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## STEERING EU SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY THROUGH TURBULENT WATERS: WHERE DOES THE STRATEGIC COMPASS POINT?

The Strategic Compass offers a detailed action plan to reinforce the EU's role as a security provider. However, it represents a missed opportunity in unlocking the vast full potential of Turkey-EU security cooperation due to its problematic stance *vis-à-vis* Turkey.

The long-awaited "Strategic Compass" document was formally approved by the EU Foreign Affairs Council on 21 March 2022 and later endorsed by the European Council. The Strategic Compass aims to steer the course of the EU's security and defence policies in the next five to ten years. Two years in the making, the Strategic Compass comes at an overly critical moment when great power competition has intensified, the core tenets of the rules-based international order are under attack and the European security architecture is undergoing a profound transformation due to Russia's war on Ukraine.

Unlike its predecessors, the 2003 European Security Strategy and the 2016 EU Global Strategy, the Strategic Compass is not just a strategy document, but also a guide for action with timetables and concrete deliverables. Moreover, the fact that the Strategic Compass was borne out of a process led by EU capitals increases the hope that the Member States will be more willing to implement the identified actions. Dubbed as "part strategy, part action guide", the document includes a detailed action plan consisting of more than 50 actions to be fulfilled over the next five years. It is important to note that the document has undergone six revisions since the presentation of the first draft in November 2021 and the language on Russia has been substantially toughened at the request of the Baltic states and Poland. A major novelty regarding the Strategic Compass has to do with the fact that it includes the first-ever EU-wide threat assessment which is regarded as a significant step on the path to a common strategic culture.

### Four Pillars of the Strategic Compass

In an era of raw power politics, the Strategic Compass aims to boost the EU's role as a security provider and



to equip it with the ability to think and act strategically building on the following four pillars: Act, Secure, Invest, Partner. In order to improve the EU's ability to act swiftly and robustly in the face of crises, the Strategic Compass proposes the creation of the "EU Rapid Deployment Capacity" consisting of 5,000 troops by 2025, which is the most striking initiative in the document. This flexible modular force, which will consist of air, land, and maritime components, is to be deployed in different operational scenarios and increase its readiness through EU-wide regular live exercises.

Moreover, the document underlines the necessity to reinforce CSDP missions and operations through a more rapid and flexible decision-making process. This implies mobilising the Treaty provisions providing for flexibility and differentiated integration in CSDP such as forming ad hoc "coalitions of the willing" and the use of "constructive abstention" enshrined in Articles 44 and 31 of the Lisbon Treaty. Increasing financial solidarity, military mobility, and developing the capacity to station

200 fully equipped civilian experts in crisis areas within 30 days by mid-2023 form the other actions foreseen under this pillar.

Under the second pillar, which focuses on improving the EU's ability to deter and respond to the fast-changing nature of threats, the document concentrates on boosting the EU's ability in countering hybrid and cyber threats. To this end, various "toolboxes" combining different instruments in a more coordinated manner are to be developed.

Based on the understanding that the EU's collective ambition to become a more robust security provider should be matched with adequate resources, the Strategic Compass includes a pledge by the Member States to substantially increase their defence spending and invest more in disruptive technologies, under the third pillar. The changing threat perceptions due to Russia's war on Ukraine have led numerous EU capitals such as Berlin, Copenhagen, and Warsaw to announce vast defence budgets and more Member States are expected to follow suit. At a time when the effects

of the COVID-19 pandemic continue to put pressure on national budgets, the EU's recent defence initiatives such as Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) and the European Defence Fund (EDF) have become more important than ever. The Strategic Compass puts forward proposals such as VAT exemption and a bonus system to encourage joint capability development and joint procurement to make full use of these instruments.

Finally, the fourth pillar focuses on strengthening cooperation with long-standing strategic partners such as NATO, UN, and regional organisations including the OSCE and ASEAN as well as developing tailored bilateral partnerships with like-minded countries and strategic partners such as Turkey, the US, the UK, and Norway. Establishing tailored partnerships with Western Balkan countries as well as southern and eastern neighbours through enhanced dialogue is another priority in this regard.

### The Strategic Compass and Turkey

The document's position on Turkey highlights the dichotomy between the short-term interests of the certain Member States and the collective interests of the EU in the EU's effort to set a long-term strategic vision. Given Turkey's status as an EU candidate country and a key NATO Ally and the significant role Ankara has been playing in mediating a ceasefire between Moscow and Kyiv, the way the document mentions Turkey is quite problematic and difficult to comprehend. The document cites Turkey in two sections, firstly in the context of the Eastern Mediterranean where the security environment is analysed in a rather negative light, and secondly in the section on bilateral partnerships as a cooperation partner with long-standing contributions to CSDP missions and operations. In the latter part, while underlining the EU's commitment to developing a mutually beneficial partnership with Turkey,

the document argues that this would require an equal commitment on the part of Turkey to cooperation and de-escalation in the Eastern Mediterranean as stated in the 25 March 2021 European Council Statement.

The fact that the section on the Eastern Mediterranean was written in a language reflecting Greek and Greek Cypriot claims, has triggered strong criticism from Ankara. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in a statement issued on 22 March 2022, noted that this section seems to have been dictated by the Greek and Greek Cypriot duo who have maximalist maritime boundary claims in the Eastern Mediterranean. Given the document's failure to point the right direction, the Foreign Ministry stated that it could be perceived neither as a "compass" nor as "strategic". Finally, referring to the Russia-Ukraine war and Ankara's mediation efforts, "Taking into account the latest developments, it is unfortunate and non-visionary for the EU that the document misses the truth and reality and sees a candidate country and a NATO Ally from such a shallow perspective", the statement noted.

It is very unfortunate that a document that should provide long-term guidance and a strategic vision for the EU's defence and security policies has become hostage to the unilateral claims of certain Member States. If it had been designed with a more objective and balanced approach regarding Turkey, the Strategic Compass could have been a game-changer. Not only would it present concrete opportunities for revitalising Turkey-EU relations which would ultimately contribute to the deepening of NATO-EU cooperation, as stated in the Compass, but it would also reinforce the EU's global actorness. In its present form, however, the document represents a missed opportunity in this respect. Both Turkey and the EU have a lot to win from closer cooperation in security and defence. Turkey could provide substantial added value to the EU's defence initiatives and turn the EU into a true geopolitical actor.





## AMBASSADOR OF CZECHIA VACEK VISITED TOBB IN ANKARA

On 20 April 2022, Ambassador of Czechia Pavel Vacek paid a visit to the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges (TOBB) in Ankara. During his visit, Vacek met with the TOBB President M. Rifat

Hisarcıklioğlu and IKV Chairman Ayhan Zeytinoğlu. Economic and trade relations between Turkey and the Czechia, the modernisation of the Customs Union and Turkey-EU relations were discussed at the meeting.



## IKV CHAIRMAN ZEYTİNOĞLU MET WITH EUROPEAN COMMISSION VICE-PRESIDENT TIMMERMANS

European Commission Executive Vice-President Frans Timmermans paid an official visit to Ankara on 20-21 April 2022. Timmermans, who visited Ankara for the 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Turkey-EU High-Level Climate Dialogue, met with Environment, Urbanisation and Climate Change Minister Murat Kurum, Trade Minister Mehmet Muş as well as Foreign Minister and Chief Negotiator Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu. Timmermans, leading the Commission's work on the European Green Deal and its first-ever European Climate Law, drew attention to close cooperation between Turkey and the EU in the green transition process. Timmermans prioritised limiting the global temperature rise to 1.5°C in line with the Paris Agreement targets and emphasised the importance of Turkey's commitment to updating its 2053 zero-emission target and national contribution statement ahead of COP 27.

Timmermans also came together with representatives of the business community and civil society organisations. At the working dinner attended by IKV Chairman Ayhan Zeytinoğlu, Timmermans stated that it is critical to cooperate on the basis of mutual benefit in relations between the EU and Turkey. Timmermans emphasised that the European Green Deal aims to make Europe the world's first climate-neutral continent by 2050. He stressed the importance of the EU and Turkey working closely to achieve this goal and stated that Turkey and the EU could work together on issues such as the transition to a circular economy, renewable energy, increasing the share of solar and wind energy, and the production of alternative

fuels such as green hydrogen. IKV Chairman Ayhan Zeytinoğlu conveyed to Timmermans the support given by the business community to Turkey's EU membership goal, modernisation of the Customs Union, visa liberalisation and the Green Deal. Emphasising the importance of reviving the relations within the scope of the positive agenda initiated between Turkey and the EU, Zeytinoğlu stated that initiating the Customs Union modernisation process would contribute to the development and deepening of trade and economic relations between the two parties. IKV Chairman Zeytinoğlu reminded that Turkey is a very close partner of the EU on security, energy, and migration issues. Zeytinoğlu also stated that Turkey, hosting 3,7 million Syrian refugees, has taken a significant burden from Europe. He said that Germany spends approximately 30,000 euros for each refugee, and with this calculation, the importance and cost of the humanitarian mission of Turkey might be better understood. Chairman Zeytinoğlu also touched upon the Green Deal. He stated that the European Green Deal had created pressure for transformation, but it also contained opportunities. Zeytinoğlu noted that the Green Deal, which requires a radical transformation in almost every sector, forced Turkey and the EU to cooperate closely. He also emphasised the importance of the EU's investments in Turkey. He stated that investments to be made in areas like green economy, hydrogen, solar energy, and electric vehicles would contribute to the development of Turkey-EU trade and economic relations for the benefit of both sides.



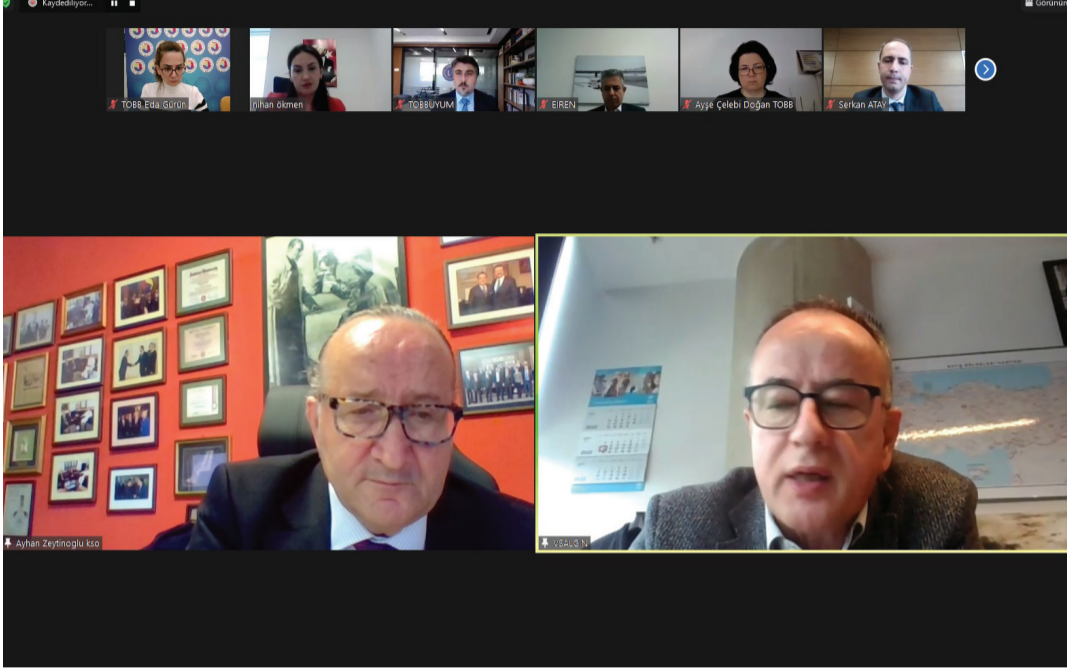
## TOBB PRESIDENT M. RİFAT HİSARCIKLIOĞLU ATTENDED THE PRESIDENTIAL HANDOVER CEREMONY OF EUROCHAMBRES

On 28 April 2022, Deputy President of the European Chamber of Commerce and Industry (EUROCHAMBRES) and President of the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB) M. Rifat Hisarcıklioğlu attended the Presidential Handover Ceremony of EUROCHAMBRES.

Christoph Leitl handed over the presidency of EUROCHAMBRES to Luc Frieden at the reception. TOBB President Hisarcıklioğlu had also discussed Turkey-EU relations prior to the reception.

TOBB President Hisarcıklioğlu attended the EUROCHAMBRES General Assembly on the following day.

İKv AGENDA



## İKv CHAIRMAN ZEYTİNOĞLU PARTICIPATED IN THE MEETING OF GLASS AND GLASS PRODUCTS INDUSTRY COUNCIL

İKv Chairman Ayhan Zeytinoğlu attended the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB) Glass and Glass Products Industry Council's meeting with representatives of the public, non-governmental organisations under his and Turkey Glass and Glass Products Industry Council President Vecdet Salgın's co-chairmanship on 26 April 2022.

At the meeting, the Council President provided information about the production losses experienced by the sector due to natural gas and power outages in 2022 and the work carried out in this process. In addition,

Council Members expressed their experiences about the financial losses they experienced in this process, the penalties experienced in the export process, and the ruptures in the production lines due to the closed (cooling) furnaces. Expressing the sensitivity of the glass sector regarding the power outage, the members noted the importance of informing the sector long before these cuts were made. In addition, it was stated that there was uncertainty due to the continued increase in energy costs by the Members.

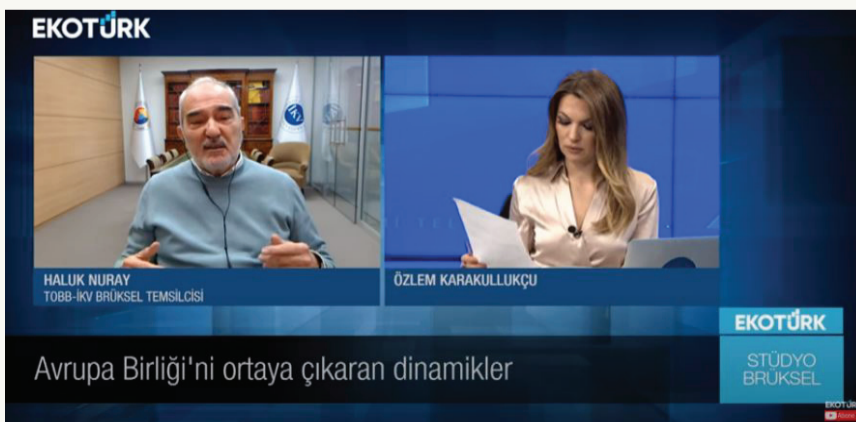
At the meeting, the environmental Label Branch Manager of the Ministry

of Environment, Urbanisation and Climate Change Serkan Atay delivered a speech on the Environmental Label, while TOBB Environment Directorate Assistant Specialist Esin Özarslan made a presentation on the European Green Deal.

General Manager of TOBBUYUM Mediation and Dispute Resolution Center Onur Yüksel touched upon the advantages of the system and processes of disputes. Lastly, TOBB MEYBEM Vocational Qualification and Certification Centers Marketing Officer Nihan Öktem addressed the importance and scope of the Vocational Qualification Certificate.

## İKv BRUSSELS REPRESENTATIVE NURAY SPOKE ON EKOTÜRK TV

İKv Brussels Representative Haluk Nuray was the guest of the "Studio Brussels" (Stüdyo Brüksel) programme presented by Özlem Karakullukçu and broadcasted on EKOTÜRK TV on 26 April 2022. Nuray discussed the impacts of the elections held in Hungary and France on the EU in the coming period.



## TIMELINE APRIL 2022

	1	İKv published a brief entitled "Revisiting the Prospects for a Cyprus Settlement: Assessing the Outlook for 2022 and Beyond".
	2	
Hungarian parliamentary elections were held.	3	İKv Secretary General Nas discussed Turkey-EU relations at 19 Mayıs University.
	4	
	5	İKv Secretary General Nas spoke on the effects of green transition to agriculture at the webinar held by Syngenta.
The NATO Foreign Ministers Meeting was held.	6	
	7	İKv Secretary General Nas spoke about women's rights in Turkey's EU accession process at the workshop entitled "Prospects for Civil Society in EU-Turkey Relations".
Turkish, British and Italian defence ministers met at the tripartite meeting in Istanbul.	8	
	9	
The first round of the French presidential elections were held.	10	
	11	
	12	İKv Secretary General Nas attended the TOBB Turkey Packaging Council Meeting.
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Foreign Minister Çavuşoğlu met with Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Szijjarto.	18	
	19	İKv Secretary General Nas spoke at the conference on "One Hundred Years of Turkish Diplomacy".
The European Commission's Executive Vice-President for the European Green Deal Timmermans visited Turkey to attend the 2 <sup>nd</sup> Turkey-EU High-Level Climate Dialogue.	20	
	21	İKv Chairman Zeytinoğlu met with European Commission Vice-President Timmermans.
	22	
	23	
Slovenian general elections and the second round of the French presidential elections were held.	24	İKv published a brief entitled "Modernising the EU-Turkey Customs Union".
	25	İKv Chairman Zeytinoğlu participated in the meeting of TOBB Glass and Glass Products Industry Council.
İzmir was awarded the 2022 Europe Prize for promoting European ideal.	26	
	27	İKv Secretary General Nas spoke at the webinar organised by TÜSİAD Global Politics Forum.
	28	
İstanbul and İzmir were selected amongst the 100 cities participating in EU Mission for climate-neutral and smart cities by 2030.	29	
	30	
	31	

## IKV CHAIRMAN ZEYTİNOĞLU ATTENDED THE LAUNCH EVENT OF “WOMEN’S HAND IN INDUSTRY” PROJECT



On 20 April 2022, IKV Chairman Ayhan Zeytinoğlu made an opening speech at the launch event of the “Women’s Hand in Industry” project conducted by The Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB) Kocaeli Women Entrepreneurs Council (Kocaeli KGK). Within the scope of the project, which aims to create an education plan according to the needs of industrial organisations and to provide education to women who want to participate in work life and girls in vocational technical high schools, a press

conference was held with the participation of project stakeholders.

In his opening speech IKV Chairman Zeytinoğlu said that the aim of the project is to increase women’s participation in employment in industry, contribute to meeting the need for qualified employment of the industry, as well as increasing role model women in industry in front of our young people.

TOBB Kocaeli Women Entrepreneurs Council President Nurcan Babalık also said “As Kocaeli KGK, we aim to increase the participation of women in the

economy by increasing women’s employment in the industry in our province. 52,000 companies operate in our province. The number of male employees in the province is 492,000 while the number of female employees is 180,495. In line with this data, I would like to state how important our project is for our province. Because we think that increasing women’s employment in our province, which is an industrial centre, will bring serious benefits to our country economically.”

The Press Conference was attended by President of the Körfez Chamber of Commerce Recep Öztürk, Director of National Education of Kocaeli Ömer Akmanşen, and School Principals, President of İMEAK Chamber of Shipping Vedat Doğusel, Vice President of TOBB Women Entrepreneurs Council of Directors Günseli Özen, and Member of the Upper Board Fatma Aydoğdu, TOBB Entrepreneurship Department Specialist Handan Köse, TOBB Kocaeli Women Entrepreneurs Council President Nurcan Babalık and Executive Board Members.

## IKV VICE-CHAIRMAN KABAALIOĞLU SPOKE AT THE CONFERENCE ENTITLED “TURKEY-EU VISA FREE DIALOGUE” HELD IN ADANA



IKV Vice-Chairman Prof. Haluk Kabaalioğlu and IKV Secretary General Assoc. Prof. Çiğdem Nas spoke at the conference entitled “Visa Liberalisation Dialogue in Turkey-EU Relations” on 21 April 2022 in Çukurova University, with the cooperation of Adana Ticaret University. The conference was organised as part of Jean Monnet module “Turkey in or out=EU”.

The opening speeches of the conference were made by Çukurova University Department

of International Law Faculty Member and Jean Monnet Module Coordinator Assoc. Prof. A. Aslı Bilgin, Adana Chamber of Commerce President and IKV Board Member Atila Menevşe and IKV Vice-Chairman Prof. Haluk Kabaalioğlu. In his speech, Chamber of Commerce President Menevşe discussed the current developments in Turkey-EU relations and the importance of visa liberalisation, especially for the business world.

IKV Vice-Chairman Prof. Kabaalioğlu, on the other hand, explained in detail the historical background and legal aspects of visa and visa liberalisation issues in Turkey-EU relations and the studies he has conducted on the subject. In the panel section, under the moderation of Research Assistant Deniz Alkış Cemiloğlu, IKV Secretary General Assoc. Prof. Çiğdem Nas, TOBB University of Economics and Technology Faculty Member of Law Prof. Sanem Baykal and T.C. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, EU Presidency EU Expert Caner Yıldız gave speeches. In her speech, Assoc. Prof. Nas emphasised that the visa liberalisation dialogue in Turkey-EU relations progressed in parallel with the refugee cooperation and discussed the development and current status of the dialogue that started with the signing of the Turkey-EU Readmission Agreement in 2013.

## IKV SECRETARY GENERAL NAS SPOKE AT VARIOUS EVENTS AND MEDIA PLATFORMS



IKV Secretary General Assoc. Prof. Çiğdem Nas discussed different dimensions of Turkey-EU relations in numerous events throughout April. IKV Secretary General Assoc. Prof. Çiğdem Nas spoke at the conference held at Samsun 19 Mayıs University, Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences on 4 April 2022. The economic dimension of Turkey-EU relations was discussed at the conference, which was co-organised by the Friedrich Naumann Foundation (FNF) and the European Neighbourhood Council (ENC) within the scope of the project titled “Beyond Erasmus: Education, Exchange and Employment Opportunities for Youth in the EU and Turkey.” In her speech, Assoc. Prof. Nas discussed the establishment of the Turkey-EU Customs Union, its problematic areas, and modernisation.

On 6 April 2022, Assoc. Prof. Çiğdem Nas attended the webinar entitled “The Future of Agriculture in Africa, the Middle East, and Turkey: Basic Trends and Its Importance” organised by Syngenta. In her presentation, Assoc. Prof. Nas highlighted the current state and problems of the agricultural sector in Turkey and discussed how climate change and green transformation affect agriculture and farm policy.

Assoc. Prof. Çiğdem Nas discussed women’s rights in Turkey’s EU accession process at the workshop titled “Prospects for Civil Society in EU-Turkey Relations” organised as part of the “Turkey-Europe Forum” supported by the Stiftung Mercator on 7 April 2022. Speaking at the workshop held within the scope of the Mercator Alumni Fund Assoc. Prof. Nas firstly stated Turkey’s accomplishments on women’s rights in the EU accession and then touched upon the problems women face in everyday life. Lastly, Nas pointed out that although Turkey’s

decision to withdraw from the Istanbul Convention implies an important backsliding in the process, the struggle of civil society in this area continues.

On 12 April 2022, Assoc. Prof. Nas participated in the TOBB Turkey Packaging Council meeting and delivered a speech on the modernisation of the Turkey-EU Customs Union and the European Green Deal. During the meeting chaired by TOBB Packaging Council President Mustafa Tacir, current issues regarding the sector were discussed. In her speech, Assoc. Prof. Çiğdem Nas touched upon the Turkey-EU Customs Union modernisation process and talked about the developments affecting this process.

On 20 April 2022, Assoc. Prof. Nas participated in the conference entitled “One Hundred Years of Turkish Diplomacy” organised by Istanbul University Faculty of Political Sciences in honour of Istanbul University Faculty member, international relations and Turkish foreign policy expert Emeritus Prof. Faruk Sönmezoğlu. Nas discussed the growing importance of climate diplomacy in recent years and the impacts of the European Green Deal on Turkey-EU relations.

On 27 April 2022, Nas spoke at the webinar titled “Crisis of the International System: The Erosion of Rules, Values and Norms” organised by TÜSIAD Global Politics Forum. In her speech, Assoc. Prof. Nas touched upon the current state of the international system and its crisis. Defining the crisis of the international system as a crisis of trust, legitimacy, and authority, Nas stated that fundamental rights and freedoms and democracy maintain their importance and universal character and emphasised the importance of the struggle for progressive politics at the local, national, and global levels.

HIGH-LEVEL EXCHANGES

## RUSSIA-UKRAINE FACE-TO-FACE PEACE TALKS HELD IN İSTANBUL

Following the first negotiation attempt between Russia and Ukraine that took place on the fourth day of the war in the Belarus-Ukraine border region, the negotiations continued via video conferences. However, the Ukrainian and Russian negotiators came face-to-face for the first time at Dolmabahçe Palace in İstanbul on 29 March 2022, with the mediation of Turkey. Although during the initial negotiations, the parties only agreed on opening the humanitarian corridors for the safe evacuation of civilians, the peace talks entered a new phase with Turkey's mediation efforts. Turkey's peace-making attempt increased the hope for a peaceful solution to the Russia-Ukraine war.

Turkey's mediation initiatives originally began at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Antalya Diplomacy Forum. Followingly, Turkey sat on the negotiation table as the facilitator at the end of March 2022, on both parties' demands. Turkey's



neutral and balanced position in the Russia-Ukraine war gave confidence to both parties. This is due to the fact that while providing military support to Kyiv with Bayraktar drones, Turkey only followed sanctions imposed by the UN against Moscow.

As was stated by the Ukrainian negotiators, it was discussed during the peace-making meeting that Ukraine would agree not to join NATO; however, it would require its security guaranteed as per the provisions of Article 5 of NATO.

Moreover, it was stated that Turkey was named amongst the potential guarantor states along with other states such as Canada, Israel, and Germany. Lastly, the Ukrainian negotiators called for a meeting between Russian President Vladimir

Putin and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky to negotiate the status of Donbas. On the other hand, Russia gave the assurance that it would scale down its military operations in Kyiv and northern Ukraine.

However, with the war crimes committed by the Russian army in Bucha, Mariupol, and Volnovaha, just a few days after the peace talks meeting, the negotiation process between the Ukrainian and Russian negotiators made the peace process much more complex.

Although no concrete results have emerged yet, Turkey, as a NATO member state, demonstrated the possibility to establish reliable relations with both conflicting parties, namely Russia and Ukraine as Turkey has been conducting intense diplomacy since the beginning of the Russia-Ukraine war.



## FOREIGN MINISTER ÇAVUŞOĞLU ATTENDED THE NATO FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING

Turkey's Foreign Minister and Chief Negotiator Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu paid a two-day visit to Belgium to attend the NATO Foreign Ministers Meeting in Brussels on 6-7 April 2022 to discuss the war in Ukraine as well as the current global developments, and to hold bilateral contacts.

It was announced that the NATO Foreign Ministers Meeting was also attended by key officials from Ukraine, Finland, Sweden, Georgia, the EU, and NATO's Asia-Pacific partners such as Australia, Japan, New Zealand, and South Korea. The main agenda of the meeting was Russia's intervention in Ukraine. In addition to the war in Ukraine,

it was announced that NATO Foreign Ministers discussed the development of NATO's next Strategic Concept, which is a roadmap for the Alliance's continued adaptation in a more dangerous world.

Minister Çavuşoğlu also held bilateral meetings during his two-day visit in Brussels. He first met with his Canadian counterpart, Mélanie Joly. In his second meeting, Çavuşoğlu met with the Italian Foreign Minister, then met with Swedish Foreign Minister Ann Linde, British Foreign Minister Liz Truss, and Portuguese Foreign Minister João Gomes Cravinho. During all these bilateral meetings, the relations between the two countries and the latest

developments in the war between Ukraine and Russia were evaluated.

Speaking following the NATO Foreign Ministers Meeting in Brussels, Minister Çavuşoğlu also reiterated that US Secretary of State Antony Blinken extended an invitation to visit Washington on 18 May 2022 to discuss the recently launched strategic mechanism between Turkey and the US. Lastly, Minister Çavuşoğlu attended the opening of the "Turkey's Beauties" exhibition in Brussels. In the exhibition, photographs taken by The Photojournalists Association of Turkey to world capitals took place and Çavuşoğlu stressed that the exhibition constitutes a good example of the culture of living together.

## DEFENCE MINISTER AKAR MET WITH HIS ITALIAN AND BRITISH COUNTERPARTS TO DISCUSS THE CRISIS IN UKRAINE



Shortly after his bilateral meetings with Italian Defence Minister Lorenzo Guerini and British Defence Minister Ben Wallace, Defence Minister Hulusi Akar hosted his Italian and British counterparts at the tripartite meeting, held in İstanbul on 9 April 2022. The three ministers, who had talks on the Italian island of Sicily last year, discussed bilateral and regional security as well as defence cooperation at this year's meeting in İstanbul.

Speaking at a joint press conference following the tripartite meeting, Minister Akar stated that extremely beneficial and constructive outcomes were obtained in this meeting. According to Minister Akar, the urgency of the safe evacuation of civilians from land and sea, especially from Mariupol, was also emphasised. Minister Akar also remarked that

the three ministers agreed that they would continue to openly express their support for the sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity of Ukraine. In the context of recent developments in Ukraine, the ministers came to a mutual understanding that a ceasefire is needed without delay so that there would be no more casualties and civilian casualties and that the humanitarian situation would not deteriorate. Minister Akar expressed that Turkey would continue to do its part to provide humanitarian aid to Ukraine.

Meanwhile, Minister Akar reiterated this intention during his phone call with his Ukrainian counterpart Oleksii Reznikov on the same day. The tripartite summit demonstrated that Turkey stepped up its efforts to bring a diplomatic solution to the crisis in Ukraine.

## TURKEY TO EMERGE AS A LOGISTICS SUPERPOWER BY 2053



On 12 April 2022, President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan unveiled a new “Transport and Logistics Master Plan” for 2053 which aims to make Turkey a regional logistic hub. Speaking at a press conference after a cabinet meeting, President Erdoğan stressed that Turkey started to advance on the path to becoming the logistics superpower of vast geography stretching from London to Beijing and from Siberia to South Africa in line with the new transport and logistics strategy.

Turkey aims to set out the best alternatives for passenger transportation by taking into account all transportation modes with an integrated approach. It is envisaged that the divided road network

will be increased to 38,060 kilometres and the railway line length to 28,590 kilometres by 2053. Turkey also aims to increase the share of rail transport while reducing the share of passenger and freight transportation as a part of its efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Increasing energy efficiency and use of renewables, reducing the dependence on fossil fuels, and raising environmental awareness will also be prioritised.

Finally, Turkey also intends to increase the number of airports in the country from the current 57 to 61 by 2053, while the number of air passengers is expected to reach over 200 million annually.

## HUNGARIAN FOREIGN MINISTER SZIJJARTO VISITED TURKEY FOLLOWING THE HUNGARIAN PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS

The Hungarian general elections, which took place on 3 April 2022, resulted in the landslide victory of the Fidesz and KDNP coalition. According to the Hungarian National Election Office (NVI), the Fidesz-KDNP coalition, which received 54.10% of the votes and 135 seats in the 199-seat parliament, obtained a two-thirds majority in parliament. The “United for Hungary” coalition, formed by Hungary’s Green Party (LMP), Momentum Movement, Democratic Coalition (DK), Dialogue for Hungary, Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP), and Jobbik, received 34.46% of the votes and won 57 seats in the parliament, while Our Homeland Movement (*Mi Hazánk*) received 5.88% of the votes and won 6 seats in the parliament.

Following, Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Peter Szijjarto paid his first abroad visit to Turkey on 19 April 2022 after the Hungarian elections and came together with Foreign Minister and Chief Negotiator Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu in Ankara.

During the joint press conference with Hungarian Minister Szijjarto following their bilateral meeting, Minister Çavuşoğlu emphasised that even if the conditions on the field changed in the Ukraine crisis, there



was still an opportunity for diplomacy, and the only solution could be achieved diplomatically. Reminding Turkey’s efforts to end the war without delay and its mediation endeavours between Russia and Ukraine in Antalya and İstanbul, Çavuşoğlu noted that everyone’s contribution to this process was important.

Minister Çavuşoğlu also touched upon bilateral relations between Hungary and Turkey and stressed his belief that bilateral relations have the potential to become much stronger in all areas in the new period. Çavuşoğlu also attracted attention to the 11% increase in the trade volume of two countries last year despite the COVID-19. Highlighting Turkey and Hungary’s strategic importance as transit countries due to the war in Ukraine,

Çavuşoğlu stated that a four-member working group on rail transport would be established with Hungary, Serbia, and Bulgaria. Çavuşoğlu also uttered Hungary as one of the countries that strongly supports Turkey’s EU accession process.

On the other hand, Hungarian Foreign Affairs and Trade Minister Peter Szijjarto expressed Hungary’s hope for a ceasefire between Russia and Ukraine without delay and commended Turkey’s role as a mediator in the Russia and Ukraine conflict. Confirming Hungary’s energy supplies from Russia were flowing according to the schedule outlined in its contract, and Turkey’s key role in this, Hungarian Minister Szijjarto named Turkey as an important hub for natural gas deliveries.

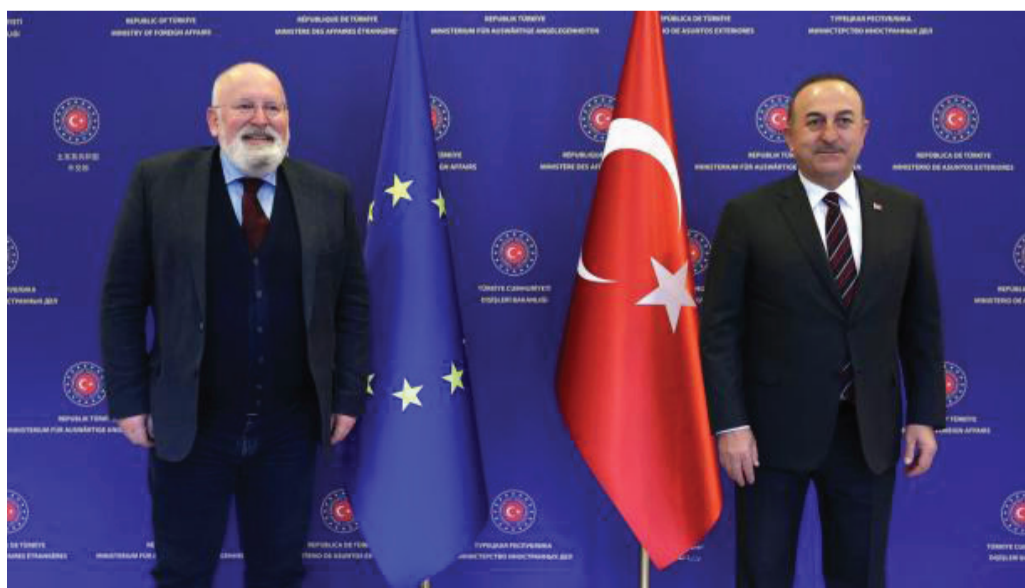
## THE 2<sup>ND</sup> TURKEY-EU HIGH-LEVEL CLIMATE DIALOGUE CONVENED IN ANKARA

Boosting cooperation to tackle the climate crisis and achieving the green transition were at the top of the agenda during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Turkey-EU High-Level Climate Dialogue.

On 21 April 2022, the European Commission’s Executive Vice-President for the European Green Deal Frans Timmermans visited Turkey to hold the 2<sup>nd</sup> Turkey-EU High-Level Climate Dialogue. During the visit carried out in the times of turbulence arising from the Russia-Ukraine war, Executive Vice-President Timmermans met with First Lady Emine Erdoğan, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Chief Negotiator Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, the Minister of Trade Mehmet Muş, Environment, Urbanisation and Climate Change Minister Murat Kurum as well as several business organisations and NGO representatives.

During the meetings between Turkish ministers and Executive

Vice-President Timmermans, increasing cooperation to tackle the climate crisis and achieving the green transition of both parties’ economies were at the top of the agenda. While Executive Vice-President Timmermans underscored that “cooperation between the EU and Turkey for green transition is now more important than ever”, Timmermans also recalled Turkey’s importance to the EU’s energy diversification plan, especially through its potential to export green hydrogen and renewable energy to the EU. Timmermans finally expressed his anticipation for Turkey to accelerate its transition to climate neutrality in 2053 and its commitment to update its NDC before COP27.



## EBRD MADE ITS FIRST GREEN INVESTMENT UNDER THE GEFF TURKEY



The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) launched a new Green Economy Financing Facility (GEFF) Turkey to support Turkey's transition to an environmentally sustainable,

low-carbon, and climate-resilient economy. The GEFF consists of 500 million euros worth of concessional financing from the Clean Technology Fund (CTF) and grants from both CTF and Turkey-EBRD Cooperation Fund. It will be used

to accelerate the green transition in the Turkish financial system and increase investments to meet climate commitments.

The first green credit line under the new GEFF will be given to Türkiye Sınai Kalkınma Bankası

(TSKB), a listed private sector bank and a long-standing EBRD partner. The loan will be about 53.5 million euros and provide TSKB with resources to extend green credit lines to companies to enhance their energy efficiency, renewable energy, and climate resilience measures and a technical assistance package to support its corporate climate governance and on-lending practices through recommendations by the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD).

As stated by the EBRD Deputy Head of Financial Institutions for Turkey Arthur Poghosyan, Turkey's ambitious climate commitments after the ratification of the Paris Agreement in October 2021 are considered to be a major factor for the large size of this new energy-efficiency related facility as meeting these commitments would require "a sharp increase in green investment."

## NATIONAL ELECTORAL THRESHOLD LOWERED TO 7% WITH THE NEW ELECTION LAW IN TURKEY



Turkey amended its election law and changed the structure of provincial and district electoral boards and the deputy calculation system of the political parties that joined an alliance. It also reduced the national electoral threshold from 10% to 7%. A serious change in the allocation of the political parties' seats in the Grand National Assembly of Turkey is expected with this new law.

The amended election law also aims to empower visually impaired people to vote alone. The new law will be applied in the elections to be held in 2023.

## İZMİR WAS AWARDED 2022 EUROPE PRIZE FOR PROMOTING EUROPEAN IDEAL



Turkey's third-largest city in terms of population, İzmir, was awarded the 2022 European Prize by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe for being the most active city in promoting the European ideal. İzmir's initiatives to improve the lives of its inhabitants and international solidarity, as well as its close ties with its sister cities in political, social, economic, and cultural areas were critical in obtaining the award. The city had won the second-highest distinction, the Plaque of Honour, in 2014.

The award increases visibility for the winning cities in Europe and helps establish new partnerships with like-minded municipalities.



## TURKEY RAMPS UP THE DEPLOYMENT OF ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STATIONS

The transition towards electric vehicles has been high on the Turkish government's agenda, especially following the roll-out of Turkish electric cars produced by TOGG and the entry into force of the Paris Agreement in the country. Turkey recently shared a new strategy that is centred on access to public charging stations for electric car drivers. The potential regulation that covers the rules for charging units and stations as well as

charging services indicates that companies applying for a charging network operator licence are required to have a minimum capital of 4.5 million Turkish liras and are obliged to deploy at least 50 charging units. It foresees that renewable energy and storage integration will also be used to power charging stations. The regulation also requires that at least 50% of the charging stations on highways have a minimum capacity of DC 50 kilowatts. Moreover, the

creation of an online platform called "Free Access Platform" will allow platform users to see availability at stations to make charging reservations, station locations, charging capacity, costs, and payment methods.

Finally, Turkey will also offer grants worth 300 million Turkish liras for the establishment of 1,500 fast-charging stations in all 81 provinces. The projections indicate that the current policies will increase the number of electric vehicles to 1 million by 2030.

## TURKEY TO BENEFIT MOST FROM THE IPARD III



The European Commission adopted the Rural Development Program for Turkey (IPARD III) for the 2021-2027 period within the scope of the EU's pre-accession assistance to Turkey. Turkey is expected to be the major beneficiary of the 927 million euros worth programme, with a budget of 430 million euros.

The IPARD III Programme constitutes the basis of EU support in agriculture and rural development. Together with national public and private contributions, the programme is expected to provide a total investment of over 1 billion euros in rural areas of Turkey. It aims to align Turkey's agricultural and rural development policies with the EU's common agricultural policy and adapt the agriculture and food sector to EU food, hygiene, and environmental standards. The EU also aspires to contribute to the European Green Deal objectives with the implementation of the IPARD III Programme.

# WHAT WILL THE FRENCH PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION RESULTS BRING FOR TURKEY-EU RELATIONS?

As a result of the Presidential elections held on 10 and 24 April, Macron became the President of France once again. It is an object of interest how the results will affect Turkey's relations with the EU and France.

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**A**s a result of the presidential elections held in France on 10 and 24 April 2022, incumbent Emmanuel Macron was again entitled to take office for a new five-year term. 12 candidates from a wide political spectrum competed in the elections, which were held in the shadow of the Ukraine crisis and the inflation, the effects of which were felt throughout Europe. In the second round, Macron won the elections with 58.5% of the vote. While the pledges made by the candidates during the campaign era and the threat of the "far-right" determined the fate of France, Marine Le Pen, the candidate of the *Rassemblement National*, increased her votes significantly. It is also possible to predict that the results of the French presidential election would affect Turkey-French and Turkey-EU relations as well.

## On the Way to Elections

Incumbent French President Emmanuel Macron once again conducted a campaign himself in the center during the electoral period. Macron, who took the office with pledges on social policy towards the Yellow Vests protesters in the 2017 elections, could not meet the expectations with the liberal policies he followed during his Presidency. This time, Macron pledged to make adjustments in the minimum wage in a context aiming to increase employment although he also announced that the government will cut public spending and raise the retirement age to 65 if he will be re-elected. Therefore, his campaign received negative responses from socialist and leftist parties. On the other hand, he "winked" at the Greens voters by declaring that he would follow policies to support the green transition of the economy against climate



change, including the installation of six nuclear power plants -although this was protested by environmentalists-, and at the right voters by promising to strengthen border control and protect the French sovereignty against migrant influxes.

Marine Le Pen, the other strong candidate, changed the name of her party from Front National to *Rassemblement National* in 2018 and won the majority of French votes in the EP elections held in 2019. A more moderate course was being drawn in party policy although Le Pen's principal focus during the campaign was again on immigration and security. In short, she intended to establish a mechanism that would prevent the migration flows to France and ensure the security of the borders, and to implement new adjustments for the deportation of undocumented immigrants. Le Pen also promised the abolishment of the naturalisation of immigrants born and still residing in France by marriage and the automatic right of citizenship gained at the age of 18.

In the first round of elections held on 10 April 2022, Macron and Le Pen were qualified for the second round by receiving 27.85% and 23.15% of the votes. Three remarkable outcomes that have revealed the transformation of French politics came to the surface. First, the turnout remained at 74.76%, which was 3% less than in 2017. Second is the current situation of "establishment" in France.

On the one hand, the Republicans and the Socialist Party, which were the central parties which have interchanged the Presidency between themselves for years, could not pass the 5% threshold. On the other hand, the qualified ones for the second round were the candidates who claim to be an alternative in the last two elections. As a natural consequence of the previous point, the third result is that Le Pen, Éric Zemmour and Nicolas Dupont-Aignan, who are described as "far-right", received 33% of the votes in total.

## Macron Re-Elected as President

In the TV duel held on 21 April, tensions were quite high. Although there were debates on many issues from the cost of living to immigration, the EU to the retirement age and climate to the constitutional change, it can be argued that the winner of the duel was determined by the arguments about Russia, itself. Macron explicitly criticised his opponent due to her close relations with Russia in the past by reminding Le Pen's position as one of the first political leaders who recognised the annexation of Crimea and the loan she received from a Russian bank.

Three days later, a formally unsurprising result came out from the second round of the elections held on 24 April 2022. Macron won the elections with 58.5% of the vote against Le Pen's 41.5%. Although it seems a victory for Macron, it also includes some threats to the future of France and European politics.

First of all, turnout in the elections remained at the lowest rate (63.23%) since 1969. The question about whom Zemmour and the socialist candidate Jean-Luc Mélenchon would support between the candidates before the second round was a matter of curiosity. Zemmour, who received 7% of the votes, gave open support to Le Pen, while Mélenchon, who received 21.9% of the votes, only told his voters that "Don't vote for Marine Le Pen". In consideration of the results, it is revealed that the voters of Mélenchon did not boycott completely but did not show a very high turnout.

Despite losing the election, it could be argued that Le Pen was also a gainer. While taking into account the 11 million votes received by Le Pen, Zemmour and Dupont-Aignan in the first round, and 2 million more votes in the second round, it is clear to see that Le Pen has begun to gain general acceptance of the French people. Consequently, after Zemmour's radical policy, Le Pen's moderate impression and even backtracking on her ideas to leave the Schengen Area and Eurozone, it can be assumed that the *Rassemblement National* movement began to settle in the mainstream politics in France. Moreover, the post-election polls by *France24* indicate that more than 90% of Mélenchon supporters voted for Macron to prevent Le Pen from winning.

## Evaluation of the Election Results from Turkey's Perspective

Macron's victory in the French election was welcomed by most of the world. This is both because Macron would remain in the office for five more years, and because the threat of a "far-rightist", Le Pen's, coming to power was avoided. As it is known, France took over the Presidency of the Council of the EU on 1 January 2022. Thus, the progress made on the digital and green transition as well as the security and social policy priorities will continue to be tracked. Considering the government change in Germany, it is quite possible to expect that Macron, as an "experienced" President in his second term, will try to throw his weight about in European politics and put the emphasis on "sovereignty" in his discourses into practice for both France and Europe.

If the election results are evaluated in terms of Turkey's relations with France, it is impossible not to think that Le Pen's anti-Islamic and anti-immigrant attitudes have left Turkey in a difficult position on many issues such as its relations with the EU and the status of Turkish nationals in France. With the re-election of Macron, it can be predicted that a new chapter would be opened in Turkey-France and Turkey-EU relations. It might be observed that the relations between Turkey and France, which have been tense in the past years, have progressed since the bilateral talks held at the G20 on 30-31 October 2021. In particular, the mediation mission undertaken by Turkey and France in the Ukraine crisis, and the exchange of ideas between Macron and President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan in goodwill at the NATO Summit held on 24 March 2022, are some of the indicators that a redesigned cooperation is on the way. Since it is known that Macron does not support a new enlargement perspective similar to the previous French presidents, Turkey needs to prioritise making improvements in technical issues that directly concern its relations with the EU, such as the modernisation of the Customs Union and the Visa Liberalisation Dialogue.