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"The 2005 Enlargement package"  
Speech at the Plenary Session of the European Parliament

Strasbourg, 15 November 2005

The Candidate Countries: Turkey and Croatia

With Turkey and Croatia, we started screening the chapters for accession negotiations three weeks ago. The progress reports analyse where the countries stand, and the Accession Partnerships set short-term and medium-term goals to address the problems identified.

It's a mixed picture, frankly. In Turkey, bold and significant reforms that enhance the rule of law and human rights have now entered into force, but implementation remains uneven. The report underlines that Turkey must make significant further efforts in freedom of expression, women's rights, religious freedoms, trade union rights, cultural rights and the fight against torture and ill-treatment. The Accession Partnership for Turkey addresses these issues among the priorities for action in the short term.

On a positive note, the Commission now recognises Turkey as a functioning market economy, as long as stabilisation and reform measures are firmly maintained.

Croatia is generally doing well in transposing and implementing EU legislation, but it still need to make important efforts to reform the judicial system, to fight corruption, to improve the situation of minorities and to facilitate refugees' return, as well as to strengthen the administrative structures for the enforcement of the acquis. Needless to say, Croatia must maintain full cooperation with ICTY so that the remaining fugitive is finally brought to justice; we shall monitor this commitment closely.