

**Question for written answer E-005529/2012  
to the Commission**

Rule 117

**Frieda Brepoels (Verts/ALE), Bart Staes (Verts/ALE) and Jürgen Klute (GUE/NGL)**

Subject: Kurdish rights in the positive agenda with Turkey and its future constitution

On 17 May 2012 the new 'positive agenda', which aims to keep the accession process of Turkey alive, was launched in Ankara. The positive agenda aims not to replace, but to complement and support Turkey's accession process, mainly in the following areas: alignment with EU legislation; political reforms and fundamental rights; visas, mobility and migration; trade; energy; counter-terrorism and dialogue on foreign policy. Under the positive agenda working groups will be set up to accelerate the process of Turkey's alignment with EU policies and standards under eight chapters. On 17 May the first working group, on Chapter 23, dealing with judicial and fundamental rights and anti-corruption, was launched.

In this context, we ask the following questions:

1. In Commissioner Füle's speech at the Chapter 23 kick-off meeting with Turkey, it was said that 'more needs to be done for the protection of persons belonging to minorities, and for cultural rights'. Does this mean that the Kurdish population in Turkey will be able to determine the content of education policy, that the Kurdish language must be allowed in education, and that Kurdish can be used freely in politics? Which other Kurdish protective and cultural rights should be guaranteed? How can the Commission push for them to become reality?
2. As regards the establishment of a new, independent High Council of judges and prosecutors, does the Commission favour a system that would impose a guaranteed representation of minorities, like the Kurds, in the High Council?
3. The upcoming drafting of a new Turkish non-discriminatory, pluralist constitution must seek a peaceful resolution of the Kurdish question. Approval of such a constitution, however, requires national consensus on contentious issues such as citizenship, the anti-terror law, Kurdish-language education and lowering the 10 % national electoral threshold. Does the Commission believe these issues need to be resolved within the framework of the new constitution? Does the Commission believe a solution to the Kurdish issue must also be reached via the new civil constitution?
4. What is the Commission's reaction to the recent sentencing of Sakharov Prize winner Leyla Zana to 10 years in prison by a court in Diyarbakir? How will this influence the accession talks with Turkey?