



TURKISH INDUSTRIALISTS' & BUSINESS ASSOCIATION
Representation to the EU and UNICE
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PRESS RELEASE

TURKISH BUSINESS COMMITS TO PLAYING KEY ROLE IN EU ACCESSION TALKS FOCUSING ON DEMOCRACY, ECONOMY, SOCIETY AND TECHNOLOGY

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The European Commission's annual progress report on Turkey to be published on 9 November 2005 is an important milestone enhancing the institutional framework of Turkey's progress towards full EU membership. This year's report comes in the context of accession talks that started on 3 October. We expect this new phase in the EU-Turkey relationship to be shaped by a more coherent institutional framework and by economic and social progress rather than political uncertainties. TUSIAD will monitor and contribute to this process through its working groups and policy committees covering different chapters of accession talks.

TUSIAD's priorities for the next ten years of the EU accession process can essentially be outlined for the following four domains:

1. DEMOCRACY: TUSIAD has been a determined source of pressure and has shown leadership for Turkey's progress towards sufficiently fulfilling the Copenhagen political criteria. TUSIAD will closely watch the progress of Turkey in executing democratic reforms as it continues with the remaining tasks of that process. The Turkish business community will also make sure that Turkey is a bearer of European values in its policies towards Asia and the Middle East.

2. ECONOMY: The European Commission's report will identify Turkey as fulfilling market economy status. As a functioning market economy that has integrated with world markets for several decades and having a decade-long customs union with the EU since 1996, Turkey is progressively moving ahead to meet the Maastricht criteria. In the next decade, we expect economic growth to figure between 5 to 7 %. This will be accompanied by a significant reduction in the size of the unregistered economy, radical reforms in agriculture, pensions and the fiscal system and a considerable increase in FDI from the EU and other countries.

3. SOCIETY: The legislative harmonisation process implies a comprehensive transformation of the society and a special focus on issues such as gender equality, vocational training, consumer rights and environmental protection. TUSIAD will assume its responsibilities to play a leading role in supporting this process.

4. TECHNOLOGY: Turkey's information and communication technologies market, research and development budget and e-government spending have increased several folds in the last years. TUSIAD believes that more investment into technology and innovation will have spill-over effects in integrating Turkey into the EU as a source of international competitiveness.

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Turkey will become a member of the EU only when it will be ready. Therefore, this will naturally be the moment when the problems resulting from Turkey's accession will be settled. However, at that moment, the EU should also continue to be an attractive polity for Turkey. In this respect, we hope that in the next ten years the EU will achieve progress in generating more economic growth, political coherence, institutional efficiency and democratic credibility.

TUSIAD is confident that, in the next years Turkey will prove to be an asset and not a liability for Europe. A Turkey that fulfils the criteria of EU membership will reinforce Europe's global power and competitiveness. Thus, Europe will be stronger in pulling its weight in world affairs and will be injecting itself with much needed energy for growth and further prosperity. "As the representatives of the Turkish business community, we will continue to be active in making Turkey's case to the European public. We will also continue to closely monitor Turkey's transformation and maintain our progressive position with no compromise with or concession to expediency says" Ömer Sabancı, President of TUSIAD.

For more information:

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