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Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Borrell
on behalf of the European Commission
(29.4.2021)

Following the tasking of the December 2020 European Council¹, the High Representative and the Commission submitted a report on the state of play of EU-Turkey political, economic and trade relations². This report took the form of a Joint Communication by the Commission and the High Representative to the European Council.

The Joint Communication underlined that to deepen the present momentum and incentivise closer EU-Turkey ties across the board, the Union should put a number of possible areas of cooperation and common interest on the table to allow for a progressive, proportionate and reversible approach. These could be pursued in incremental steps - provided that the constructive efforts by Turkey are sustained and reinforced.

The Joint Communication also underscored that should Turkey not move forward constructively in developing a genuine partnership with the EU, but instead return to renewed unilateral actions or provocations in breach of international law, this would bear political and economic consequences.

In their Statement of 25 March 2021, the Members of the European Council welcomed the Joint Communication and particularly as regards economic cooperation, they invited the Commission to intensify talks with Turkey to address current difficulties in the implementation of the Customs Union, ensuring its effective application to all Member States, and, in parallel, the Council to work on a mandate for the modernisation of the Customs Union. Such a mandate may be adopted by the Council subject to additional guidance by the European Council³.

There are currently no plans to assess the impact of suspending any of the EU's trade agreements.

¹ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/47296/1011-12-20-euco-conclusions-en.pdf>

² <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52021JC0008&from=EN>

³ https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/48976/250321-vtc-euco-statement-en.pdf?utm_source=dsms-auto&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Statement+of+the+members+of+the+European+Council%2c+25+March+2021