

ДОКЛАД НА ДЖЕФРИ ВАН ОРДЕН

Публикуван на: 14-11-2005

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Treaty of Accession of the Republics of Bulgaria and Romania to the European Union, signed on 25 April 2005,
- having regard to its relevant resolutions and reports since the beginning of the accession negotiations,
- having regard to the Presidency Conclusions of the Brussels European Council of 16-17 December 2004,
- having regard to the Commission's Comprehensive Monitoring Report for Bulgaria (COM(2005)534), its earlier Reports on Bulgaria's progress towards accession, its Strategy Paper on progress in the enlargement process (COM(2004)0657 – C6-0150/2004), and its Opinion of 22 February 2005 on the applications for accession to the European Union of the Republic of Bulgaria and Romania (COM(2005)0055),
- having regard to Rule 45 of its Rules of Procedure,
- having regard to the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the opinion of the Committee ...,

A. whereas, following the closure of accession negotiations on 14 December 2004, Bulgaria signed the Accession Treaty on 25 April 2005 and ratified it on 11 May 2005

B. whereas Bulgaria remains well on course to assume the obligations for membership in time to meet our common objective of her accession to the EU on 1 January 2007

C. whereas, as the European Parliament has repeatedly emphasised, the accession of Bulgaria should depend exclusively on its own merits and should not be linked to the candidacy of any other country or indeed be disadvantaged by unrelated concerns about the course of future EU enlargement

1. Welcomes the ratification of Bulgaria's Treaty of Accession by many Member States and urges the speedy completion of the ratification process by the remainder

2. Congratulates successive Bulgarian governments on their steady commitment and progress towards EU accession, and welcomes the elements of continuity in Government and the National Assembly's determined prioritisation of taking forward legislation to meet accession requirements following the General Election in June 2005

3. Welcomes the generally positive assessment of Bulgaria's progress towards accession in the Commission's 2005 Monitoring Report and urges the Bulgarian Government and authorities to attend to those areas highlighted as needing 'increased efforts' and, before April 2006 (when a further Monitoring Report will be prepared) to show that it has taken effective action to remedy areas identified as being of

'serious concern'

4. Notes that Bulgaria is as close, or in many cases closer, to fulfilling accession criteria fourteen months before accession, as any of the new Member States were at the same stage in the accession process of the fourth enlargement

5. Recognises that the prospect of timely accession is a major incentive to increased effort and acceleration of the pace of reform and that the target date for accession of 1 January 2007 is clearly achievable; at the same time notes that the changes underway are beneficial in themselves, not merely as a prerequisite of EU accession, and that the process of modernisation and reform must continue for many years after accession and this will be reflected in the conditions for cohesion funding

6. Welcomes the arrival of 18 Bulgarian Parliamentary Observers to the European Parliament and looks forward to continuing the fruitful cooperation between Parliament, Commission and Council in decisions relating to Bulgaria's progress towards EU membership, in particular in relation to any consideration of activation of safeguard clauses

7. Recognises Bulgaria's significant contribution to the stability of the wider south-east European region and her continuing role in the promotion of regional security and prosperity

Political criteria

8. Notes that Bulgaria continues to fulfil the political criteria, and urges Bulgaria to channel maximum political, financial and administrative energy into practical implementation of legislation and strategies, including the National Anti-Corruption strategy and the Strategy on the Reform of the Judiciary, in order to deliver tangible results

9. Strongly endorses the view that the rule of law is vital to the establishment of public trust and confidence and also provides the foundation for economic progress and therefore greater prosperity

10. Recognises that crime rates in Bulgaria are generally no higher than in many Member States and notes that progress has been made in combating certain categories of serious crime such as drug trafficking, people trafficking, and currency counterfeiting

11. At the same time expresses concern at the brazen nature of Bulgarian organised criminal elements, their contempt for the law and challenge to the authority of the State, and their involvement with apparent impunity in a series of audacious, high-profile murders in recent years; notes with concern the small proportion of serious criminal cases that result in successful penal convictions

12. Notes that, while ranking better than one Member State and the other three EU candidates in the international "Corruption Perceptions" ranking, Bulgaria nevertheless does not score well and that, to date, there have been few successful convictions of high-level officials for corruption

13. Welcomes the initiatives taken for improved coordination of the work of the various Ministries and

operational agencies engaged in the fight against organised crime and corruption and the planned improvements in the organisation and management of the Police and Security Services; applauds the adoption of a range of new measures notably the Criminal Procedure Code and urges their speedy and effective implementation; reiterates, however, the strategic importance of further reform of the judiciary as the prerequisite for all other modernising initiatives; furthermore recognises that several Member States have provided excellent specialised assistance, in particular the UK "Crown Agents", and requests that those Member States with special expertise in combating organised crime should offer urgent additional support; notes that satisfactory results will only be achieved if efforts are enhanced not only at national but also local levels; notes as well Bulgaria's strategic location as an EU external border and recommends further concerted efforts to improve all aspects of border control

14. Calls therefore for additional steps including: Constitutional amendment in order to provide clearer division of responsibilities and greater effectiveness in the prosecution and investigation of crime; greater control and accountability of the Chief Prosecutor and his deputies; improved measures to facilitate investigation of corruption in the judiciary; improved salaries, resources and opportunities for 'fast track' promotion for the police; and serious attention to the seizure of assets of those involved in organised crime

15. Calls for more resources to be directed to improvement of orphanages and schools for disadvantaged children and those with special needs and to more effective implementation of the deinstitutionalisation plan; also wishes to encourage changes in the law and practice of adoption to reduce further the number of Bulgarian children adopted internationally and to promote national adoption including establishment of a unified national register for potential adopters

16. Welcomes the practical measures taken by Bulgaria to improve the integration of minorities into mainstream society especially in relation to education, housing and healthcare, while insisting that all efforts must be properly resourced and that progress will be judged by the tangible improvements felt by Bulgarian society; in this regard emphasises that integration is a two-way process with the Roma themselves recognising the need to adapt

17. Calls for action to be taken to effectively implement the Strategy for Decentralisation so that local administrative structures are considerably strengthened and have the necessary capacity to play a full and active role in Bulgaria's reforms

Economic criteria

18 Commends Bulgaria on taking action, as called for in Parliament's last Report, to further consolidate her economic performance via substantial structural reforms and sound fiscal policies and encourages further specific efforts to reduce the current account deficit; stresses that a strong focus on economic progress is essential in order to master the challenges and opportunities of EU membership

19. Welcomes the Commission's verdict on the positive effects of the privatisation programme in Bulgaria; notes that the share of the private sector reached 67% of GDP in the first half of 2005, an increase of 2.2% from the same period in 2004

20. Welcomes the notable progress in the creation of a business environment conducive to investment and growth, and the targeting of private sector, state and European funding to develop effective and equitable legal, administrative and regulatory structures for economic activity; continues to emphasise in this regard the relevance of a reliable judiciary and public administration for a healthy business climate and a strong decentralised infrastructure particularly for the benefit of SMEs

21. Recommends measures to bring greater flexibility to the labour market, to encourage innovation, to increase mobility of the workforce and to improve education and training programmes; at the same time wishes to see steps taken to assess the true level and nature of unemployment, given manpower shortages in some sectors

Acquis communautaire

22. Welcomes that some progress has been made by Bulgaria in the agricultural sector but urges immediate action to ensure that the various functioning systems such as control and paying agencies are in place to address concerns over outstanding legislative commitments in this field; stresses the need for a strong focus on improvements in land use and on resolving issues of land ownership; and encourages advantage to be taken of the enormous potential for efficient organic farming

23. Calls on Bulgaria to ensure that the highest standards of animal welfare are respected in all legislative and practical measures, for example in the transportation and slaughter of animals; in particular calls for vigorous action to enhance Bulgaria's capacity to meet challenges in relation to animal health, veterinary services and phytosanitary controls, most especially where there is an associated risk to public health, as in the case of avian flu, or to the safety of food supplies

24. Stresses that the management and control of pre-accession assistance must be substantially enhanced in order to prepare Bulgaria for more efficient use of EU Structural Funds; in particular efforts to accredit the Phare- and ISPA-related Extended Decentralised Implementation System must be accelerated; at the same time the Commission should target further assistance into those areas of greatest need

25. Stresses the crucial importance of ensuring energy supplies at a level which will meet future requirements both nationally and in the region; underlines the importance of new generating capacity on a sustainable basis, as well as of energy conservation efforts, and of the Kyoto Protocol targets; and reiterates its call on the Council to be prepared to view the closure dates for Units 3 and 4 of the Kozloduy Nuclear Power Plant flexibly until new generation capacity can come on stream in Bulgaria, without in any way compromising safety requirements, which remain an absolute priority

26. Reminds Bulgaria that urgent attention is needed to improve the implementation and enforcement of the protection of intellectual and industrial property

27. Reiterates its support for the Bulgarian nurses held in custody since 1999 in Libya and currently under sentence of death and calls upon the Libyan authorities to respond to the widespread international appeals for early and satisfactory resolution of this appalling situation

ДОКЛАД НА ДЖЕФРИ ВАН ОРДЕН

- Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the governments and parliaments of the Member States and National Assembly of the Republic of Bulgaria.