



**CHP**

REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S PARTY - TURKEY



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**Perspectives of CHP**  
**Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, Chairman of the Republican People's Party (CHP)**  
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Europe and the world are going through difficult times. Today's financial system, the way we use natural resources and the consumption patterns that we have become used to are no longer sustainable. The nature and dimensions of the current economic and financial crisis go beyond our knowledge and experiences. More importantly, we are experiencing these problems simultaneously with the political crises raging around the whole world along with an escalation in incidents of violence. As social democrats, we have to make good use of our skill and capacity to manage the change that is taking place in the international system. We are all part of this change, and as a result are also responsible for directing it.

In such an atmosphere, when I seek an answer to the question of "why" and "how" we need a better Europe, I find that the answer itself is hidden in the very dynamics that have created these problems.

I think that influencing these dynamics and directing them to what is better is our primary task as politicians of the 21st century. We urgently need a better, healthier, more integrated and more effective Europe. The Europe of the near future

- should be able to assume the political and normative leadership of a new world order; and
- redefine itself along the axis of cultural pluralism, human rights and universal democratic values.
- be the driving force of the global governance system that can resolve conflicts, poverty, climate change and financial crisis.
- utilize the opportunities offered by the economic power of the Euro-Atlantic community and their evolution towards an economic area should be ensured,
- develop effective relations with the emerging Asia, the dynamic South America and with Africa that is in need of stability,
- be influential in structuring the area ranging from the Mediterranean to the Middle East.
- prove its potential as a large single market, as a good social model and political union.

These propositions also constitute the reason behind our belief that Turkey will become a member of the EU and of our will to work to achieve this goal. When Turkey becomes a full member of the EU in the not too distant future, both Turkey and the European Union will have changed a lot.



A Turkey that has met the conditions for EU membership will no doubt play the important positive role needed in reshaping the future of Europe.

Turkey that is an EU member will:

- have a high positive multiplier effect, with the ability to contribute to the global role of Europe in a wide range of ways,
- offer new opportunities to Europe in terms of its geopolitical location, economic dynamism, young working population, in security and energy areas, and in terms of its natural, cultural and historical richness.
- facilitate the EU's extension into the Caucasus, Central Asia and Middle East, and ensure that the EU is influential in the development of these areas.
- Hence, establishment of a fair economic order in conformity with the requirements of the global competitive economy and with the European standards is a fundamental goal for CHP.

CHP's targets for the Turkish economy are in keeping with the EU's 2020 objectives of "inclusive, creative and sustainable growth". Our priority working areas are the issues that raise concern among the European social democrats, such as youth employment, education, vocational training and increasing the support given to small and medium sized enterprises.

The challenges that will be encountered in eliminating our common concerns should be added to the agenda of the "Pre-Accession Strategy for Turkey". In short, the fates of the EU and Turkey should be enjoined.

As you know, Turkey has a long history in its relations with the EU. Even if we consider the official starting date of the negotiations, October 2005, as the beginning, we have six long years. During that period, Turkey was able to open only 13 of the 33 negotiation chapters as others were blocked by a few EU member states due to their political caprices. Even this situation alone proves that we need a better Europe.

As the social democratic and main opposition party of Turkey, CHP has always supported Turkey's EU membership process. We have our signature under the reforms that have been moving Turkey forward for years. Our programme, our discourses and our attitude in the parliament are all supportive of our EU membership. For years we have been strongly criticizing the Government for deliberately acting slowly and without real commitment in the process of EU accession negotiations. Beware of Europeans and Turks telling you that "CHP is against Europe". They are either ignorant, or want to mislead you with ill-intent. They are not sincere.





As CHP, we want Turkey to meet the requirements of the Copenhagen political criteria of the EU and to undertake additional legal and social reforms. Croatia, which started the negotiations at the same time with us six years ago, has already completed its membership negotiations and will soon join the EU. A lot has changed in Europe and in Turkey since 2005. In Turkish, we call it “a lot of water has run from under the bridge”. In our view, while getting stronger in some areas, Turkey has moved backwards in the most crucial areas like fundamental rights and freedoms and particularly with regard to women’s rights, judicial independence, and freedom of expression and of the media.

With the experience of recent years, Turkey represents a very different case from all the other countries that have gone through the EU membership process. None has experienced the decline that Turkey has in the areas of fundamental rights and freedoms. I would like to share with you some examples:



- Of the 139,630 cases brought before the European Court of Human Rights in 2010, 15,206 were against Turkey. And Turkey was found to be in violation of human rights in 278 cases.
- In the report evaluating the freedom of the media in Turkey, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Dunja Mijatovic, observes that there are 57 journalists in prison as of the spring of 2011, while 700-1000 journalists face the possibility of a prison sentence. Today there are 70 journalists in prison, more than they have in China.
- There are more than 600 students under arrest, most of them on grounds of protesting the government and demanding education without fees.
- In the Reporters Without Borders (RSF) Press Freedom Index, Turkey ranked the 138<sup>th</sup> among 178 countries, dropping from 101 in 2007.
- ATV and Sabah groups were sold via lending from public banks, and the Prime Minister’s son-in law was unethically appointed as director general to these media organs. The government’s direct and indirect control over the media has reached 75-80%. Reporters not towing the Government’s line are either fired from their jobs or their TV programmes are ended. And these occurrences have escalated after the elections.
- Especially in the light of the developments in 2011, the growing internet usage and of the social media have upset all authoritarian governments in the world, leading to efforts to establish state control over them. In Turkey, control of the internet initially entailing the banning of well-known websites such as YouTube and Blogger, continued to increase in 2011 and have reached the level of censorship.
- Reporters Without Borders included Turkey among the 16 countries that are globally watched with regard to internet censorship.



- In United Nations Development Programme's 2010 Global Gender Inequality Index, Turkey ranked 83<sup>rd</sup>. This represents a drop by 6 ranks compared to 2008.
- In the World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap Report 2011, Turkey ranked 122<sup>nd</sup> among 135 countries.
- In 2002, 66 women were murdered in Turkey; in 2010, this figure rose to 1550. Cases of violence against women increased by 1400% in the last 7 years
- Of the 4.7 million illiterate citizens in Turkey, 3.8 million are women.
- Women's participation in labour (26%) is lower than in all EU countries, and is the lowest among OECD (employment rate of 56.5%) countries.
- Following the constitutional amendment, the first action of the Supreme Council of Judges and Prosecutors ([HSYK](#)) was to reduce women's representation in the high judiciary from 36% to 2%.
- HSYK recommended that that women raped should be married to their rapists.
- According to the latest results of the International Corruption Survey, last year one out of every four individuals had to pay bribes in order to get the services they sought.
- In the International Corruption Survey, Turkey ranked 6th among countries with the most bribery. Considering that the most bribed 5 countries were not from Europe, Turkey ranks at the top of the list of most corrupt countries in Europe.
- In Turkey (according to official figures), the ratio of the population at risk of poverty is quite high (17%). The OECD average is 10%.

The rising violations of fundamental rights and freedoms in recent years in Turkey have been mostly met with silence in Europe. The European Union failed or refused to see this dangerous trend in Turkey. I believe the following deserve more than some non-committal, diplomatic statements of "concern" prepared in a room in one of the EU institutions:

- the oppressed judges and prosecutors,
- the parliamentarians who are in prison (an explanatory memorandum is attached),
- the telephones that are tapped,
- the violation of privacy,
- the attacks against science and universities,
- the termination of the independence of autonomous financial, administrative and similar agencies and their placement under political influence,
- the calls for boycott made by the Prime Minister against the biggest media group of Turkey, and the levying of severe tax fines imposed on the same media group,
- silencing the voices of the press and all dissidents, firing the reporters
- the restrictions imposed on internet freedom,
- the long detention periods,
- the rapid increase in political appointments in the public sector.
- the creation of an order of pressure and fear.



I regret to say that Europe has lost its cogency and credibility regarding the state of human rights in Turkey.

The values on which Europe was built belong to all of us. We cannot let anyone to irresponsibly damage them.

I would also like to share with you some examples of the positive role that the European Union should, but somehow does not, play.

In Turkey's membership negotiations, *there are three chapters that can be opened provided that the technical criteria for opening them are met: competition policy, public procurements, Social policy and employment chapters.* As the main opposition party, we are saying that we support the reforms needed to open these chapters. Let's open these chapters. Yet we neither hear a strong voice from the European front nor are we seeing a willingness on the part of the Turkish Government to open these three chapters.



CHP has long fought against the misconception that hat "CHP is against the EU membership", a misconception created and nurtured in Brussels by pro-government groups. Recognizing this for what it is should not have been that difficult for the EU.

Earlier I mentioned that Croatia stands to be the next EU member. Why do the members of the European Parliament and the European Commission, critical in their reports of the lack of political consensus in Turkey not support the model used in Croatia and which we had also proposed for Turkey? Why did they not act as an element of pressure in this matter? It is difficult to understand this. Let alone taking the leadership regarding a consensus model, our people and our parliament are not even informed about the official negotiation position documents submitted by our country to the EU since the start of the negotiations. Unlike the other countries, these documents are not shared with the public in Turkey.



We also regrettably observed that some European politicians supposedly supporting Turkey in some critical situations actually sided with the governing party in Turkey. These also clearly demonstrate that there is a common agenda between the ruling party in Turkey and those politicians and political movements in Europe that do not want to see Turkey in the EU. This is an extremely dangerous game in terms of European values and the interests of Europe in the changing global environment.

Last September, a package of amendments to some articles of the Constitution was submitted to a referendum. In fact the package was imposed on the public by a variety of means. The European Union remained silent and demonstrated some very contradictory attitudes in the face of these changes that eliminated the independence of the judiciary and rendered the problems in the current system even more deeply defective. The EU failed to take a progressive step by justifying its inaction through reference to some practices in some EU member states. On that day, we painfully saw that the EU was the hostage to the erroneous practices of some of its member states and of the status-quo. Today, Turkey is paying a heavy price for the arrangements approved at that referendum. The referendum package included provisions that emphasized some principles that already existed in our laws in areas such as women's and children's rights. Naturally, we were not against those articles. But in addition to those, there were also some articles that had some tangible consequences regarding the functioning of the judiciary. CHP also wanted a judiciary reform. But in the constitutional amendment package, the appointment of judges and prosecutors was being left to the political preferences of a simple majority of the parliament and the President of the Republic. We objected to it. A mistake should not be replaced with another mistake. As a result, today the judiciary has become politicized, and has lost the public's trust. There was a very recent event. The prosecutors who wanted to investigate the corruption relations between the ruling AKP and a charity organization with German connections were immediately removed from office. Unfortunately, some European social democrat politicians were also among those who supported the anti-democratic policies of the AKP during the constitutional referendum, seeing no reason to even consult with CHP. We have to protect the European and social democratic values. The universality and the customs of social democracy teach and remind us to always help each other.

Lastly, a few words are in order about the 2011 Progress Report. The European Commission's Turkey 2011 Progress Report emphasized some very important steps that Turkey has to take for EU membership. However, it also showed that it is always necessary to make deeper analyses in order to rectify the shortcomings in the areas of the independence and impartiality of the judiciary, individual freedoms, the freedom of the media, women's rights, social policy, and free and fair market economy, and in order to tackle the retrogression through reforms. On the other hand, the report was seriously lacking in terms of demonstrating the internal contradictions and impasses of the European Union with regard to the negotiation chapters that were unfairly blocked by the Greek Cypriot administration in Southern Cyprus and France. We expect the



European Commission to defend more strongly the European values and principles at the EU level in its relations with Turkey.

Our suggestions regarding the process and solution are perfectly solid. We suggest that Turkey's EU membership process be revitalized. Turkey's democratic future is in Europe. We would like to emphasize the importance of at least five issues in order to support a new period with Turkey beyond the current situation:

- Firstly, Turkey's EU process should be approached in a manner that will encourage the broadest political and social consensus, free from partisanship and narrow-minded political calculations. As in the case of Croatia, a monitoring committee chaired by the opposition party is a good example in this sense.
- Secondly, the political agenda should be oriented to meet the needs of a democratic country that has to focus on the issues of growth, employment, judicial system reform, education reform, energy security, the EU harmonization process and global competition policies within the framework of the EU2020 Strategy.
- Thirdly, the Turkish public should be provided with more information on how the EU process will raise social standards, democracy and economy to higher levels.
- Fourthly, Turkey's European, constructive and results-oriented approach to the Cyprus issue should continue, but must be reciprocated.
- Lastly and most importantly, it is very important that EU politicians directly support Turkey. However, they should avoid falling into the contradiction of "supporting the political fate of a government" in their initiatives and discourses in the name of "supporting the future of Turks in Europe".

This is also a significant opportunity for European politicians to take the leadership in telling the truth to the European publics regarding the global situation. A Turkey that has fulfilled the membership criteria will really become a strong model for democracy. At the same time, it will create economic and political added value for the Union in the international arena. The enlargement of the European Union will be to the benefit of the futures of the European citizens in an environment of increasing competition in the world.

Turkey's problems will be better solved with an EU process revitalized through more concrete, more prudent policies without questioning the goal of full membership on the Turkish side or on the EU side. It should not be forgotten that a well-functioning Turkish democracy is in the common interest of Turkey and Europe.

CHP is the guarantee, owner and leader of the social democratic change in Turkey. Our goal is to strengthen the social state, which is one of the founding principles and unchangeable qualities of our Republic, and to ensure social justice and a life of happiness and dignity for our people.