



Plenary sitting

B9-0266/2020

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))

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B9-0266/2020

**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 the European Council conclusions on the Eastern Mediterranean of 19 August 2020,
 - having regard to the statements by the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, and in particular his statement of 20 August 2020,
 - having regard to the statements following the informal meeting of Foreign Affairs ministers (Gymnich) on 27 and 28 August,
 - having regard to the statement by NATO Secretary General on 3 September 2020,
 - having regard to the Ajaccio declaration after the seventh Summit of the Southern countries of the Union (MED7) of 10 September 2020,
 - having regard to the Charter of the United Nations and to all the UN conventions to which EU Member States, including Greece and Cyprus, as well as Turkey are States Party,
 - having regard to the Rome Statute and the founding documents of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and to the precedents set by its jurisprudence,
 - having regard to the NATO Treaty of 1949,
 - having regard to its resolution of 13 March 2019 on the 2018 Commission Report on Turkey¹, in which it recommended that the Commission and the Council, in accordance with the Negotiating Framework, formally suspend all accession negotiations with Turkey,
 - having regard to Rule 132(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas following the decision by Turkey to send exploratory vessels escorted by Turkish navy vessels to prospect for natural gas within the maritime boundaries of Greece and Cyprus, in breach of international law, Turkey violated the territorial integrity of Greece and Cyprus, and thus also violated the territorial integrity of the European Union;
- B. whereas exploratory talks between Greece and Turkey have been stalled since March

¹ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2019)0200.

2016; whereas a positive push to improve bilateral relations was given by both the Greek Prime Minister and the Turkish President after their meeting in September 2019 at the UN General Assembly, and in December to resume political dialogue, following which high officials met in Ankara in January 2020, and confidence building measures were discussed in Athens in February 2020;

- C. whereas in November 2019 Turkey signed with the Libyan Government a Memorandum of Understanding delimiting shared maritime borders despite having no adjacent or opposite coasts; whereas this agreement has been declared null and void by a number of states in the region; whereas on 6 August 2020 Greece signed an agreement delimiting its exclusive economic zone with Egypt following 15 years of negotiations;
- D. whereas on 27 February 2020 the Council put two executives of the Turkish Petroleum Corporation (TPAO) on the EU sanctions list, imposing a travel ban and an asset freeze, following Turkey's involvement in illegal drilling activities in the Eastern Mediterranean without authorisation from the Republic of Cyprus; whereas a legal framework for restrictive measures in response to Turkey's illegal drilling activities was adopted on 11 November 2019 by the Council after it repeatedly voiced its concerns and strongly condemned Turkey's activities in several conclusions, in particular on 22 March 2018 and 20 June 2019;
- E. whereas in February and March 2020 Turkey provided logistical support for sending thousands of migrants to the Greek border, and engaged in disinformation campaigns against Greece and the EU;
- F. whereas on 21 July Turkey decided to launch exploration activities within the Greek maritime boundaries around Kastelorizo and the Barbaros drilling site in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of the Republic of Cyprus;
- G. whereas on 16 August 2020 Turkey sent 17 naval vessels to escort its exploration vessel Oruc Reis in Greek waters, simultaneously deploying the Turkish fleet in the Aegean sea, putting Greek Armed Forces on high alert; whereas the next day a Greek and Turkish warship accidentally collided in the area;
- H. whereas following Germany's mediation efforts, Turkey agreed to remove its exploration vessel Oruc Reis by 23 August and resume joint exploratory talks with Greece; whereas, however, Turkey did not remove its vessel and fleet until 12 September, extending the mandate of its illegal mission;
- I. whereas Turkey finally ordered its exploration vessel Oruc Reis to return on 12 September;
- J. whereas Greece has recorded over 600 violations of its air space by the Turkish Air Force over demilitarised Greek Aegean islands since January 2020; whereas Turkey has attempted to block the NATO defence plans of Poland and the Baltic states;
- K. whereas on 10 June a French naval vessel was met with an extremely hostile behaviour by Turkish warships when it was, in the framework of the Sea Guardian NATO mission, requesting to inspect a Turkish vessel suspected of violating the UN arms embargo on Libya;

- L. whereas to support Greece and Cyprus, France deployed two naval vessels and fighter jets on 12 August in the area, and took part in military exercises together with Greece, Cyprus and Italy on 26 August;
- M. whereas it is the responsibility of the European Union and its Member States to uphold international law, including the Montego Bay Convention on the Law of the Seas and related jurisprudence on maritime boundaries, irrespective of the fact that Turkey has not ratified the Convention;
- N. whereas Greece and Cyprus have reiterated their readiness to resort to the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice;
- O. whereas the EU is by far Turkey's most important trade partner and its primary source of foreign direct investment (FDI); whereas in 2018 the initiative to modernise the customs union was suspended; whereas talks on sectoral partnerships between the EU and Turkey can only resume after a de-escalation of tensions in the Eastern Mediterranean;
- P. whereas Turkey remains a key partner for the EU, and a NATO member; whereas Article 1 of the NATO Treaty provides that the parties thereto undertake to settle any international disputes in which they may be involved by peaceful means in a manner that international peace and security and justice are not endangered, and to refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force in any manner inconsistent with the principles of the United Nations;
1. Expresses its full solidarity with Greece and Cyprus;
 2. Firmly condemns the Turkish military and civilian intervention in EU maritime boundaries of Greece and Cyprus, EU Member States, in the Eastern Mediterranean, which severely undermines the security and stability of the region and violates international law;
 3. Welcomes Turkey's decision of 12 September to immediately withdraw its exploration and naval vessels from EU maritime boundaries; demands Turkey resumes talks with Greece and Cyprus, and confidence building measures; demands that Turkey otherwise resorts to the International Court of Justice to solve outstanding territorial matters, as requested by Greece and Cyprus;
 4. Firmly rejects the unilateral declaration made by Turkey's Foreign Affairs Minister that the maritime areas of Greece and Cyprus should be considered part of Turkish territory by virtue of their location on the same continental shelf as Turkey;
 5. Welcomes the sustained mediation efforts by Germany to de-escalate the situation;
 6. Condemns the constant threats being made by the Turkish government against Greece, Cyprus and EU Member states, and its disinformation campaigns against the EU;
 7. Points out that Parliament has already taken steps to reduce Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) II funding to Turkey given the substantial degradation of democracy, human rights and the rule of law in the country;

8. Calls upon the Council of 24 September to use all appropriate means at the disposal of the European Union to respond to Turkey's aggressive actions; calls on it to speed up its preparation of additional entries to the EU sanctions list from proposals already on the table, with a view to their earliest adoption, and asks the Council to draw up a list of additional restrictive measures such as a comprehensive arms embargo in case the Turkish government does not make enough progress towards dialogue, and does not put an end to its unilateral activities;
9. 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 EU member states, the United Nations and Turkey, ensuring translation of this text into Turkish.