict resolution can be found only through dialogue, diplomacy and concessions on both sides;
  - 2. Commends Turkey for having taken a first step towards easing tensions in the Eastern Mediterranean by withdrawing its seismic research vessel Oruç Reis from the disputed waters; urges Turkey to refrain from any further provocation in the future and to continue to actively contribute to de-escalating the situation, including by immediately

ending any further illegal exploration and drilling activities in the Eastern Mediterranean, refraining from violating Greek airspace and Greek and Cypriot territorial waters and by distancing itself from nationalistic warmongering rhetoric;

3. Calls on Turkey to fully respect the Law of the Sea and the sovereignty of EU Member States Greece and Cyprus, including their sovereign rights in their maritime zones related to the exploitation of natural resources;
4. Calls on all relevant actors to commit to an urgent de-escalation by withdrawing their military presence in the region to enable dialogue and effective cooperation and to refrain from belligerent rhetoric that incites nationalist sentiments among voters back home;
5. Urges Turkey, Greece and Cyprus to engage in a constructive dialogue to find a peaceful solution, to step up their efforts to finally resolve disputes over land and sea borders, to commit themselves to good neighbourly relations, the respect of international agreements and the peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with the UN Charter;
6. Urges all parties concerned to actively support the negotiations for a fair, comprehensive and viable settlement of the Cyprus issue within the UN framework, as defined by the relevant UN Security Council resolutions, in accordance with international law, the EU acquis and on the basis of respect for the principles on which the Union is founded;
7. Welcomes the efforts made by the EU, and especially the German Presidency, to contribute to finding a solution through dialogue and diplomacy; welcomes NATO's initiative to reconcile its member states, Greece and Turkey, over their dispute in the Eastern Mediterranean and to ease military tensions and prevent accidental clashes;
8. Calls on the Commission and all Member States to pursue a broader and more inclusive dialogue with Turkey rather than promoting further escalatory military and political measures; calls on the Commission and the Member States to remain firmly committed in this dialogue to the fundamental values and principles of the Union, including respect for human rights, democracy, the rule of law and the principle of solidarity;
9. Invites the parties in conflict to return to the status quo ante in order to defuse tensions and to start a dialogue on a comprehensive and strategic security architecture and energy cooperation for the Mediterranean; urges the parties to refer the whole range of matters to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague or to resort to international arbitration in the event a settlement cannot be reached through mediation;
10. Reminds the parties in conflict that Turkey's current exploration missions and drilling for fossil resources have not yet confirmed that such reserves exist; urgently calls for a comprehensive environmental risk assessment of any drilling activity, considering the multitude of risks associated with offshore gas exploration for the environment, the workforce and local populations; invites the parties in conflict to jointly reconsider their exploration and drilling plans and to step up their efforts to invest in renewable energy and a sustainable climate-friendly future; calls on the EU to support the development of such a Green Deal for the Mediterranean, which would include plans for investment

plans in renewable energy in the wider region in order to avoid disputes over limited fossil resources that are harmful to our climate and environment;

11. Expresses its serious regret and concern about the current state of EU-Turkey relations, which mostly result from the dire human rights situation in Turkey, the erosion of the rule of law and a highly undemocratic internal development under President Erdoğan's authoritarian rule; underlines the past and present negative impacts of Turkey's unilateral foreign policy initiatives in the wider region and that Turkey's illegal exploration and drilling activities in the Eastern Mediterranean further add to the deterioration of EU-Turkey relations in general; calls on Turkey and the EU Member States to support the peaceful resolution of the conflict and political dialogue in Libya and to refrain from encouraging and increasing the dynamics of the Libyan conflict in order to seek territorial gains in the Mediterranean or political influence in Libya;
12. Hopes that further sanctions can be avoided and replaced by dialogue and sincere cooperation; calls at the same time on the Council to stand ready, to draw up and put in place a list of new restrictive measures should Turkey continue to aggravate the situation by violating the territorial integrity of EU Member States and international law; proposes that these measures could include the cessation of arms exports to Turkey in accordance with Common Position 2008/944/CFSP for as long as Turkey continues its illegal actions in the Eastern Mediterranean;
13. Deplores and criticises the fact that Cyprus and Greece make their approval of sanctions in the context of Belarus conditional on the approval of sanctions against Turkey in the context of the gas dispute in the Eastern Mediterranean; stresses that the conflict in the Mediterranean has no tangible link with the suppression of democracy in Belarus;
14. Reiterates that the parliamentary dialogue between the EU and Turkey is an important element of the dialogue and de-escalation efforts; deeply deplores the continuous refusal of the Turkish Grand Assembly to reinstate bilateral meetings of the EU-Turkey Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC); calls for the immediate continuation of these sessions;
15. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the Parliamentary Assembly and the Secretary-General of NATO, the President, Government and Parliament of the Republic of Turkey, and the EU Member States.