

2239. Council - GENERAL AFFAIRS

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Turkey

The Council took note of the information provided by the Commission concerning the preparation of the pre-accession strategy for Turkey, in particular proposals for an accession partnership, the preparation of the screening process with regard to the "acquis communautaire" and the establishment of a single framework for coordinating all sources of European Union financial assistance for pre-accession.

The Council took also note of a report by the Portuguese State Secretary SEIXAS da COSTA on his recent contacts with the Turkish Authorities in Ankara on the conduct of future work following the conclusions of the Helsinki European Council recognising Turkey as a candidate country. On the basis of a report by Greek Foreign Minister PAPANDREOU on his recent visit to Ankara, the Council noted with satisfaction the positive developments in Greek-Turkish bilateral relations.

Enlargement - procedure for negotiations and preparation of the Intergovernmental Conferences

The Council approved the EU positions in view of the opening at Ministerial level of the Intergovernmental Conferences for the accession negotiations with respectively Malta, Romania, Slovakia, Latvia, Lithuania and Bulgaria which will take place on 15 February 2000.

The Council also agreed on a procedure (internal arrangements) for negotiations with all candidate States. The new arrangements replace the previous ones which were adopted by the Council in March 1998.