



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

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26 September 1989

*Jean Charles,*

Turkey's Application for EC Membership

While you were with the Prime Minister in Tokyo for the IDU Conference, the Turkish Foreign Minister handed over a letter from Mr Özal to the Prime Minister concerning Turkey's application for membership of the European Community. We believe it best to send a short and cautious reply. I enclose a draft.

The letter was not unexpected. We had learnt earlier in the week from UKRep Brussels that the Turks might have got hold of a copy of the Commission's draft report and would be taking urgent lobbying action with ourselves, the Germans and French. We checked in Paris and Bonn; it appears that we were the only recipients of the letter.

The Commission are in the final stages of preparing their report. We have not yet seen a copy of the draft. The latest indications are that the Commission are still working towards a report (not a formal Opinion) which will be carefully neutral. It will explain why the time is not ripe to take a decision on the opening of negotiations: the EC is not ready (absorption of Spain and Portugal, completion of the internal market) nor is Turkey in a position to take on the obligations of membership (an economic and social analysis will highlight the large gaps between the EC and Turkey). The possibility of Turkish accession at a future date will be left open. We have supported the Commission in this line.

Mr Özal's letter asked for a final Commission report acknowledging the eligibility of Turkey for full membership and for a declaration of political will by the Community before 1993 which would give a positive signal to the Turks. Both requests pose difficulties for us, and no doubt other member states.

Ministers took the view in OD(E) in April 1988 that accommodating Turkey in the Community would have huge economic costs and should not be attempted. Although, therefore, we could not agree to a political declaration that the Community would be ready one day to accept Turkey, we could subscribe to a general statement confirming the importance the Community

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attaches to developing its relationship with Turkey. To attempt to give a substantial reply at this stage would risk drawing Turkish fire on ourselves and allow other member states to hide behind us. The fact that the Commission have not produced their report provides ample excuse for a brief acknowledgement only.

If they come back and ask for our substantive views once we have seen the Commission's report, we might be able to be more forthcoming, but we should coordinate our position with at least the Germans and French.

*Yours ever,*

*Richard Gozney*

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DSP (Revised Sept 85)

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despatch/note

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FROM:  
The Prime Minister

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TEL. NO:

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SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

- Top Secret
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TO:

Copies to:

H E Mr Turgut Ozal  
Prime Minister of Turkey

PRIVACY MARKING

..... In Confidence

CAVEAT .....

SUBJECT:

Thank you very much for your letter of 20 September which your Foreign Minister, Mesut Yilmaz, passed to me during the IDU Conference in Tokyo last week. It was useful to have your ideas on Turkey's application for membership of the European Community.

As you point out, we expect the Commission to report to the Council before the end of this year. I cannot of course give you my reactions until we have received it. But I can assure you that, when the time comes, we will give it our most careful consideration, together with other member states. I will certainly bear in mind the points you raise in your letter.

*CO*

Enclosures flag(s) .....

Tuskey - Relations Pr 2

