



Fabian Hamilton (Leeds North East): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps he is taking at EU level to seek to secure progress on Turkey's application for membership of the EU. (23639)

Date Answered

15 November 2010

David Lidington

Turkey's accession to the EU is a key goal for the British Government, subject to the rigorous application of the accession criteria. We believe that Turkish accession would be to the wider benefit of the UK and EU, contributing to our security and prosperity. We work closely with our EU Member State counterparts and with the European Commission in order to encourage and support progress in Turkey's Accession process.

We work closely with Turkey, both bilaterally and at the EU level, to support progress in their domestic reform programme to meet the all requirements of the EU acquis. We also encourage Turkey's efforts to support the Cyprus settlement process, and call for Turkey to implement the Additional Ankara Protocol.



Fabian Hamilton (Leeds North East): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, when he expects Turkey to accede to the European Union.

(23636)

Date Answered

12 November 2010

David Lidington

EU Accession is a condition-based not a time-based process. Turkey's accession is a key goal for the British Government, subject to the rigorous application of the accession criteria. We believe that Turkish accession would be to the wider benefit of the UK and EU, contributing to our security and prosperity. The accession process is challenging and Turkey must prove that it can meet the accession criteria and the requirements of the EU acquis before it can join the Union.



Fabian Hamilton (Leeds North East): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent representations he has made to the government of Turkey on its military presence on the island of Cyprus.

(23637)

Date Answered

12 November 2010

David Lidington

I refer the Hon. Member to the answer I gave to the House on 9 November 2010 (Official Report of 9 November 2010, column 128), namely that British Ministers raise the Cyprus settlement process with our Turkish counterparts at every opportunity. I last did so with both Turkey's Foreign Minister and Minister for Europe on 23 October. The presence of Turkish troops in Cyprus is one of the issues that will need to be resolved as part of a comprehensive settlement.



Fabian Hamilton (Leeds North East): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps he is taking to encourage a settlement on Cyprus.
(23638)

Date Answered

12 November 2010

David Lidington

I refer the Hon. Member to the answer I gave to the House on 9 November 2010 (Official Report of 9 November 2010, column 128), namely that at both ministerial and official level, we are urging the leaders of the Greek Cypriot community, President Christofias, and of the Turkish Cypriot community, Mr Eroglu, to demonstrate leadership, flexibility and willingness to compromise in the interests of everybody living on the island of Cyprus. We welcome the decision by both leaders to attend the meeting with Ban Ki-moon on 18 November. We remain in very close contact not just with the Governments of Cyprus and of Turkey, but with Mr Downer, the UN special envoy, and we will lend whatever support we are able to in the hope of bringing the negotiations to a successful conclusion.



Fabian Hamilton (Leeds North East): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps he is taking to increase the level of cultural exchange with Turkey.

(23640)

Date Answered

12 November 2010

David Lidington

In the UK-Turkey Strategic Partnership, signed in Ankara by both Prime Ministers in July, we committed to encouraging and facilitating wider human and inter-societal contacts between the two countries. The British Council leads such efforts in Turkey. Programmes include English Teacher training, vocational skills, higher education and science and climate change.