

Prof. Niyazi KIZILYÜREK

Member of the European Parliament

09 January 2020

Honourable President, Mr Sassoli,

I am the first elected Turkish-Cypriot MEP, and I have been elected with the votes of both Greek and Turkish Cypriots. As discussed in our several encounters in the parliament premises, I am committed for the reunification of my country, Cyprus. My main objective is to bring Greek and Turkish Cypriots together in a reconciliation process that would allow them to build a common future. The European Union and especially the Parliament can play a vital role in this process.

I would like to bring to your attention that Turkish is one of the two official languages of the Republic of Cyprus (the other being Greek). Its introduction as an official language of the EU will be then of great importance, both for the Turkish Cypriots and the peace process for the reunification of the island. I am of course aware that matter is up to the Council of the EU to decide.

What I am asking from you as a president of the European Parliament is to consider the passive use of Turkish language in the EP, namely when I take the floor to be able to speak in my mother tongue.

The President of the Republic of Cyprus, Nicos Anastasiades, has sent a letter dated 17 February 2016 to the Presidents of the Council, Commission and European Parliament regarding this issue. In his letter, he stated that Turkish is one of the official languages of the Republic of Cyprus and asked for its introduction as an official EU language in accordance with Article 342 of the TFEU on the rules governing the languages of the institutions of the Union.

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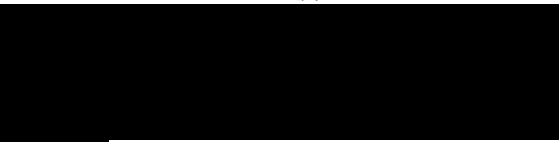
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The Council of the European Union responded through the Dutch Foreign Minister Mr Koenders, since the Netherlands was holding the Presidency of the at the time. In this response Mr Koenders, acknowledged the importance of adopting the Turkish language as an official EU language and was ready to start preparations for the introduction in collaboration with the Republic of Cyprus.

Now that a Turkish Cypriot has been elected in the European Parliament, this issue has been revitalised. Given all the above, I would appreciate to have a short meeting with you to discuss the above matter.

I am also looking forward to your positive response.

Yours sincerely,


Prof. Dr. Niyazi Kizilyürek