

WRITTEN QUESTION E-5053/09/rev.1
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to the Commission

Subject: Turkish flag on Mount Pentadaktylos

On 28 October 2003, the Greek National Day, a huge flag of the so-called Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus carved out by the occupying forces on the slopes of Mount Pentadaktylos as a sign of the occupation of the northern part of the Cyprus was lit up. The flag of the pseudo-State had originally been marked out with white stones on the northern slopes of Mount Pentadaktylos in the 1980s, the principal objective being that it should be as visible as possible. Today the flag, together with the accompanying slogan by Kemal Ataturk '*Ne mutlu türk'üm diyene*' (How happy is he who call himself a Turk), covers an overall area of over 200 000 square metres and is lit up by thousands of light bulbs at night. 425 metres wide and 250 metres high, the flag in question is in the Guinness Book of Records as the largest flag in the world. It should be pointed out that special teams are brought over to Cyprus from Turkey to maintain this flag, using special chemical dyes. In view of the above will the Commission say:

1. Is it aware of the existence of the flag in question in this mountain chain in Cyprus?
2. How does it intend to intervene in this matter, given that this action by the Turkish Cypriot side:
 - constitutes an unprecedented daily provocation to the people of Cyprus, in particular Greek Cypriots;
 - recalls the tragic events accompanying the Turkish invasion and the continuing slavery of the northern part of Cyprus, thereby wrecking any attempts to cultivate a climate of confidence-building between the two communities;
 - constitutes a hostile action which forms part of Turkish endeavours to make the occupied territories of Cyprus Turkish?
3. How can it permit the existence of such a flag which, apart from the catastrophic environmental damage it causes, the use of chemical substances and the brutal abuse of the environment, involves an absurd waste of electricity at a time of economic crisis? Does Turkey show sufficient respect towards the environment to justify its desire to open the relevant chapter of accession negotiations?
4. What action does it intend to take to restore the balance of nature and to impose sanctions on Turkey, a candidate country, for its unbecoming conduct towards both Greek Cypriots and the environment?