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## TEXTS ADOPTED

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### **P10\_TA(2025)0092**

### **2023 and 2024 reports on Türkiye**

### **European Parliament resolution of 7 May 2025 on the 2023 and 2024 Commission reports on Türkiye (2025/2023(INI))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to the European Council conclusions of 17 and 18 April 2024, 30 June 2023, 23 June 2022, 24 June 2021 and 12 December 2019, and to all relevant previous Council and European Council conclusions,
- having regard to Türkiye’s membership of the Council of Europe and NATO,
- having regard to the Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Turkey on the readmission of persons residing without authorisation<sup>1</sup> (EU-Turkey Readmission Agreement),
- having regard to the statement of the members of the European Council of 25 March 2021 on Türkiye,
- having regard to the ‘EU-Turkey statements’ of 18 March 2016 and 29 November 2015,
- having regard to the ‘Turkey Negotiating Framework’ of 3 October 2005,
- having regard to the declaration issued by the European Community and its Member States on 21 September 2005 following the declaration made by Turkey upon its signature of the Additional Protocol to the Ankara Agreement on 29 July 2005,
- having regard to the Council conclusions of December 2006 and March 2020, and to the Presidency Conclusions of the European Council in Copenhagen of 21-22 June 1993, also known as the Copenhagen Criteria,
- having regard to the Council conclusions on Enlargement of 17 December 2024 and of 12 December 2023,
- having regard to the International Law of the Sea and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS),

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 134, 7.5.2014, p. 3, ELI: [http://data.europa.eu/eli/agree\\_international/2014/252/oj](http://data.europa.eu/eli/agree_international/2014/252/oj).

- having regard to the Commission communication of 30 October 2024 on EU enlargement policy (COM(2024)0690) and to the accompanying Türkiye 2024 Report (SWD(2024)0696),
- having regard to the Commission communication of 8 November 2023 on EU enlargement policy (COM(2023)0690) and to the accompanying Türkiye 2023 Report (SWD(2023)0696),
- having regard to Special report 06/2024 of the European Court of Auditors of 24 April 2024 entitled ‘The Facility for Refugees in Turkey – Beneficial for refugees and host communities, but impact and sustainability not yet ensured’,
- having regard to the joint communications from the Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy to the European Council of 29 November 2023 (JOIN(2023)0050) and of 22 March 2021 (JOIN(2021)0008) on the state of play of EU-Türkiye political, economic and trade relations,
- having regard to the Commission communication of 19 December 2024 entitled ‘Eighth Annual Report of the Facility for Refugees in Türkiye’ (COM(2024)0593),
- having regard to the fundamental principles of international law and to the Charter of the United Nations, the 1977 and the 1979 High-Level Agreements between the leaders of the two communities, and 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, Resolution 789 (1992) of 25 November 1992, and Resolution 2537 (2020) on the UN Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP),
- having regard to Article 46 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), which states that the contracting parties undertake to abide by the final judgment of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) in any case to which they are parties, and to the ensuing obligation of Türkiye to implement all judgments of the ECtHR,
- having regard to the relevant resolutions of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe,
- having regard to the 2025 Freedom in the World report published by Freedom House,
- having regard to the 2024 World Press Freedom Index published by Reporters Without Borders,
- having regard to the January 2025 prison statistics report published by the Civil Society in the Penal System Association (CISST) and to the 2024 country profile for Türkiye published by Prison Insider,
- having regard to the Global Gender Gap Report 2024 published by the World Economic Forum,
- having regard to recent reports of the We Will Stop Femicide Platform (Kadın Cinayetlerini Durduracağız Platformu),

- having regard to the UNESCO statement on Hagia Sophia of 10 July 2020, and to the relevant UNESCO World Heritage Committee decisions 44 COM 7B.58 (2021) and 45 COM 7B.58 (2023), adopted in its 44<sup>th</sup> and 45<sup>th</sup> sessions respectively,
  - having regard to its previous resolutions on Türkiye, in particular those of 13 September 2023 on the 2022 Commission Report on Türkiye<sup>1</sup>, of 7 June 2022 on the 2021 Commission Report on Turkey<sup>2</sup>, and of 26 November 2020 on escalating tensions in Varosha following the illegal actions by Türkiye and the urgent need for the resumption of talks<sup>3</sup>,
  - having regard to its resolution of 29 February 2024 on deepening EU integration in view of future enlargement<sup>4</sup>,
  - having regard to its resolution of 15 April 2015 on the centenary of the Armenian Genocide<sup>5</sup>,
  - having regard to its resolutions of 5 May 2022 on the case of Osman Kavala in Turkey<sup>6</sup>, of 10 October 2024 on the case of Bülent Mumay in Türkiye<sup>7</sup> and of 13 February 2025 on recent dismissals and arrests of mayors in Türkiye<sup>8</sup>,
  - having regard to European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen’s visit to Ankara in December 2024,
  - having regard to Rule 55 of its Rules of Procedure,
  - having regard to the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs (A10-0067/2025),
- A. whereas Türkiye remains a candidate for EU accession, and EU membership remains the repeatedly declared political goal of the Turkish Government, although the gap with the values and interests of the EU is growing; whereas EU accession negotiations have effectively been at a standstill since 2018, owing to the deterioration of the rule of law and democracy in Türkiye;
- B. whereas any accession country is expected to respect democratic values, the rule of law and human rights, and to abide by EU law; whereas Türkiye needs to credibly demonstrate its commitment to closer relations and alignment with the European Union in order to reinvigorate its European perspective; whereas being a candidate country presumes a willingness to progressively approach and align with the EU in all aspects, including values, interests, standards and policies, inter alia with its common foreign and security policy, to respect and uphold the Copenhagen criteria, and to pursue and maintain good neighbourly relations with the EU and all of its Member States without discrimination; whereas the tensions between the EU and Türkiye in relation to the situation in the Eastern Mediterranean have de-escalated but not ceased; whereas

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<sup>1</sup> OJ C, C/2024/1760, 22.3.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/C/2024/1760/oj>.

<sup>2</sup> OJ C 493, 27.12.2022, p. 2.

<sup>3</sup> OJ C 425, 20.10.2021, p. 143.

<sup>4</sup> OJ C, C/2024/6746, 26.11.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/C/2024/6746/oj>.

<sup>5</sup> OJ C 328, 6.9.2016, p. 2.

<sup>6</sup> OJ C 465, 6.12.2022, p. 112.

<sup>7</sup> OJ C, C/2025/206, 14.1.2025, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/C/2025/206/oj>.

<sup>8</sup> Texts adopted, P10\_TA(2025)0016.

Türkiye has repeatedly been asked to refrain from all actions which violate the sovereignty and sovereign rights of all EU Member States and are in breach of international and EU law;

- C. whereas the 2023 Commission progress report on Türkiye painted a picture of continued backsliding, while its latest progress report of 2024 appears to present a slightly more positive overall picture of progress on enlargement-related reforms in Türkiye, such as in the area of economic and monetary policies; whereas this cannot, however, be applied to the core matters related to democracy and fundamental rights, which have deteriorated even further since the release of the Commission's latest report; whereas the gap between Türkiye and the EU's values and normative framework has therefore remained unaddressed during the recent period with the persistent use of laws and measures aimed at curtailing the rule of law and human rights, fundamental freedoms and civil liberties;
- D. whereas the joint communication on the state of play of EU-Türkiye relations of 29 November 2023 struck a more positive note, putting forward a set of recommendations on cooperating in areas of joint interest in a phased, proportionate and reversible manner and based on the established conditionalities; whereas only a few concrete steps in line with the commitments therein have been taken so far; whereas the April 2024 European Council mandated Coreper to advance in the implementation of this joint communication; whereas nevertheless this joint communication has not yet received a clear political endorsement by the Council;
- E. whereas Türkiye is a member of the Council of Europe and is therefore bound by the judgments of the ECtHR; whereas owing to its failure to apply landmark ECtHR rulings, Türkiye is currently facing historical infringement proceedings; whereas Türkiye consistently ranks among the countries most frequently found in violation of the human rights and fundamental freedoms protected by the European Convention on Human Rights; whereas as of late November 2024, Türkiye had the highest number of pending cases before the ECtHR, with 22 450 applications, representing 36,7 % of the Court's total caseload of 61 250 applications;
- F. whereas Türkiye is classified as 'not free' by Freedom House and has experienced one of the worst declines in the level of freedom in the world in the past 10 years; whereas Türkiye ranks 158<sup>th</sup> out of 180 countries in the 2024 World Press Freedom Index; whereas the Turkish Government has closed dozens of media outlets, routinely blocks online articles, is reported to control 85 % of national media and uses its state agency Anadolu as an organ of propaganda;
- G. whereas the Turkish constitution provides for sufficient protection of fundamental rights, but the practice of the institutions and the critical state of the judiciary, including the lack of respect for Constitutional Court rulings, are the main reasons for the dire situation of the rule of law and human rights in the country, issues repeatedly described in the reports of the EU, the Council of Europe and international organisations;
- H. whereas Türkiye has the highest incarceration rate and the largest prison population of all Council of Europe Member States, with an overcrowded prison population that has grown by 439 % between 2005 and 2023 and currently represents more than a third of all inmates of Council of Europe countries;

- I. whereas Türkiye is ranked 127<sup>th</sup> out of 146 countries in the 2024 Global Gender Gap Index, underscoring severe gender inequality and systemic failures in protecting women's rights; whereas according to the 2024 report of the We Will Stop Femicide Platform (Kadın Cinayetlerini Durduracağız Platformu), 394 women were murdered by men and 259 women were found dead in suspicious circumstances in Türkiye in 2024, the highest number recorded since the civil society group started collecting data in 2010; whereas in its 2023 report, the platform noted that 315 women were killed by men, and 248 women were found dead in suspicious circumstances;
- J. whereas in recent months, Türkiye has taken steps towards the resumption of a process for a peaceful resolution of the Kurdish question; whereas on 27 February 2025 jailed militant leader Abdullah Öcalan called on his Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) to disarm and disband, providing a historic opportunity to end the Turkish-Kurdish conflict; whereas these efforts have been accompanied by increasing repression and the curtailment of the powers of democratic local governments, including the dismissal of elected Kurdish and other opposition mayors;
- K. whereas, alongside being a candidate for EU accession, Türkiye is a NATO ally and a key partner in the areas of trade, economic relations, security, the fight against terrorism, and migration; whereas Türkiye continues to play a key role in the region, acts as a bridge between Europe and Asia, and remains a key partner for the stability of the wider East Mediterranean region; whereas Türkiye continues to play a significant role in the Syrian conflict and maintains a military presence in northern Syria;
- L. whereas Türkiye has not aligned with EU sanctions against Russia; whereas trade between Türkiye and Russia has nearly doubled since the EU's imposition of sanctions against Russia; whereas despite some steps taken, Türkiye has not prevented its territory from being used to circumvent EU sanctions against Russia;
- M. whereas the 2024 Commission progress report on Türkiye states that, as at 30 September 2024, the country maintained a very low alignment rate of 5 % with relevant statements of the High Representative on behalf of the EU and with relevant Council decisions, compared to 9 % in 2023;
- N. whereas Türkiye is the EU's fifth largest trade partner, and the EU is Türkiye's largest trading partner by far, as well as its primary source of foreign direct investment;
- O. whereas in the past year, the level of engagement between the EU and Türkiye has increased in terms of both technical and high-level meetings in sectoral areas;
- P. whereas Türkiye has applied for membership of BRICS+ and shown interest in joining the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO);
- Q. whereas following a period of unorthodox economic policy, Türkiye has implemented a tighter monetary policy over the past year leading to a reduction in external imbalances and a moderation of inflationary pressures;
- R. whereas in March 2025 the Turkish Government spent at least USD 10 billion of its currency reserves to counteract the collapse of its financial markets and the devaluation of the lira caused by its decision to arrest and detain Mayor of Istanbul and prominent opposition politician Ekrem İmamoğlu; whereas the Turkish Government's

undermining of Turkish democracy and the rule of law creates an unfavourable environment for foreign direct investment and hence weakens the Turkish economy, with grave consequences for the socio-economic situation of Turkish citizens;

- S. whereas Türkiye hosts the largest refugee population in the world, with around 3,1 million registered refugees, mainly from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan; whereas since 2011 the EU has directed more than EUR 10 billion to assisting refugees and host communities in Türkiye; whereas according to a credible investigative report by Lighthouse Reports and eight media partners, the EU is funding removal centres in Türkiye implicated in the detention, abuse and forced deportations of refugees under the guise of voluntary return;
- T. whereas in addition to the emergency assistance coordinated via the EU Civil Protection Mechanism, with an estimated financial value of EUR 38 million, the EU provided EUR 78,2 million in humanitarian aid for the earthquake response in 2023, and EUR 26 million in humanitarian aid in 2024; whereas the EU signed an additional EUR 400 million in assistance under the EU Solidarity Fund to finance recovery operations following the devastating earthquake;
- U. whereas Türkiye has systematically misused counterterrorism laws to target elected officials, opposition politicians, journalists and human rights defenders, among others;

#### ***Commitment to EU accession***

1. Recognises the long-standing aspirations of Turkish civil society regarding accession to the European Union; welcomes the Turkish Government's recent statements reiterating its commitment to EU membership as a strategic goal amid an effort to revitalise EU-Türkiye relations in line with relevant European Council conclusions in a phased, proportionate and reversible manner; recognises the EU's commitment to fostering this engagement through enhanced dialogue and cooperation but encourages it to review its expectations for engagement in the foreseeable future, in light of the deterioration of democratic standards that has been pushing the country towards an authoritarian model over the past decade, accelerating recently with the politically motivated arrest of President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's main political opponent, Mayor of Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality Ekrem İmamoğlu;
2. Stresses that EU membership is contingent on fulfilling the accession (Copenhagen) criteria, which require stable institutions that guarantee democracy, the rule of law, human rights, respect for and the protection of minorities, good neighbourly relations, respect for international law and alignment with the EU CFSP; further notes that these are absolute criteria, not issues subject to transactional strategic considerations and negotiations; stresses that recognition of all Member States is a necessary component of the accession process;
3. Regrets, in this regard, that the aforementioned positive statements have not been accompanied by any concrete actions by the Turkish authorities to close the persistent and vast gap between Türkiye and the EU on values and standards, particularly with regard to the fundamentals of the accession process; reiterates its previously adopted conclusion that the Turkish Government continues to show, as it has done for the past few years, a clear lack of political will to carry out the necessary reforms to reactivate

the accession process and continues to pursue a deeply entrenched authoritarian understanding of the presidential system;

4. Acknowledges the strategic and geopolitical importance of Türkiye, and its increasing presence and influence in areas critical to international security, such as the Black Sea region, including Ukraine, and the Middle East; reiterates that Türkiye is a strategic partner and NATO ally, and a country with which the EU has close relations in the areas of security, trade, economy and migration; welcomes closer cooperation between Türkiye and the EU, to which the Turkish Government has made frequent reference, but stresses that this cannot in any way be a substitute for the necessary real progress which Türkiye, as a candidate country, needs to make with regard to meeting the fundamental requirements for accession; highlights, in this regard, that there are no shortcuts in the accession process and that no argument can be put forward to avoid discussing the democratic principles which are at the core of the accession process;
5. Notes that the Commission's Türkiye report 2024 paints a more positive picture of reform implementation in the context of Türkiye's accession process than the Türkiye report 2023, shifting from further deterioration to 'no progress' with regard to the rule of law and human rights issues; is of the opinion, however, that at least in key areas such as democracy, rule of law and fundamental rights, this is due to the fact that a very low point had already been reached and this situation has remained unchanged;
6. Further takes note of a nuanced shift in focus of the Türkiye report 2024, by contrast with the 2023 report, away from the accession process towards a strategic partnership between the European Union and Türkiye; is of the opinion that the critical state of the accession process is driving the Commission and the Council to focus merely on the partnership dimension of the EU's relations with Türkiye, as is also reflected in the joint communication on the state of play of EU-Türkiye relations of 29 November 2023, and of 22 March 2021; highlights the increasing shift towards a different framework for the relationship, which might come at the expense of the accession process;

***The core of the accession process: democracy, the rule of law and fundamental rights***

7. Considers that, in terms of human rights and the rule of law, Parliament's recent resolutions on the matter remain valid in light of the continued dire human rights situation and democratic backsliding in Türkiye over the last year; fully endorses the latest resolutions of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and the related report by its Monitoring Committee, as well as the resolutions adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, which depict in detail the wide range of serious shortfalls in human rights constantly reported by locally and internationally renowned human rights organisations;
8. Notes the Turkish Government's stated commitment to judicial reform and the introduction of measures of an organisational nature; highlights, however, the need to introduce structural measures ensuring judicial independence; deeply regrets that, despite a reform strategy with nine judicial reform packages, the state of independence of the judiciary in Türkiye remains desolate following systematic government interference in and political instrumentalisation of the judicial system; deplores, in this regard, the weakening of remaining constitutional review mechanisms, particularly individual applications, and the frequent violations of due process;

9. Is dismayed by the persecution of legal professionals, including most recently the lawsuit filed by the Istanbul Chief Public Prosecutor's Office that resulted in the removal of the leadership of the Istanbul Bar Association on charges of 'making propaganda for a terrorist organization' and 'publicly disseminating misleading information' for having asked for an investigation into the murders of two Kurdish journalists in Syria, and in the imprisonment of one of the members of the Istanbul Bar Association's executive board following his trip to Strasbourg to hold meetings with Council of Europe institutions;
10. Is alarmed by the blatant lack of implementation of decisions by the Constitutional Court, including in the case of MP Can Atalay, which has turned into a serious judicial crisis, with the Court of Cassation filing a criminal complaint against nine judges of the Constitutional Court; is worried by the recent decision of the Court of Cassation to overturn the sentences of and release the terrorists involved in the ISIS attack at Istanbul's Atatürk Airport, which claimed 45 lives in 2016;
11. Calls on Türkiye to strengthen its commitment to democratic governance, especially through reforms that ensure an independent judiciary; takes notes of the recent announcement of the Fourth Judicial Reform Strategy, spanning 2025-2029; calls on the Turkish Government to move from the superficial changes made so far through the recurrent reform packages and action plans to a profound and long overdue reform that will address, through real political will, the serious and structural shortcomings of Türkiye's judiciary; stresses that putting an end to political interference in the judiciary requires no strategy or reform package but merely the political will to do so;
12. Remains deeply concerned by the continued deterioration of democratic standards and relentless crackdown by the Turkish authorities on any critical voices by means of a growing battery of repressive laws, the regular misuse of counterterrorism laws, including their application in relation to minors (as in the 'Kız Çocukları Davası' trial), the disproportionate use of the crime of insulting a public official, the extensive use of secret witnesses and dormant cases in flawed judicial proceedings, and the recurrent practice of exaggerated night arrests and home raids to portray targeted persons as extremely dangerous;
13. Welcomes the withdrawal in November 2024 of the draft amendment to Türkiye's espionage laws, known as the 'agent of influence' law; urges the Turkish authorities to refrain from reintroducing a similar overly broad and vague law in the future, given the serious risk that it would be used as a tool to further criminalise the legitimate activities of civil society organisations within the country; calls on the Turkish authorities to ensure that the recently approved cybersecurity bill will serve its legitimate purpose of protecting data privacy and national security without giving way to potential infringements of fundamental rights or becoming another tool for further repression; stresses that the judicial apparatus remains heavily restrictive, with a complex web of legislation serving as a tool to systematically control and silence any critical voice, such as the 2020 social media law, the 2021 anti-money laundering law and the 2022 disinformation law;
14. Is concerned by the recent approval of legal provisions granting extraordinary powers to the State Supervisory Council (DDK) and the Savings Deposit Insurance Fund (TMSF), including the possibility for the former to dismiss public officials of all types and levels and appoint trustees, which could be used in an arbitrary manner;



15. Urges the Turkish authorities to put an end to the current serious restrictions on fundamental freedoms, in particular of expression, of assembly and of association, and to the constant attacks on the fundamental rights of members of the opposition, human rights defenders, lawyers, trade unionists, members of minorities, journalists, academics, artists and civil society activists, among others; strongly condemns the recent waves of mass arrest and imprisonment on politically motivated charges, and on the grounds of suspected terror links, affecting political figures, academics and journalists, including the arrests of Elif Akgül, independent journalist, Yıldız Tar, editor in chief of LGBT+ news site Kaos GL, Ender İmrek, columnist of Evrensel daily, and Joakim Medin, Swedish journalist for ETC, all well known for their work on human rights issues;
16. Strongly condemns the recent arrest and detention of the Swedish journalist Joakim Medin; reiterates that freedom of the press is a fundamental right and core EU value; strongly condemns the accusations made against Joakim Medin, which are solely based on his journalistic work and therefore demands his immediate and unconditional release and that of other journalists imprisoned for exercising their freedom of speech;
17. Deplores the continued prosecution, censorship and harassment of journalists and independent media, denying them the freedom to carry out their professional duties and inform the public, which is essential to a functioning democratic society; calls on the Turkish authorities to refrain from further attacks on independent media and to uphold fundamental rights and civil liberties such as freedom of speech and of the press; remains deeply concerned by the existing legislation that prevents an open and free internet, with lengthy prison sentences imposed for social media posts, scores of access blocks and content removal orders, and by the continued use of the Radio and Television Supreme Council (RTÜK) to crack down on media criticism and even on outlets deemed to spread 'pessimism' instead of positive news;
18. Acknowledges the positive developments in relation to the partial lifting by the minister of the interior of restrictions on the weekly vigils of the Saturday Mothers, Cumartesi Anneleri, in Istanbul's Galatasaray Square, and the recent acquittal of all 46 people prosecuted for more than 6 years in the case surrounding the organisation's 700th gathering in August 2018; calls for the complete removal of all restrictions on their peaceful protest, in full compliance with the relevant Constitutional Court ruling, and for an end to the ongoing judicial case against several of its members and sympathisers; is concerned by the ongoing trial against prominent human rights defender Nimet Tanrıkulu, who was released on 4 March 2025 after spending 94 days in pre-trial detention; urges the Turkish authorities to ensure the immediate release of all individuals detained for exercising their fundamental freedoms;
19. Continues to be appalled by the Turkish authorities', in particular the Turkish judiciary's, continuous disregard for and failure to apply landmark ECtHR rulings; reiterates its condemnation of Türkiye's blatant misuse of the judicial system and the refusal to release from detention human rights defender Osman Kavala and opposition politicians Selahattin Demirtaş and Figen Yüksekdağ, for which Türkiye is facing historical infringement proceedings in the Council of Europe, with long-awaited consequences yet to be determined; is appalled by the recent filing and acceptance of a new indictment against Selahattin Demirtaş in which the Diyarbakır Chief Public Prosecutor's Office asks for up to 15 years of imprisonment and a ban on his political activities on the basis of several speeches he made in 2016; calls on Türkiye to fully

comply with the ECtHR judgements related to missing persons and properties (inter alia in the Fokas case) in Cyprus; deplores the politically motivated nature of these prosecutions, which form part of a broader pattern of judicial harassment; calls on Türkiye to fully implement all judgments of the ECtHR in line with Article 46 of the ECHR and in line with the unconditional obligations derived from Article 90 of the Turkish constitution; calls on the European Commission and Member States to use all diplomatic channels to urge Türkiye to implement relevant ECtHR rulings and consider implementing relevant funding conditionality in relation to compliance with ECtHR rulings;

20. Calls on Türkiye to respect the European Court of Human Rights decision of 24 January 2008, which found Türkiye guilty of breaching Article 2 of the European Convention on Human Rights, due to its failure to locate and prosecute those responsible in the case of the murders of Tassos Isaak and Solomos Solomou, which were committed in Cyprus in 1996; calls on the Turkish authorities to enforce the international arrest warrants against the murder suspects, and hand them over to the Republic of Cyprus;
21. Expresses its deep concern about the dire situation in Turkish prisons owing to severe overcrowding and poor living conditions, with reports, including by the Council of Europe, of torture and ill-treatment being widespread, and access to basic needs such as hygiene and information being severely limited; is particularly worried by the conditions of imprisonment of elderly and seriously ill prisoners, such as the case of Soydan Akay, who is being unjustly kept imprisoned; calls for his immediate release on humanitarian and health grounds; is concerned by the continued use of humiliating strip searches in prisons and other places of detention and by the persisting harassment of MP Ömer Faruk Gergerlioğlu, who is currently facing six proceedings for the removal of his parliamentary seat and immunity, among other reasons for his having denounced this very practice;
22. Strongly condemns the Turkish Government's decision to dismiss, following the March 2024 local elections, the democratically elected mayors of at least 13 municipalities and districts (Hakkari, Mardin, Batman, Halfeti, Tunceli, Bahçesaray, Akdeniz, Siirt, Van and Kağızman, won by the DEM Party; and Esenyurt Ovacık and Şişli, won by CHP Party) and to replace them with government trustees appointed by the interior ministry; regards this long-standing practice of appointing trustees as a blatant attack on the most basic principles of local democracy; urges the Turkish authorities to immediately cease and reverse repression of political opposition and to respect the rights of voters to elect their chosen representatives in line with the recommendations of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe and the Venice Commission; reiterates its call on the VP/HR to consider restrictive measures under the EU Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime against Turkish officials assuming the role of trustee and those appointing them; denounces the severe repression of protests against the removal of elected mayors, including the arbitrary arrest of hundreds of protesters, some of whom were minors; regards the decision of the Turkish Government to return to this practice after the last local elections of March 2024 as a clear sign of its lack of commitment to addressing the democratic shortcomings within the country and in clear contradiction to the declared willingness to revitalise the accession process, as such actions undermine the prospects for a stronger, more comprehensive partnership with the EU and are detrimental to long-term progress towards closer cooperation;

23. Deplores the permanent targeting of political parties and members of the opposition, who continue to suffer increasing pressure; condemns in the strongest terms the recent arrest and removal from office of the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality CHP Mayor Ekrem İmamoğlu, along with the mayors of Şişli and Beylikdüzü, in the framework of two separate investigations on alleged corruption and terrorist-related charges involving a total of 106 suspects; highlights that these last cases, which are part of a long list of 42 administrative and 51 judicial investigations since İmamoğlu's election in 2019, were launched just a few days before the internal party election to nominate him presidential candidate and the day after the controverted decision by Istanbul University to revoke his diploma, a requisite for his eligibility to be President; is appalled by the decision to temporarily ban all demonstrations in Istanbul and other provinces across the country, and the slowdown on social media; condemns the Turkish authorities' harsh crackdown on the peaceful mass protests, including the detention of nearly 2000 people, many of them students, and the prosecution of hundreds of them through hasty mass trials with a lack of any evidence of criminal wrongdoing; expresses its deep concern over the unlawful arrest of Esila Ayık, a Ghent-based photography student detained on 8 April 2025 during protests in Istanbul, particularly owing to her untreated heart and kidney conditions; calls for the immediate release of all those still in detention and the acquittal of all those prosecuted for exercising their fundamental rights; deplores the arrests, detentions and deportations of local and international journalists covering the protests, in violation of the freedom of the press; urges the Turkish authorities to promptly and effectively investigate all allegations of harassment and excessive use of force against protesters and to uphold the freedom of assembly and protest; considers that the attacks against İmamoğlu constitute a politically motivated move aimed at preventing a legitimate challenger from standing in the upcoming elections and that with these actions the current Turkish authorities are further pushing the country towards a fully authoritarian model; regrets the EU's lack of a strong, unified response to these alarming developments;
24. Further expresses its concern about the recent separate cases against Istanbul's Beşiktaş district CHP Mayor Rıza Akpolat, Istanbul's Beykoz district CHP Mayor Alaattin Köseler, CHP Youth Branch Chair Cem Aydın, and Zafer Party Chair Ümit Özdağ; is appalled by the brutal and relentless crackdown on any kind of criticism to which all sectors of Turkish society have recently been subjected by the Turkish authorities, as illustrated, among others, by the case of Ayşe Barım, a well-known talent manager imprisoned since 27 January 2025 for alleged involvement in the Gezi Park protest 12 years ago, the investigation launched against Orhan Turan and Ömer Aras, the president and an executive of TÜSİAD, the country's main business group, and the indictment, with the aim of imposing hefty prison sentences, of Halk TV Editor-in-Chief Suat Toktaş and journalists Seda Selek, Barış Pehlivan, Serhan Asker and Kürşad Oğuz, who have been provisionally acquitted; is concerned by the involvement in these and other cases of recently appointed Istanbul Chief Public Prosecutor Akın Gürlek, who has a long record of involvement, in different positions, in high-profile cases against political figures, and which may give grounds for considering the application of restrictive measures under the EU Human Rights sanction regime; is also concerned by the growing financial pressure on opposition municipalities and controversial announcements, such as that made in relation to day-care centres run by opposition municipalities;
25. Expresses its deep concern at the deterioration in women's rights, at gender-based violence and at the increase in the incidence of femicide in Türkiye in 2024, which has

been the highest since 2010, the year before the signing of the Istanbul Convention; reiterates its strong condemnation of Türkiye's withdrawal, by presidential decree, from this international agreement and reiterates its call to reverse this decision; urges the Turkish authorities to improve the legislative framework and its implementation, including by fully applying Protection Law no. 6284, in order to effectively tackle all forms of violence against women and the practice of so-called 'honour killings', end the persistent policy of impunity by holding abusers to account, and advance towards gender equality, particularly with regard to the participation of women in decision-making and policymaking processes; warns against further encroachments on women's rights, as exemplified by Türkiye's recent ban on elective caesarean sections at private medical centres without medical justification, which constitutes an unacceptable infringement on women's bodily autonomy;

26. Strongly condemns the ongoing violations and lack of protection of the fundamental rights of LGBTI+ persons in Türkiye, including the increased incidence of hate speech, hate crimes and discriminatory rhetoric, as well as continued media stereotyping based on sexual orientation and gender identity; deplores the fact that this continued discrimination is often sanctioned by the authorities, as evidenced by the mass arrests made during the Pride March in 2023 and the banning of the march in 2024, while anti-LGBTI+ marches were permitted; urges the Turkish authorities to stop banning activities against homophobia, including Pride marches, with immediate effect;
27. Welcomes the increased dialogue with Christian minorities, but stresses that no significant progress has been registered with regard to the protection of the rights of ethnic and religious minorities, in particular as regards their legal personality, including those of the Greek Orthodox population of the islands of Gökçeada (Imvros) and Bozcaada (Tenedos); calls for Türkiye to implement the Venice Commission recommendations and all relevant ECtHR rulings in this regard; notes with concern that representatives of different confessions, including non-Muslim and Alevi communities, continue to face bureaucratic obstacles when attempting to register places of worship; highlights that this is a violation of the right to freedom of religion and belief; calls on Türkiye to adopt the long-awaited regulation on the election of board members in non-Muslim minority foundations controlling community hospitals; reiterates its call on Türkiye to respect the role of the Ecumenical Patriarchate for Orthodox Christians all over the world and to recognise its legal personality and the public use of the ecclesiastical title of Ecumenical Patriarch; calls on Türkiye to fully respect and protect the outstanding universal value of Hagia Sophia and the Chora museum, which are inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage List; notes with concern that Türkiye has still not implemented two decisions of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee of 2021 and 2023 regarding its obligations to undertake special measures to protect these monuments; deplores the lack of protection of Panagia Soumela Monastery, which has been put forward for inclusion in the UNESCO World Heritage Monuments list; stresses the need to eliminate restrictions on the training, appointment and succession of clergy; welcomes the envisaged reopening of the Halki Seminary and calls for the lifting of all obstacles to its proper functioning; calls on the Turkish authorities to effectively investigate and prosecute people responsible for any hate crimes, including hate speech, committed against minorities; condemns the antisemitic statements made in the media and by high-level officials following the Hamas terrorist attacks against Israel on 7 October 2023; notes that all of these practices against any religious minority are incompatible with EU values;

28. Welcomes Abdullah Öcalan's recent call on the PKK to lay down arms and dissolve, and to engage in a peace process, as a historic and long-awaited step that could help end a period of 40 years of violence that has caused more than 40 000 deaths; praises the efforts made by all stakeholders involved to facilitate these developments, including the constructive approach of different political leaders that was started by MHP leader Devlet Bahçeli, the visits to Imrali prison granted to a delegation of the DEM Party, and the broad consultations that this party has led with other political parties; underlines that this represents a significant opportunity and must be followed by an inclusive political process, with a prominent role for the Turkish Parliament, aimed at the peaceful and sustainable resolution of the Kurdish issue in its political, social, democratic and security-related aspects; stresses the need to uphold human rights, political pluralism, and civil rights for all citizens, including Kurds; regrets the continued political repression, judicial harassment and restrictions on cultural and linguistic rights faced by Kurdish citizens, which undermine democratic principles and social cohesion;

### ***Regional cooperation and good neighbourly relations***

29. Continues to commend Türkiye for hosting around 3,1 million refugees, including 2,9 million Syrians under temporary protection in 2024, down from 3,2 million in 2023; reiterates the importance of Türkiye's collaboration for the effective and orderly management of migration flows; further welcomes the fact that since 2011 the EU has contributed close to EUR 10 billion to assist Türkiye in hosting refugees; notes that some EU funding has been allocated to strengthening Turkish border control and containment capabilities; welcomes the EU's decision to allocate an additional EUR 1 billion in December 2024 to further support the healthcare, education, and integration of refugees in Türkiye since the fall of the Assad regime; at the same time, notes that these funds had already been pledged in May 2024, and therefore do not constitute new funds; calls on the Commission to ensure utmost transparency and accuracy in the allocation of funds and that EU-funded projects, particularly those related to removal centres and border control, comply with all relevant human rights standards; is alarmed by credible reports uncovering grave human rights violations at EU-funded removal centres in Türkiye and calls on the Commission to launch a transparent and independent review into the matter; notes with concern that a continuing increase in asylum applications has been registered in the Republic of Cyprus over recent years; recalls Türkiye's obligation to take all necessary measures to halt the existing illegal migration routes and prevent the creation of new sea or land routes for illegal migration from Türkiye to the EU, particularly to Greece and the Republic of Cyprus; points out the risks related to any possible instrumentalisation of migrants by the Turkish Government; underlines the need to ensure the protection of all refugees' and migrants' rights and freedoms; calls on Türkiye to ensure the full and non-discriminatory implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement of 2016 and the EU-Türkiye Readmission Agreement vis-à-vis all Member States, including the Republic of Cyprus; expresses cautious hope that developments in Syria will gradually allow an increasing number of refugees to return home; reiterates that returns should only be carried out on a voluntary basis and under conditions of safety and dignity; condemns repeated violent attacks against refugees and migrants fuelled by xenophobic rhetoric among politicians and host communities; calls on the European Commission and the EU Member States to increase their efforts to preserve humanitarian and protection space for Syrian refugees in Türkiye and to uphold the principle of non-refoulement as a cornerstone of EU policies;

30. Reiterates its strong interest in stability and security in the Eastern Mediterranean; welcomes the continued de-escalation and positive momentum in the region and the recent climate of re-engagement between Türkiye and Greece, albeit that unresolved issues continue to affect bilateral relations; deplores the fact that Türkiye continues to violate the sovereignty and sovereign rights of EU Member States, such as Greece and the Republic of Cyprus, including through the promotion of the Blue Homeland doctrine; underlines that, although Turkish violations of Greek airspace have drastically decreased, violations of Greek territorial waters have risen compared to 2023, and systematic illegal fishing activities have been conducted by Turkish vessels within Greek territorial waters; expresses its deep concern that Türkiye continues to uphold a formal threat of war against Greece (*casus belli*), should the latter exercise its lawful right to extend its territorial waters up to 12 nautical miles into the Aegean Sea, in accordance with Article 3 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea; calls on Türkiye to fully respect the sovereignty of all EU Member States over their territorial sea and airspace, and their other sovereign rights, including the right to explore and exploit natural resources in accordance with EU and international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), which is part of the EU *acquis*; reiterates its view that the memorandum of understanding between Türkiye and Libya on delimitation of the maritime jurisdiction areas in the Mediterranean infringes upon the sovereign rights of third States, does not comply with the Law of the Sea and cannot produce any legal consequences for third States;
31. Regrets the fact that the Cyprus problem remains unresolved, and calls for serious reengagement and the political will of all parties involved to bring about peaceful UN-led negotiations, with a view to achieving real progress in the Cyprus settlement talks; welcomes the resumption of informal talks under the auspices of the UN Secretary-General on 18 and 19 March 2025, which were held in a constructive atmosphere in which both sides showed a clear commitment to making progress and continuing dialogue; welcomes the agreement between both sides on opening four crossing points, demining, establishing a youth affairs committee and launching environmental and solar energy projects, as part of a new set of confidence-building measures; encourages all sides to use this momentum to move towards the resumption of negotiations;
32. Strongly reaffirms its view that the only solution to the Cyprus problem is a fair, comprehensive, viable and democratic settlement, including of its external aspects, within the agreed UN framework, on the basis of a bi-communal, bi-zonal federation with a single international legal personality, single sovereignty, single citizenship and political equality, as set out in the relevant UN Security Council resolutions, the agreed areas of convergence and the Framework of the UN Secretary General, as well as in accordance with international law and the principles and values on which the Union is founded; strongly condemns Türkiye's attempts to upgrade the secessionist entity's status in occupied Cyprus, including via the Organisation of Turkic States, and calls on all states to respect Cyprus' sovereignty according to UNSC resolutions; calls, as a matter of urgency, for the resumption of negotiations on the reunification of Cyprus under the auspices of the UN Secretary-General as soon as possible, from the point at which they were interrupted in Crans-Montana in 2017; calls on Türkiye to abandon the unacceptable proposal for a two-state solution in Cyprus and to return to the agreed basis for a solution and the UN framework; further calls on Türkiye to withdraw its troops from Cyprus and refrain from any unilateral action which would entrench the permanent division of the island and from action altering the demographic balance;

33. Calls on Türkiye to respect the status of the buffer zone and the mandate of the UN Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP); reiterates its call for cooperation among the Republic of Cyprus, Türkiye, the United Kingdom and the UN to implement concrete measures for a demilitarisation of the buffer zone, and to improve security on the island; urges Türkiye and the Turkish Cypriot leadership to reverse all unilateral actions and violations within and in the vicinity of the buffer zone and refrain from any further such actions and provocations; condemns the ongoing ‘opening’ of Varosha by Türkiye, as this negatively alters the situation on the ground, undermines mutual trust and negatively impacts the prospects for the resumption of direct talks on the comprehensive solution of the Cyprus problem; calls on Türkiye to reverse its illegal actions in violation of UN Security Council resolutions 550(1984) and 789(1992) on Varosha, which call on Türkiye to transfer the area of Varosha to its lawful inhabitants under the temporary administration of the UN, and to withdraw from Strovilia and facilitate the full implementation of the Pyla Understanding;
34. Reiterates its deep concern regarding all unilateral actions which aim at entrenching on the ground the permanent division of Cyprus as opposed to its reunification; condemns, in this context, the recent illegal visit of President Erdoğan to the occupied areas of the Republic of Cyprus, as well as his provocative statements, which jeopardise the efforts of the UN, the EU, the international community at large and other parties involved for the resumption of substantial negotiations in the agreed framework; regrets that such unilateral actions are tantamount to a direct illegitimate intervention against the interests of the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities;
35. Reiterates its call on Türkiye to give the Turkish Cypriot community the necessary space to act in accordance with its role as a legitimate community of the island, which is a right guaranteed by the constitution of the Republic of Cyprus; reiterates its call on the Commission to step up its efforts to engage with the Turkish Cypriot community, with a view to facilitating the resolution of the Cyprus problem and recalling that its place is in the European Union; calls for all parties involved to demonstrate a more courageous approach to bringing the communities together; stresses the need for the EU body of law to be implemented across the entire island following a comprehensive resolution of the Cyprus problem;
36. Takes note of the significant work of the Committee on Missing Persons in Cyprus (CMP) and calls for improved access to occupied military zones by the Turkish army, access to its military archives and information as to the relocation of remains from former to subsequent burial sites; remains deeply concerned about the education and religious restrictions and impediments faced by the enclaved Greek Cypriots; calls on Türkiye to step up its cooperation with the Council of Europe and its relevant bodies and institutions, to address their key recommendations, to fully implement the European Convention of Human Rights with regard to respecting the freedom of religion and the freedom of opinion and expression, and the right to access and enjoy cultural heritage, and to stop the deliberate destruction of cultural and religious heritage; condemns the repeated attempts by Türkiye to intimidate and silence Turkish Cypriot journalists, trade unionists, human rights defenders and progressive citizens in the Turkish Cypriot community, thus violating their right to freedom of opinion and expression; calls on Türkiye to halt its proclaimed aggressive policy of the sale and exploitation of Greek Cypriot properties, a policy designed to create irreversible effects on the ground and which completely disregards the European Code of Human Rights ruling on this issue;

37. Regrets Türkiye's continuing refusal to comply with aviation law and establish a channel of communication between air traffic control centres in Türkiye and the Republic of Cyprus, the absence of which entails real safety risks and dangers as identified by the European Union Aviation Safety Agency and the International Federation of Air Line Pilots' Associations; regrets, too, its denial of access to vessels under the flag of one Member State to the Straits of Bosphorus and the Dardanelles; takes the view that these could be areas where Türkiye can prove its commitment to confidence building measures and calls on Türkiye to collaborate by fully implementing EU aviation law; regrets that Türkiye has continued its attempts to impede the implementation of the Great Sea Interconnector, an EU project of common interest, and has persisted in its plans for an illegal electricity interconnector with the occupied area of Cyprus;
38. Regrets that for 20 years Türkiye has refused to implement the obligations assumed towards the EU, including those in relation to Cyprus, as per the Negotiating Framework of October 2005; stresses that recognition of all Member States is a necessary component of the accession process; reiterates its call on Türkiye to fulfil its obligation of full, non-discriminatory implementation of the Additional Protocol to the Ankara Agreement in relation to all Member States, including the Republic of Cyprus; further calls on Türkiye to ensure that the human and political rights of all Cypriots are fully respected and that compliance with the fundamental principles of the European Union and the European *acquis* is guaranteed;
39. Affirms its support for a free, secure and stable future for Syria and its citizens and highlights the need for an inclusive and peaceful political transition process that is Syrian-led and Syrian- owned, including the protection and inclusion of religious and ethnic communities; expresses its commitment to constructive cooperation between the EU and Türkiye to that end, on humanitarian aid, promoting a sustainable political solution in Syria, and the fight against DAESH, given that Türkiye has a key role in promoting stability in the region; recalls that Syria's sovereignty must be restored; acknowledges the importance of rebuilding Syria's economy as a pillar of long-term stability and prosperity for the region; calls on Türkiye to respect Syria's territorial integrity and sovereignty and immediately cease all attacks and incursions on and occupation of Syrian territory in full compliance with international law; condemns the attacks carried out in recent weeks, taking advantage of the collapse of the Assad regime, by Turkish-backed militias against Syrian Kurdish forces in the north of Syria; expresses deep concern, as these attacks increase the number of internally displaced persons but also threaten the efficiency and continuity of the fight against Daesh; notes that its ongoing presence risks further destabilising and undermining efforts towards a sustainable political resolution in Syria; further notes that, citing security concerns, Türkiye also illegally occupies areas in Iraq; reiterates that civilian populations should never be the victim of military self-defence; calls for the necessary investigation into the cases in which there have been civilian casualties and to stop the crackdown on journalists working in the area; calls on Türkiye to support the process of implementing the agreement between the Syrian transitional government and the Kurdish-led SDF and refrain from any interference in Syria's internal processes;
40. Supports the normalisation of relations between Armenia and Türkiye in the interests of reconciliation, good neighbourly relations, regional stability and security and socio-economic development, and welcomes the progress achieved so far; welcomes the continued efforts to restore links between the two countries; urges Türkiye to ensure the



speedy implementation of agreements reached by the Turkish and Armenian Governments' special representatives, such as the opening of the airspace and the border between the two countries for the third country nationals, and, subsequently, for holders of diplomatic passports; welcomes the temporary opening of the Margara-Alican border crossing between Armenia and Türkiye to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid to Syria; expresses the hope that these developments may give impetus to the normalisation of relations in the South Caucasus region, also in terms of security and socio-economic development, and stresses the EU's interest in supporting this process; encourages Türkiye to play a constructive role in promoting regional stability by facilitating the swift conclusion of the peace process between Armenia and Azerbaijan, inter alia by exerting its influence on Azerbaijan and by deterring Azerbaijan from any further military action against Armenian sovereignty; encourages Türkiye once again to acknowledge the Armenian genocide in order to pave the way for genuine reconciliation between the Turkish and Armenian peoples and to fully respect its obligations to protect Armenian cultural heritage;

41. Notes that Türkiye's stance in relation to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine continues to affect EU-Türkiye relations, as Türkiye attempts to maintain ties with both the West and Russia simultaneously; notes Türkiye's diplomatic attempts to mediate between Russia and Ukraine, particularly regarding the Black Sea Grain Initiative, as well as its continued support for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine, including its vote in favour of UN General Assembly resolutions condemning the Russian aggression against Ukraine; regrets that, on the other hand, trade between Türkiye and Russia has risen sharply since the start of the war in Ukraine, making Türkiye Russia's second largest trading partner despite EU sanctions against Russia, and that Türkiye is the only NATO member state not having imposed any sanctions on Russia; further notes that the European Union's anti-fraud office, OLAF, has initiated an investigation into a loophole that enables countries like Türkiye to rebrand sanctioned Russian oil and export it to the EU; welcomes, however, positive steps such as Türkiye's blocking of exports to Russia for certain dual use goods, as well as products originating in the United States and the United Kingdom that are of benefit to Russian military action; reiterates its call on the Turkish Government to halt its plans for the Akkuyu Nuclear Power Plant, which will be built, operated and owned by Russia's state atomic energy corporation, Rosatom; expresses concern at Türkiye's ongoing discussions with Russia to establish a gas-trading hub in Istanbul, scheduled to begin operations in 2025;
42. Welcomes Türkiye's participation in various crisis management missions and operations (within the framework of the common security and defence policy); regrets, however, the further deterioration in the level of alignment on common foreign and security policy positions, including on sanctions and countering the circumvention of sanctions, which has fallen to a historically low rate of 5 %, the lowest rate for any accession country; recalls that EU candidate countries are required to progressively align with the common foreign and security policy of the European Union and comply with international law; regrets that Türkiye has not undertaken any steps in this regard, notably by failing to align with EU sanctions against Russia, and that in many areas of mutual interest the foreign policies of the EU and Türkiye are worryingly divergent; urges Türkiye to align with and fully implement the EU sanctions against Russia, including on anti-circumvention measures and to cooperate closely with the EU's Sanctions Envoy;

43. Stresses the importance of reinforcing EU-Türkiye cooperation in global security matters, particularly in light of the changing geopolitical landscape and potential shifts in US foreign policy; expresses cautious hope that recent informal engagement, such as the participation of the Turkish Foreign Minister in the informal meeting of EU foreign affairs ministers in 2024, may provide an impetus towards better relations; acknowledges Türkiye's key role as an ally in NATO and welcomes the Turkish Parliament's decision to ratify Sweden's NATO accession in January 2024; recalls, in this regard, that Türkiye has a key responsibility to foster stability at both regional and global levels and is expected to act in line with its NATO obligations, especially given the current geopolitical upheavals; encourages constructive engagement in a more structured and frequent political dialogue on foreign, security and defence policy to seek collaboration on convergent interests while working to reduce divergences, particularly with regard to removing persistent obstacles to the enhancement of a genuine relationship between the EU and NATO, including the acquisition from Russia of the S-400 air defence system; remains duly concerned that Türkiye continues to exclude a Member State from cooperation with NATO;
44. Welcomes Türkiye's long-standing position in favour of a two-state solution for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, its calls for a ceasefire in the Israel-Hamas war, and its ongoing efforts to supply humanitarian aid to Gaza throughout the conflict; deeply regrets, at the same time, the Turkish authorities', including the President's, active support for the EU-listed terror group Hamas and their stance on the attack against Israel on 7 October 2023, which the Turkish Government failed to condemn; points out that Türkiye's open support for Hamas and its refusal to designate it a terrorist organisation is not compatible with the EU's foreign and security policy; calls, therefore, for a revision of this position;
45. Notes with concern that Türkiye has asked to be a member of BRICS+ and been offered 'partner country' status, and is considering the same for the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), where it holds the status of a dialogue partner; expresses serious concern over Türkiye's increasing interest in an alternative partnership framework, which is fundamentally incompatible with the EU accession process; insists that Türkiye's new status as a BRICS partner country must not affect Türkiye's responsibilities within NATO; notes that Türkiye has been cultivating cooperation formats, partnerships and regional alliances beyond the EU; is concerned by Türkiye's tendency to use this multi-vector approach to advance its interests without committing to a full-fledged cooperation with any of these alliances;
46. Remains concerned by the Turkish Government's use of the Turkish diaspora as an instrument for occasional meddling in EU Member States' domestic policies;

### ***Socio-economic and sustainability reforms***

47. Welcomes Türkiye's return to a more conventional economic and monetary policy, while maintaining robust growth and a moderate budget deficit; regrets, however, that the cost of this is yet again being borne by citizens in the form of higher interest rates; highlights that social vulnerabilities have increased, particularly among children and older people, primarily due to the absence of a comprehensive poverty reduction strategy and income inequalities; underlines the necessity for the Turkish authorities to implement comprehensive social protection measures, strengthen collective bargaining

rights and ensure that economic reforms prioritise reducing inequality and creating decent work opportunities;

48. Regrets the fact that despite the progress observed in economic and monetary policies, other actions by the Turkish Government affecting the rule of law continue to undermine basic principles such as legal certainty, which impacts negatively on Türkiye's potential capacity to receive investments; welcomes the removal of Türkiye from the grey list of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) in June 2024, following significant progress in improving its anti-money laundering regime and combating the financing of terrorism;
49. Welcomes Türkiye's increased investment activity in the green energy sector and calls on Türkiye to continue improving the compatibility of its energy policy with the EU *acquis*, exploiting Türkiye's enormous potential in renewable energy; expresses concern about the lack of any significant progress on climate action, in particular owing to the absence of a comprehensive climate law, a domestic emissions trading system, and a long-term low-emission development strategy, which undermines its 2053 climate neutrality target; highlights the need for a robust legal framework and stricter enforcement mechanisms to safeguard environmental and natural resources; urges Türkiye to align its environmental policies with the EU *acquis*, including respecting natural habitats when conducting mining projects, and underlines the importance of Türkiye's adherence to the Aarhus Convention; commends the work of environmental rights defenders in Türkiye and warns against the dire environmental impact of extensive government projects, such as the expansion of its copper mining activities in Mount Ida (Kaz Dağları);
50. Highlights the fact that Türkiye has taken steps to diversify energy supplies and increase its renewable energy share; notes that the country is the seventh largest LNG market and highlights its potential as a regional energy hub; takes note that Türkiye has subscribed to the global goals on energy efficiency and renewable energy capacity by 2030; calls on the Commission to take into account Türkiye's potential as a regional energy hub in initiatives to increase the installed renewable capacity in the Mediterranean region and in the development of the New Pact for the Mediterranean, and calls for energy cooperation to be part of the common agenda;
51. Observes some improvements in labour market conditions and points out a number of pending critical challenges, such as informal employment, the gender gap, and income inequality; is worried about the low coverage of collective bargaining and the lack of recognition of trade union rights for certain public sector employees; believes that more efforts are needed to enhance social dialogue mechanisms and address emerging occupational safety challenges; recalls that trade union freedom and social dialogue are crucial to the development and prosperity of a pluralistic society; deplores, in this regard, the recent detentions of trade unionists including Remzi Çalışkan, vice-president of the DISK confederation, and president of Genel-İş, who was released after a month in prison, Kemal Göksoy, President of the Mersin Branch of Genel-İş, who remains in prison, and Mehmet Türkmen, chair of the textile sector union BİRTEK SEN, who was detained on 14 February 2025;

### ***Wider EU-Türkiye relations***

52. Reiterates its firm conviction that, beyond the currently frozen accession process, Türkiye is a country of strategic relevance, a key partner for the stability of the wider region and plays an important role in addressing security challenges, migration management, counterterrorism, and energy security; stresses the importance of maintaining constructive dialogue and deepening cooperation in areas of mutual strategic interest; points towards a number of policy areas for future engagement, whether it be the green transition, trade, energy, a modernised customs union and visa liberalisation, among others; recalls, however, that democratic backsliding and non-alignment with the CFSP are not conducive to significant progress being made in that regard; reaffirms that the EU is committed to pursuing the best possible relations with Türkiye, based on dialogue, respect and mutual trust, in line with international law and good neighbourly relations;
53. Stresses the importance of encouraging deeper partnership in all economic sectors, to the benefit of the EU and all of its Member States and Türkiye; notes in particular the importance of cooperation in the fields of energy, innovation, artificial intelligence, health, security and migration management, among others; in this regard, notes that various high-level dialogues (HLDs) were held recently, including the HLD on trade and the HLD on economy, as steps towards pragmatic forms of cooperation in areas of mutual importance; calls again for the resumption of all relevant HLDs and for the establishment of structured HLDs on sectoral cooperation, to address common challenges and explore opportunities, on the condition that such cooperation must go hand-in-hand with clear and consistent conditionality grounded in respect for democratic principles, the rule of law and fundamental rights, as previously underlined in this resolution;
54. Stands ready to support an upgraded customs union with a broader, mutually beneficial scope, which could encompass a wide range of areas of common interest, including digitalisation, Green Deal alignment for green energy policies, public procurement, sustainable development commitments, and due diligence, contributing to the economic security of both sides; supports accompanying this upgraded customs union with an efficient and effective dispute settlement mechanism; underlines the fact that for Parliament to give its consent at the end of the process, such a modernisation would need to be based on strong conditionality related to human rights and fundamental freedoms, respect for international law and good neighbourly relations, including Türkiye's full implementation of the Additional Protocol on extending the Ankara Agreement to all Member States without exception and in a non-discriminatory fashion;
55. Notes with deep regret that no progress has been made by Türkiye towards meeting the required benchmarks for visa liberalisation; reiterates its willingness to start the visa liberalisation process as soon as the Turkish authorities fully fulfil the six clearly outstanding benchmarks in a non-discriminatory manner vis-à-vis all EU Member states while aligning with EU visa policy; regrets that Turkish citizens are facing problems with visa requests/applications to EU Member States owing to a marked increase in demand and fears of abuse of the system; recognises, however, the political commitment to improving access to visas and calls for intensified efforts on both sides to address the remaining technical and administrative barriers; calls on the EU Member States to increase the resources allocated to this matter; supports measures on visa facilitation, particularly with regard to business activities and Erasmus students; deeply regrets the constant attempts by the Turkish authorities to blame the EU for not making progress on this dossier, while not taking any necessary steps to comply with the

remaining benchmarks; reminds Türkiye that the lack of tangible and cumulative progress on the pending conditions has a direct impact on business activities and Erasmus students; appreciates the invaluable contribution of Erasmus+ exchanges in providing rich cross-cultural educational opportunities; regrets, however, the poor oversight on the part of the Commission, exemplified by the Erasmus partnership with Gaziantep Islam Science and Technology University, whose leadership publicly expressed support for terrorist acts; calls on the Commission to ensure that partner universities respect the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights by conducting ex ante verifications and regular controls;

### ***The way forward for EU-Türkiye relations***

56. Considers, in view of the above, that the Turkish Government has failed to take the necessary steps to address the existing fundamental democratic shortcomings within the country and therefore reiterates its view that Türkiye's EU accession process cannot be resumed in the current circumstances, despite the democratic and pro-European aspirations of a large part of Turkish society; recalls that, as in the case of any other candidate, the accession process is contingent on full compliance with the Copenhagen criteria and on the normalisation of relations with all EU Member States;
57. Urges the Turkish Government and the EU institutions and Member States to continue working, beyond the currently frozen accession process, on the basis of the relevant Council and European Council conclusions and the established conditionality, towards a closer, more dynamic and strategic partnership with particular emphasis on climate action, energy security, counter-terrorism cooperation and regional stability; insists on the need to begin a process of reflection on how this new constructive and progressive framework for EU-Türkiye relations can encompass the interests of all parties involved, for example by modernising and enhancing the current Association Agreement; underlines that such a positive process must be based on and matched by tangible progress in Türkiye as regards CFSP alignment, democracy, the rule of law and respect for fundamental values;
58. Considers the joint communication of 29 November 2023 on the state of play of EU-Türkiye relations a good basis on which to move forward in the overall relations between the EU and Türkiye; regrets the lack of a clear political endorsement of this joint communication so far by the Council; reiterates that recognition of all EU Member States is a necessary component of any agreement between the EU and Türkiye; stresses that Türkiye's constructive engagement, including in relation to the Cyprus problem, remains key to advancing closer cooperation between the EU and Türkiye;
59. Warns, nevertheless, that a further drift towards authoritarianism by the Turkish authorities, such as we have been witnessing recently, will ultimately have a severe impact on all dimensions of EU-Türkiye relations, including trade and security cooperation, as it prevents the trust and reliability needed between partners and antagonises both sides in the current geopolitical scene;
60. Continues to acknowledge and commend the democratic and pro-European aspirations of the majority of Turkish society (particularly among Turkish youth), whom the EU will not forsake; regards these aspirations as a major reason for keeping Türkiye's accession process alive; calls therefore on the Commission to uphold and increase its political and financial support to the vibrant and pro-democratic civil society in Türkiye,

whose efforts can contribute to generating the political will necessary for deepening EU-Türkiye relations; highlights, nevertheless, that the resumption of the accession process depends on the unwavering political will of Türkiye's authorities and society to become a full-fledged democracy, which cannot be forced upon it by the EU;

61. Reiterates its call to strengthen and deepen mutual knowledge and understanding between our societies, promoting cultural growth, socio-cultural exchanges and combating all manifestations of social, religious, ethnic or cultural prejudice; encourages Türkiye and the EU to promote shared values, particularly by supporting young people; reiterates its utmost commitment to sustaining and increasing support for Türkiye's independent civil society;

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62. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the President of the European Council, the Council and the Commission; asks that this resolution be translated into Turkish and forwarded to the President, Government and Parliament of the Republic of Türkiye.