



Plenary sitting

B9-0268/2020

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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on behalf of the ECR 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 resolution of 13 November 2014 on Turkish actions creating tensions in the exclusive economic zone of Cyprus¹,
 - having regard the European Council conclusions of 22 March 2018, 20 June 2019 and 14 October 2019,
 - having regard to the statement of 15 May 2020 of the EU Foreign Ministers on the situation in the Eastern Mediterranean,
 - having regard to the statement of 9 August 2020 by the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR) Josep Borrell on the situation in the Eastern Mediterranean,
 - having regard to the statement of 16 August 2020 by the VP/HR on renewed drilling activities by Turkey in the Eastern Mediterranean,
 - having regard to the outcome of the informal meeting of EU foreign affairs ministers (Gymnich) of 28 August 2020,
 - having regard to the upcoming special European Council summit on 24 and 25 September 2020,
 - having regard to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS),
 - having regard to Rule 132(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas Turkey is an important partner of the EU and is expected, as a candidate country, to uphold the highest standards of democracy, including respect for human rights, the rule of law and the principles of international law;
- B. whereas Turkey is a member of NATO and plays an important role in guaranteeing security on the European continent;
- C. whereas in recent years, huge gas reserves have been found in the Eastern Mediterranean, prompting the Governments of Cyprus, Greece, Israel and Egypt to work together to make the most of these natural resources, while fully respecting international law; whereas in 2019 also Turkey stepped up drilling in the area to the

¹ OJ C 285, 5.8.2016, p. 11.

west of Cyprus;

- D. whereas the EastMed Pipeline accord was signed on 2 January 2020 in Athens by the leaders of Greece, Cyprus, and Israel, calling on all countries to participate, on condition that they respect international law; whereas the EastMed pipeline is a strategically important infrastructure project in line with the EU's long-term goal of diversifying its energy supply;
- E. whereas in November 2019, Ankara signed a memorandum of understanding with Libya's Government of National Accord that, according to Turkey, created an exclusive economic zone (EEZ) from the Turkish southern coast to Libya;
- F. whereas additional sources of tension in the region include Ankara's decision to turn Hagia Sophia in Istanbul back into a mosque and the alleged Turkish attempt to allow migrants from Syria to cross the EU's borders illegally;
- G. whereas according to UNCLOS, which entered into force in 1994, an EEZ, extending to a maximum of 200 nautical miles from the baseline, exists for islands; whereas all 27 Member-States and the EU as a party in itself have ratified UNCLOS; whereas Turkey has not yet ratified the convention;
- H. whereas in late May 2020 Turkey announced its plans to start drilling in the months to come in several other areas further to the west;
- I. whereas on 6 August 2020, Greece and Egypt struck a deal that was ratified by the Greek Parliament on 27 August, forming an EEZ that, according to Greece, would cancel out the Turkish agreement with Libya;
- J. whereas tensions escalated when on 10 August 2020, Turkey sent the research vessel *Oruç Reis* to drill for gas and oil between the Greek island of Kastellorizo and Cyprus, accompanied by warships;
- K. whereas on 15 August 2020 Turkey issued a new NAVTEX announcing that its drill ship *Yavuz* would continue its work exploring for energy resources off the island of Cyprus; whereas on 12 September 2020, however, the *Oruç Reis* returned to the port of Antalya and the NAVTEX was not renewed;
- L. whereas France has temporarily deployed a frigate and two Rafale fighter jets in the Eastern Mediterranean;
- M. whereas at the Gymnich meeting, the Council expressed a political consensus to ask the relevant Council Working Groups to speed up their work in order to add individuals suggested by Cyprus to the list of the existing regime for those involved in illegal drilling in the Eastern Mediterranean, with a view to rapid adoption; whereas the leaders also agreed that, in the absence of progress in engaging with Turkey, the Commission should draw up a list of further restrictive measures that could be discussed at the European Council on 24 and 25 September;
- N. whereas NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg has taken steps attempting to break the deadlock and ease the tensions between Ankara and Athens;

- O. whereas Turkey remains a candidate country entitled to pre-accession financial assistance and receives significant amounts and support from the EU;
1. Expresses concern at Turkey's acts in the Eastern Mediterranean that infringe the legitimate rights of Greece and Cyprus in their maritime zones;
 2. Calls on Turkey to respect international law, including the law of the sea, and, in particular, the sovereignty and jurisdiction of all EU Member States over maritime zones;
 3. Demands that Turkey cease its drilling and research activities within the Cypriot and Greek EEZs and that it desist from any activities that could further fuel tensions in the Eastern Mediterranean;
 4. Stresses that maritime boundaries must be defined through dialogue and negotiations, not through unilateral actions and the mobilisation of naval forces, and that disputes must be resolved in accordance with international law; encourages all sides to prioritise diplomacy over far-reaching unilateral actions;
 5. Encourages Turkey to sign and ratify UNCLOS;
 6. Welcomes the efforts by NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg aimed at establishing an enhanced de-confliction mechanism and at reducing the risk of accidents in the Mediterranean region; supports NATO's mediation efforts to bring together two of its members and pave the way for further dialogue leading to de-escalation;
 7. Denounces Turkey's recent decisions on turning Hagia Sophia and Chora Church back into mosques;
 8. Emphasises the strategic importance of the natural resources in the Eastern Mediterranean for the EU and its Member States, and stresses the value of the EastMed pipeline project for the EU's energy diversification goals; calls for the EU to strongly defend its interests;
 9. Calls for the EU to facilitate a dialogue with Turkey;
 10. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the European External Action Service, the Commission, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the governments and parliaments of the Member States and the accession and candidate countries, and the Government and Parliament of the Republic of Turkey.