

Wednesday, 28 March 2012 - Brussels

Pino Arlacchi (S&D). - Mr President, I support this resolution because I am in favour of full EU membership for Turkey and because I am convinced that its accession process should be completed as soon as possible. I have heard many objections to this process and I believe many of them are well grounded, but I believe also that these objections are overshadowed by three facts.

First, the contribution of Turkey to the stability of the world economy. Its economic growth, along with the performance of the BRICS, averted the transformation of the financial crisis in Europe and the USA after 2008 into a genuine catastrophe.

The second fact is the strengthening of global peace generated by Turkey's democratisation process and its related problem-free foreign policy. There has been a huge change of course of Turkish foreign policy in the right direction, which is positively affecting all East-West relationships.

The third is the quality of Turkish social policies. In just six years, from 2003 to 2009, the country reduced its poverty rate by an astonishing 36%, and as Socialists and Democrats we particularly appreciate this achievement.

[source: www.europarl.europa.eu]