EU-Turkey

Reforms are needed, but also better recognition of progress achieved

The European Commission today published its annual progress report on Turkey's accession to the EU.

Hélène Flautre, Chair of the European Parliament's Turkey delegation, commented:

"The Commission's report underlines "limited progress" made by Turkey. It is true that democratisation initiatives are yet to be realised. Freedom of association, the right to trade union membership, freedom of expression and of the press and an independent justice system all remain priorities for reform. And yes, Turkey clearly needs a revised constitution.

The Commission is also right to insist on progress in the judicial procedures relating to the Ergenekon organisation and against Hrant Dink's murderers. Such clarity of message is however strangely absent on Turkey's courageous progress in both its foreign and domestic affairs, notably its rapprochement with Armenia and the centre stage debate that is taking place regarding its Kurdish population and democracy.

It appears that doubts over the Commission nominations weigh heavy on this report, which is at great pains to remain compatible with the views of Merkel and Sarkozy."
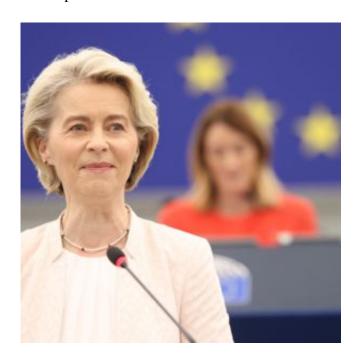
*German Green MEP **Ska Keller**, a member of the European Parliament's Turkey delegation, added:*

"It must be made clear that the accession talks are aimed towards Turkey's future membership of the EU and not a vague and undefined "privileged partnership" status as supported by certain member states. The EU must support the reform process in Turkey, not slow it down by mixed messages and double standards."

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