



HEAD OFFICE
10 Rue du Commerce
1000 Brussels, Belgium
+32 2 285 41 63
yepp@epp.eu

Standing strong in unity: EU's response to Turkey's aggression

Adopted at the YEPP Council Meeting in Larnaca, Cyprus. 26/11/2022

Having regard to:

1. the Negotiating Framework for Turkey of 3 October 2005 that Turkey's accession to the EU depends on full compliance with the Copenhagen criteria, and to the need to normalise its relations with all EU Member States.
2. the 'Ankara Agreement'¹, the EU's association agreement with Turkey, that was signed in 1963 aiming to at bridging Turkey into a Customs Union with EEC and ultimately membership.
3. Turkey's membership of the Council of Europe and NATO.
4. The relevant resolutions of the UN Security Council on Cyprus, including Resolution 186(1964) of 4 March 1964, which reaffirms the sovereignty of the Republic of Cyprus, Resolution 550(1984) of 11 May 1984 on secessionist actions in Cyprus and Resolution 789(1992) of 25 November 1992.
5. the Commission Report on Turkey 2021 of the EU Committee on Foreign Affairs (A9-0149/2022)
6. the Council Common Position 2008/944/CFSP which defines common rules governing control of exports of military technology and equipment.
7. The YEPP's resolution "Recognizing the sovereign Right of Countries to exploit their Natural Recourses" 10.09.2010 in Kyiv which condemns Turkey's efforts to hinder EU member states actions to exploit their Natural Recourses, based on UNCLOS III.
8. The YEPP's resolution "Stronger EU with more stringened partners" 11.04.2010, in Paris which recognizes the progress of Turkey's accession and proposes improvements on the process and special relationship as an alternative to a full membership.
9. The YEPP's resolution "Sending a clear message of unity and solidarity with Cyprus to Ankara" 10.09.2011 in Kyiv which urges EU to ensure territorial stability and unity against (blackmail) external interference in internal procedures.

¹ <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/en/d-tr/documents/eu-texts>



HEAD OFFICE
10 Rue du Commerce
1000 Brussels, Belgium
+32 2 285 41 63
yepp@epp.eu

10. The YEPP's resolution "Greece and Cyprus have full rights to explore their EEZs and Turkey must scale back tension in the eastern Mediterranean" 06.12.2014, in Athens which acknowledges Turkey's violations of national airspace and territorial waters of Greece and Cyprus and the basic principles of UN.
11. The YEPP's resolution "The illegal Memorandum of Understanding between Turkey and Libya" 07.12.2019, in Kyiv which condemns the illegal Memorandum between Turkey and Libya as it is jeopardising the European Union Member States sovereignty.
12. The YEPP's resolution "Turkish Provocations in Eastern Mediterranean" 28.11.2020, which condemns the provocative actions against the Republic of Cyprus and calls upon EU to adopt arms embargo, economic actions, and a unified position against unilateral illegal Turkish activities in Varosha.
13. The EPP's resolution "Recent Developments in the Cyprus' Problem" 01.06.2022 in Rotterdam which condemns the decision by Turkish and Turkish Cypriot leaders on reopening a part of the fenced-off area of Varosha.

Recognising that:

1. The EU is by far Turkey's largest import and export partner, as well as its main source of investments. In 2020, 33.4% of Turkey's imports came from the EU and 41.3% of the country's exports went to the EU². Every year about 60,000 student, scientist and academic exchanges take place between the EU and Turkey thanks to the education and youth exchange programmes financed by EU.
2. Turkey would receive €6 billion to improve the humanitarian situation faced by refugees in the country, and Turkish nationals would be granted visa-free travel to Europe. Since 2000 the European Investment Bank provided an unprecedented € 25+ Billion volume³. Under Horizon 2020, Turkish participants received almost €277 million in EU for innovation and research projects⁴. Also, Turkey has received € 9 billion from the instrument for pre-accession assistance (IPA) for the period 2007-2020 to promote Justice, human rights, good governance, inclusive growth, and sustainability. In 2018 the Council stated that Turkey had been moving away from the European Union and therefore accession negotiations are at a standstill. This position was reiterated in 2019 and 2021. Nonetheless, Turkey is able to benefit from the IPA III instrument in 2021-2027⁵.

² https://policy.trade.ec.europa.eu/eu-trade-relationships-country-and-region/countries-and-regions/turkey_en

³ <https://www.avrupa.info.tr/en/accession-negotiations-720>

⁴ https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/news/all-research-and-innovation-news/turkey-joins-horizon-europe-erasmus-and-solidarity-corps-programmes-2021-10-27_en

⁵ https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/about_the_european_commission/eu_budget/ps_db2023_ipa_h6.pdf

3. Turkey has sharply increased its offensive behaviour in the Aegean in 2022 compared to the previous years. Greek Defense Ministry⁶ agencies recorded 2,377 incidents, compared to 618 in 2021. The Turkish fighter jets just between January and April, flew 120 times over Greek territory, against 15 overflights in 2021. These overflights constitute a clear flagrant violation of national sovereignty. However, some of Turkey's main arms suppliers of major conventional weapons during 2017-21 were EU countries.

Acknowledging that:

1. The Ankara Agreement is nearly sixty years old and it does not reflect on the modern economic-political needs as it was not designed for the twenty-first century. However, this document, provides the normative foundations of EU-Turkey relations instead of the accession framework. For that reason, a renewed more transparent, open, and rules-based EU-Turkey Customs Union, in which rule of law can support a stable Turkey economy, democratic status and increased EU influence over Turkey's confrontational foreign policy.
2. Turkey fails to meet the high common standards for transfer of military technology and equipment that are determined in the Council Common Position⁷. The European Council has expressed deep concern over Turkey's repeated recent actions and statements that don't respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all EU member states. Furthermore, the EC Report on Turkey 2021⁸ highlights the continued deterioration of the human rights situation in Turkey, including backsliding on fundamental freedoms, democracy, and the rule of law.
3. The association agreements and the renegotiation of terms to modernise agreements are one of EU's tools to conduct effective diplomacy as a normative global power. The EU's agreements with Eastern partnership countries are recent examples of building strong partnerships with a wide geopolitical impact.
4. Turkey is testing the unity of the NATO alliance and EU against Russia's war in Ukraine. Turkey is closely collaborating with Russia. Turkey purchased S-400 missiles from Russia, causing a relentless diplomatic battle over them with the USA. Also, they collaborate on a large and strategic nuclear reactor construction project. Moreover, Turkey following a pattern blackmails NATO and jeopardises EU security by threatening to use veto over Finland and Sweden's bid to join NATO. If they don't take "concrete steps on the extradition of terrorist criminals" and agree "not to impose embargo restrictions in the field of defence industry" even though Turkey is inconsistent with the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR).

⁶ <https://www.ekathimerini.com/news/1188680/sharp-rise-in-turkish-air-violations/>

⁷ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32008E0944&from=EN>

⁸ https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/A-9-2022-0149_EN.html#_section1



HEAD OFFICE

10 Rue du Commerce
1000 Brussels, Belgium
+32 2 285 41 63
yepp@epp.eu

5. The energy exploration programme of the Republic of Cyprus and Greece will bolster the EU's energy security and regional energy cooperation while the European Union is the best tool for continued peace, security, and the further prosperity.
6. Turkey continues to play a destabilising role in the Eastern Mediterranean. Turkey has been incrementally building a strategic narrative of false claims in the Aegean that stretches from the Imia crisis (1996) to the present day. It has been threatening Greece with a casus belli, and it is imposing a new fait-accompli on Cyprus questioning EU territory. It has been increasing the intensity of the threats by an escalation in aggressive rhetoric. Combined with multiple violations of Greece's & Cyprus's sovereignty and sovereign rights at sea and in the air, the instrumentalization of migration flows, energy agreements that defy international law and fundamental principles of geography, massive disinformation campaigns and a unilateral decision to refuse a high-level dialogue in good faith. Turkey's behaviour is not compatible with a well-established international actor, an EU candidate country, bound by the EU values and principles.

YEPP Calls on:

1. EU to stick to its democratic principles in its relations with Turkey, to continue nurture a constructive & bona fide dialogue between Turkey and Europe, to invite Turkey to process reforms and to promote good relations by investing more in people-to-people links to enhance mutual understanding and to oppose Turkey's democratic backsliding.
2. EU to restructure the relation with Turkey in order to increase its wider geopolitical influence over Turkey's democratic erosion by modernising the 1963 association agreement under rules-based framework that includes automatic sanctions to minimise the need for ad-hoc negotiations every time Turkey takes a new provocative action.
3. European Commission and EU Member States to set new stricter and smarter rules of security and defence-related procurement mechanisms according to EU Council Common Position criteria as Turkey fails to meet the minimum standards. Moreover, to evaluate the participation of Turkish organisations in the development of strategic EU technologies funded by EU Programmes.
4. European Commission and EU Member States to vigorously monitor and reinforce the protection of EU's southeast borders and protect Greece's and Cyprus's right to explore and use their EU natural resources - Exclusive Economic Zones under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).
5. EU to introduce indicators to Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA III) fund that reflect on Turkey's government's unacceptable provocation actions that undermine the EU-Turkey good relations and are related to "rules,



HEAD OFFICE

10 Rue du Commerce
1000 Brussels, Belgium
+32 2 285 41 63
yepp@epp.eu

standards, policies and practices of the beneficiaries in alignment to those of the EU and to reinforce reconciliation and good neighbourly relations, as well as people to people contacts and communication” specific objective.

6. EU to continue strongly advocate Finish and Swedish “hand in hand” NATO memberships and press Turkey to treat Finland’s and Sweden’s application in good faith and refrain from exerting any other undue pressure in the process as it's against EU interest.