

Question for written answer E-015826/2015
to the Council
Rule 130
Marijana Petir (PPE)

Subject: Opening negotiations with Macedonia

The conclusions of the Conference of Western Balkan States, held in Berlin in 2014 and Vienna in 2015, state that all countries shall have the opportunity to join the EU if they fulfil the accession criteria, that bilateral disputes do not form part of these criteria and that Member States must refrain from abusing the status of unresolved bilateral issues in order to influence progress in the accession process. Furthermore, the most recent progress reports on Macedonia, as well as the related resolution on the progress report, indicate that Macedonia is making constant progress and that it is ready for the opening of negotiations. Finally, the Commission and Parliament have repeatedly stated that Macedonia is ready to begin negotiations on EU membership.

When will the Council open negotiations with Macedonia, which this year marks its 10th year as a candidate country? Will the Council seek to remove the bilateral dispute between Macedonia and Greece regarding the former's name from the conditions for the opening of negotiations (following the successful model set by Croatia and Slovenia), thereby enabling Macedonia's accession process to be launched and the bilateral dispute to be resolved during negotiations?