

**Question for written answer E-003036/2017  
to the Commission**

Rule 130

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Subject: Churches seized by Erdogan

On 25 March 2017, the Turkish government issued an order to seize six churches in the southeastern city of Diyarbakir. Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox churches were taken.

On the pretext of reconstructing the historic centre of the city, which has been partially destroyed by 10 months of conflict, the Turkish Government is in reality intensifying its persecution of Christians, who represent just 0.4% of the population. In the words of a local pastor, 'the government didn't take over these pieces of property in order to protect them. They did so to acquire them' and control them. Christians and their defenders fear that their religious freedom will be restricted.

The Turkish Government's new initiative, clearly intended to persecute the Christian minority, is unacceptable, and once again proves the Turkish leader's lack of flexibility and his aversion to religious pluralism.

Does the Commission intend to suspend negotiations on the accession of Turkey to the European Union once and for all?