



## EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Brussels, 26.04.2017  
C(2017) 2803 final

*Dear President,*

*The Commission would like to thank the Assembleia da República for its Opinion on the Third Report on the Progress made in the implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement {COM(2016) 634 final}.*

*As the Assembleia da República notes, the EU-Turkey Statement of 18 March 2016 has delivered substantial results during one year of implementation. In particular, the number of crossings has been reduced and the loss of life stemmed in the Aegean Sea. Continuous efforts and commitment are however required by the EU to ensure successful implementation of the Statement, including through resettlement of Syrian refugees from Turkey and carrying out projects under the Facility for Refugees in Turkey.*

*The Commission agrees with the Assembleia da República that many challenges still exist in the implementation of the Statement, including the processing of asylum applications in Greece and the need to step up the pace of returns from the Greek islands. To assist in this process and thereby to alleviate the pressure on Greece, the Commission continues to call for Member States to make available the staff required to respond to the needs identified by the European Asylum Support Office and the European Border and Coast Guard, including matching the profiles identified and providing for longer-term deployments.*

*As the Assembleia da República highlights, and while there is little evidence that the stemming of flows on the Eastern Mediterranean route has caused any major re-routing from Turkey, the situation along the Central Mediterranean route remains a source of concern. Following up on the Joint Communication "Migration on the Central Mediterranean route – Managing flows, saving lives" and the Malta Declaration of 3 February 2017, measures are being taken to address the situation, including strengthening the capacity of the Libyan Coast Guard, improving conditions for migrants in Libya, and working with Libya's neighbours. Through the Partnership Framework, efforts continue to better manage migratory flows into Libya from the south.*

*Ms Regina BASTOS  
Chair of the European Affairs Committee  
of the Assembleia da República  
Palácio de S. Bento  
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*cc. Mr Eduardo FERRO RODRIGUES  
President of the  
Assembleia da República  
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*The Commission continues to closely follow the developments and report on the implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement and the Partnership Framework.*

*The Commission looks forward to continuing the political dialogue with the Assembleia da República in the future.*

*Yours faithfully,*

*Frans Timmermans  
First Vice-President*