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12.9.2016

WRITTEN DECLARATION

submitted under Rule 136 of the Rules of Procedure

on respect for human and religious rights in Turkey

Eva Kaili (S&D), Kostas Chrysogonos (GUE/NGL), Sofia Sakorafa (GUE/NGL), Maria Spyraiki (PPE), Manolis Kefalogiannis (PPE), Eleni Theocharous (ECR), Elissavet Vozemberg-Vrionidi (PPE), Theodoros Zagorakis (PPE), Demetris Papadakis (S&D), Nikos Androulakis (S&D)

Lapse date: 12.12.2016

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Written declaration, under Rule 136 of Parliament's Rules of Procedure, on respect for human and religious rights in Turkey¹

1. In 2013, the Yargitay court (Court of Cassation) in Turkey ruled that responsibility for the Church of Saint Sophia in Trabzon should be transferred to the Directorate General for Church Property, which has approved the reopening thereof as a mosque, thereby infringing the principle of respect for the historical identity of the monument.
2. The Commission and the Council are called upon to urge the Turkish Government to reinstate the Church of Saint Sophia immediately as a museum, given the serious concerns about the fate of this religious monument.
3. In view of the formal representations made by the European Parliament to Turkey in 2006 and 2013, with which it has not complied, and the statements delivered by Pope Francis and German President Joachim Gauck, the Commission and the Council are called upon to urge the Turkish Government to accept its past and acknowledge the tragic events of 1914-1923 as acts of genocide perpetrated against the Greek, Armenian and Assyrian peoples under the Young Turks and Kemal regimes.
4. The Commission is called upon to consider the designation of 19 May as the European Day of Remembrance for the Victims of Kemalism.
5. This declaration, together with the names of the signatories, is forwarded to the Council and the Commission.

¹ Under Rule 136(4) and (5) of Parliament's Rules of Procedure, where a declaration is signed by a majority of Parliament's component Members, it is published in the minutes with the names of its signatories and forwarded to the addressees, without however binding Parliament.