

## **Mandelson: Calming globalisation fears crucial for rational debate on Turkish EU membership** - Istanbul, 15 September 2006

EU Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson has today warned that the political repercussions of Europe's response to the economic challenges of globalisation will impact on the ongoing debate on Turkish membership of the EU. Speaking to a conference organised by the Centre for European Reform in Istanbul, Mandelson argued that Turkey risks becoming "the projected image of everything Europe fears about a changing world". Mandelson argued that making the economic and political case for globalisation in Europe will be crucial in ensuring a "rational" debate on Turkey's place in the EU.

Mandelson argued: "The economic costs of the failure to make the case for enlargement and globalisation will be felt first in Europe, in relative economic decline and a shrinking fiscal base for our welfare states. But the political repercussions will also be felt here in Turkey: in the rising argument against Turkey's place in the EU. Europe's responsibility is to ensure that does not happen."

He said: "In the EU many of the dissenting voices on Turkish membership are the same voices raised against globalisation. They reflect wider questions in European society: unemployment, migration, social tensions. Genuine anxieties that need to be addressed. It is hard to have a rational debate on Turkey and the EU while Turkey is the projected image of everything we fear about a changing world. So Europe has a side of the bargain to keep."

Mandelson insisted that Turkey also has "the power to shape the perceptions and defy the prejudices". He will call on Turkey to press on with economic and legal reforms and to ratify and implement the Ankara protocol, arguing that the current refusal to do so "plays into the hands of those who have reservations about Turkish accession and creates a justification for pushing the whole membership process into a siding."

Mandelson said that Turkey needs to "convince European companies that Turkey is a reliable and profitable place to do business, a hub for the Mediterranean and a logical gateway to the single market for key goods like textiles."

Arguing that Turkey's "place should in due course be in the European Union" Mandelson concluded: "the strongest argument Turkey can offer in the face of those who seek to slow down and even stall its accession process is an unwavering commitment to the responsibilities of membership: not as an obligation but as a choice and a European vocation."

[Read the full speech](#)