

**Question for oral answer O-000045/2018
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)**

Rule 128

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Subject: VP/HR - EU-Turkey relations

As a candidate EU Member State, Turkey has to comply with the EU accession criteria. However, Turkey has been systematically infringing human rights and the rule of law¹. Recent years have seen the extension of executive control over the judiciary and prosecution, widespread arrests, the dismissal and arbitrary transfer of judges and prosecutors, as well as persistent attacks against lawyers². Numerous politicians, citizens and journalists have been illegally imprisoned and freedom of expression has been blatantly violated³. In addition, pre-accession assistance to Turkey has not yielded the expected positive results⁴.

Moreover, Turkey systematically disputes and violates the EU's borders. In 2017 alone, the Turkish Air Force violated Greece's national airspace⁵ on 3 317 occasions and the Turkish Navy violated Greece's territorial waters on 1 998 occasions⁶. It is indicative that on 15 February 2018, a Turkish patrol boat intentionally rammed a Greek coastguard vessel in Greek territorial waters⁷, while on 1 March 2018, the Turkish military authorities arrested two Greek officers at the Greek-Turkish border on Evros, who have been detained without charge or trial ever since⁸. In addition, Turkey has been hindering planned explorations and drilling in the Cypriot exclusive economic zone (EEZ)⁹. Furthermore, Turkish troops have arbitrarily invaded the region of Afrin in Syria with armaments mainly imported from EU countries, killing civilians and carrying out the looting properties and destruction of religious and cultural monuments on a massive scale¹⁰. Moreover, it should not be forgotten that since 1974, approximately 30 000 Turkish soldiers have been illegally stationed in EU territory, namely in the occupied northern half of the Republic of Cyprus¹¹.

The High Representative is requested to answer the following questions:

1. How does the EU plan to react to the fact that Turkey has not properly utilised pre-accession

¹ European Parliament resolution of 24 November 2016 on EU-Turkey relations, Texts adopted, P8_TA(2016)0450; European Parliament resolution of 8 February 2018 on the current human rights situation in Turkey, Texts adopted, P8_TA(2018)0040; European Parliament resolution of 27 October 2016 on the situation of journalists in Turkey, Texts adopted, P8_TA(2016)0423.

² European Parliament resolution of 8 February 2018 on the current human rights situation in Turkey, Texts adopted, P8_TA(2018)0040.

³ European Parliament resolution of 27 October 2016 on the situation of journalists in Turkey, Texts adopted, P8_TA(2016)0423.

⁴ https://www.eca.europa.eu/Lists/ECADocuments/SR18_07/SR_TURKEY_EN.pdf

⁵ <http://www.geetha.mil.gr/el/violations-gr/2015-01-22-11-43-23.html>

⁶ <http://www.geetha.mil.gr/el/violations-gr/thalassia-symbanta/6483-sygentrwika-stoicheia-2017.html>

⁷ <http://www.ekathimerini.com/225932/article/ekathimerini/news/videos-show-turkish-ship-ramming-greek-vessel-off-imia>

⁸ <http://www.ekathimerini.com/226334/article/ekathimerini/news/two-greek-troops-held-in-turkey-for-accidentally-crossing-the-border>; <http://www.amna.gr/en/article/236291/Turkish-court-refuses-request-to-release-Greek-soldiers-until-trial>

⁹ <http://cyprus-mail.com/2018/02/23/turkish-warships-force-eni-drillship-off-course/>

¹⁰ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-43457214>

¹¹ http://www.hri.org/docs/unzyp_e.html

assistance to meet the EU accession criteria?

2. What steps does the EU intend to take in order to effectively protect the EU's borders and give a clear signal to Turkey that it must respect international and EU law?

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