

CALL OF THE TURKISH CIVIL SOCIETY PLATFORM TO THE EUROPEAN UNION

We, as the "**Turkish Civil Society Platform**" composed of academics, artists, civil servants, craftsmen, farmers, industrialists, media representatives, professionals, self-employed people, sportsmen, students, traders, workers, representatives of all segments of the society and non-governmental organisations state that:

"TURKEY PROVED HER DECISIVENESS. IT IS NOW EU'S TURN."

Full membership to the European Union is Turkey's legal right derived from the EU acquis. Turkey is the only country that has completed the Customs Union without being a full member. Turkey has fulfilled her commitments with the progress she has achieved in complying with the political criteria.

"Turkish Civil Society Platform" convened on the 5th of June 2002 has declared to politicians and to the public that it will be the bearer and the follower of the civil society's target of full EU membership via the message

"Turkey's Place is in the European Union. We Have No Time to Lose."

The Turkish Civil Society Platform composed of over 200 non-governmental organisations representing different segments of society has displayed the strong "**public will**" behind EU full membership.

The reform process instigated in October 2001 with the most comprehensive constitutional reforms in the history of the Republic has progressed with three consecutive harmonisation packages adopted by the Turkish Parliament. The harmonization laws have been passed with sheer determination despite the political and economic hardships encountered.

These significant reforms undertaken by a Parliament that has decided to hold national elections have exhibited Turkey's "**political will**" regarding European Union membership.

The common will of the public and political parties is too strong to be affected from changes in governments. The resilience of such a common will is also a guarantee of the implementation of these legal regulations.

We believe that the European Union shares Turkey's aim of full membership. We demand this belief to be confirmed by taking the decision to initiate accession negotiations with Turkey at the Copenhagen Summit.

The demand of the Turkish Civil Society Platform is that Turkey is evaluated on equal grounds with other candidate countries as assured in Helsinki.

We expect the EU to adopt the same constructive and encouraging approach, display the same degree of solidarity to Turkey as it does towards other candidate countries and prove its will to share a common future with Turkey.

With the accession of Turkey, the Union will be strengthened in economic, political and social terms. It will also gain the chance to enhance its dynamism via Turkey's young population.

By taking the decision to launch negotiations, the EU will prove not only to Turkey, but to the whole world that it is a set of values and ideals bound by principles of democracy and justice.

Turkey's EU full membership will also be effective in preventing the threat of a clash of civilisations based on religious differences.

The confirmation of Turkey's candidacy at Helsinki has eradicated the doubts over EU's genuineness that had emerged after the Luxembourg Summit. Our public has embraced the target of full membership and our Parliament has speeded up the reform process. The decision of initiating negotiations at Copenhagen will facilitate the completion of these reforms, strengthen the implementation and place Turkey-EU relations on a more solid basis.

Turkey, by having proven her will towards full EU membership is now awaiting a clear display of "**EU will**" in the same direction.

A decision in the opposite direction will detriment the faith of the Turkish public in EU's sincerity and cause grave damages difficult to repair for the future.

We believe that the EU, with the consciousness of this historical responsibility and common sense will act accordingly in the Copenhagen Summit.

TURKISH CIVIL SOCIETY PLATFORM
7 October 2002