

Berlin: October 4, 2005

**Peter Hintze MP, European Policy Spokesman of the CDU/CSU-Parliamentary Group,
declared on the start of EU-accession negotiations with Turkey:**

(Courtesy Translation)

Austria was the only EU-member state that introduced the questions and wishes of a large majority of the citizens of Europe in the struggle for the negotiating framework. The European Union's capacity of accession of such a big country as Turkey with a so swiftly growing population and with considerable political and economic problems is more than doubtful. Therefore it is a gain for the whole of Europe that Austria managed that the EU's capacity of accession has been made a criterion of decision at the end of the negotiations. Austria has rendered a great service to Europe.

It casts a deep shadow on the negotiations ahead of us that the Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan called the European Union a "Club of Christians" only on the eve of the start of the negotiations. The Christian image of the human being has formed Europe more than anything else. The European image of the human being and the values based on that image has to be protected against all attempts to call them into question.

I wish very much that Turkey will continue its way of internal reforms and will recognize it as an opportunity for itself and not only as a means to reach EU-membership. The EU-member states must have the freedom to decide at the end of the negotiations, whether the accession of turkey and thus the crossing of the geographic borders of Europe will overcharge Europe or not.