

EUROPAUDVALGET

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(The Consultative Council of Turks in The Netherlands is a cooperation group of nine national federations of Turkish immigrants in Holland)

Utrecht, November 27, 2002

To the Parliaments and the Heads of State or Government of the European Union

The representatives of the Turkish immigrant community in The Netherlands would like to make an appeal to you to decide to set a date on which to start the negotiations with Turkey about its admittance to the European Union.

With respect to the *Copenhagen Criteria* (stable democracy, functioning market economy, adherence to the Community legislation and policy) Turkey has made considerable progress these past years. The death penalty is abolished, men and women are equal before the law, the cultural rights of minorities are legally guaranteed, and in the field of human rights the legislation has been brought in accordance with European standards.

It should not be forgotten that Turkey has been a member of the Council of Europe since 1949, a member of NATO since 1952, an associate member of the European Community since 1964, and furthermore Turkey has a Customs Union with the Community since 1996.

Four million Turkish immigrants are living in the European Union. Their communities maintain strong relations with Turkey in social, cultural and economical areas. These ties are mutually of great positive significance.

We would like to stress, that one should not be guided by farfetched arguments of historical or religious character to place Turkey outside the European tradition. Since World War I Turkey has much more affiliated with European politics, than with the Middle East. We would like to maintain this situation, which can only be realised if European countries take the relations with Turkey seriously.

It should not be that Turkey gives a lot of effort to European cooperation, without ever gaining profit from it. Such an attitude is no guarantee for stable relations in the long run.

The United Kingdom, Italy, Spain, France, Greece, Ireland, and Belgium have already committed themselves to support the proposal to set a date to discuss the admission of Turkey.

The 320.000 Dutch Turks in The Netherlands appeal to you to promote that in December at the European summit a date will be set to start the negotiations concerning the Turkish admittance to the European Union.

Yours faithfully,



Ayhan Tonca

-president-