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HUNDRED YEARS OF THE TURKISH REPUBLIC: THE EUROPEAN VOCATION AND EU PERSPECTIVE

Amidst global shifts, Türkiye's centenary heralds progress, seeking EU membership to embrace modernity and contribute to a transformed world.

Assoc. Prof. Çiğdem Nas
IKV Secretary General

The Turkish Republic is commemorating its centenary on 29 October 2023. Judged on the basis of the long perspective of world history, hundred years might be likened to a blink of an eye. Yet viewing the tremendous transformation in world affairs, economy, society, science, culture and technology since 1923, the trajectory of the young Republic's journey in its first hundred years has been arduous and breath-taking. In that sense, the World and the Turkish Republic experienced such changes, challenges and transformations during these last hundred years that they could have occurred over many centuries in former historical periods when change had not been so fast and so staggering. The reorganization of the international system following the Second World War, the Cold War, ending of the Soviet Union and the post-Cold War era, 9/11 attacks, the unipolar moment of American hegemony followed by relative decline and rise of non-Western powers, 2008 global financial crisis, Arab uprisings and Syrian War, migration crises, COVID-19 pandemic, Russian aggression against Ukraine, Israel-Hamas War, and the ambiguous and hectic transformation into a multi-centred and multi-polar world order has been a series of groundbreaking developments that marked the first hundred years of the Republic.

The young Republic founded by the great leader Mustafa Kemal Atatürk aimed to catch up with contemporary civilization in culture, industry, science and technology and raise the standard of living, education and culture of a war-torn country. Atatürk initiated



revolutionary changes in political, administrative, social and cultural domains such as the abrogation of the Sultanate and Caliphate, founding a secular system based on rule of law, adoption of the Latin alphabet, Gregorian calendar and European weights and measures, change in attires in line with the contemporary European trends, and providing for women the right to vote and stand as candidates in elections. Atatürk aimed to transform a society mired in an obsolete system in the direction of modern values, methods and mechanisms of the contemporary world. He wanted to create a new dynamism by addressing the passion of nationalist sentiments and create the perfect citizen of the new Turkish Republic who was supposed to be endowed

with the awareness of his/her role in national revival.

On the centenary of its foundation, the Turkish Republic has achieved many important aims and targets such as becoming an industrialised society, elevating much of the population from absolute poverty, and acquiring near 100% literacy rate (about 97%) despite lingering social and economic problems. Türkiye's efforts at democratization and liberalisation have undergone a challenging journey marked by ebbs and flows. This journey is still continuing with several challenges in creating the basis of a free, democratic and rules-based society.

The Turkish Republic is a member of the G-20 group of countries, a member of NATO,

Council of Europe, OECD, OSCE, BSEC, Organization of Turkish States and Organization of Islamic Cooperation and a candidate to join the EU. It is a country which combines divergent geographic, cultural and developmental identities. It is situated on the crossroads of continents and yet associates itself mostly with Europe as exemplified by its many memberships in European organizations. However, Türkiye still hasn't become a member of the EU with which it had a long-standing association relationship dating back to 1963, a bid for membership dating back to 1987, with negotiations starting in 2005. Membership in the EU is the ultimate goal for Türkiye's integration to European structures and assuming its place in European

governance. Türkiye must fulfil the Copenhagen criteria for accession to the Union which it is striving to accomplish since the declaration of candidacy in 1999. In addition, the joint political will of the 27 Member States is also necessary to accept Türkiye as a member of the Union. Türkiye's goal of EU membership acquires a new meaning and importance in the centenary of the Republic since it is commensurate with the goals and vision existent at the outset of the Republic. We hope that this goal will be accomplished in the second hundred years and that Türkiye will be able to contribute to a better future for our region and the World we live in in line with the goals of the current era such as the perspective of the green and digital transformations.



TOBB PRESIDENT HİSARCİKLIOĞLU ELECTED AS PRESIDENT OF THE WORLD CHAMBERS FEDERATION

TOBB President M. Rifat Hisarcıklioğlu was elected as the President of the World Chambers Federation (WCF), which gathers the chambers of commerce and industry and associations of 115 countries under one roof. Hisarcıklioğlu, who was elected with the highest number of votes among the six candidates, will lead the world chambers in the 2023 - 2025 period. "It is a great honour for me to fly the Turkish flag on this platform," Hisarcıklioğlu said, "We are happy that we, as TOBB, are elected to the management of all regional and global institutions and organisations, and we have the honour of representing our country and our business world. We are at the top of global consultation mechanisms. This newly elected duty is the most important indicator of what our business world and our chamber and stock exchange community can achieve in the global economy. We



will now lead the global business world and thousands of chambers under the roof of WCF. The fact that our success is also seen and appreciated abroad made me very happy as a Turk. I am proud on behalf of our 365 Chambers and Commodity Exchanges, of which

I am the President, and our more than 2 million companies. I would like to thank the representatives of the international business world who deemed me worthy of this duty and voted for me. Now it is time to run with greater enthusiasm for our country and our business world."

IKV CHAIRPERSON ZEYTİNOĞLU: "WE OBSERVE THAT PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR THE EU CONTINUES DESPITE ALL NEGATIVE DEVELOPMENTS"



Economic Development Foundation shared the results of the "Public Support for the EU and European Perception Survey 2023", prepared by the MetroPoll research company with the support of TİM. IKV Chairperson Zeytinoğlu summarised the results of the public opinion survey as follows: "Despite all the problems we have experienced in the EU process, we observe that public support for the EU continues. In this context, the public opinion survey, which we commissioned MetroPoll Research Company with the support of TİM this year, was conducted through face-to-face interviews with 2102 people in 23 cities across the country.

The support rate for Türkiye's EU membership is 66%. Compared to our survey conducted in 2019, we see an increase of 5 points here. While 45% of the survey participants think that Türkiye may become an EU member in the future, the reason for supporting EU membership for 69.1% is economic, and 47% support EU membership for progress in democracy and human rights. 44% expects to get travel and residence rights in the EU.

When it comes to the obstacles to Türkiye's EU membership, 44% of the participants think that this is due to prejudices. While 41% find the problem in Türkiye's economic development level and economic

situation, 34% see its performance in democracy and human rights as responsible. While 56% of the survey participants think that Türkiye has the necessary human resources and administrative capacity to become an EU member, 45% stated that the Customs Union is beneficial for the EU and Türkiye. 48% think that the modernization of the Customs Union would be beneficial for the EU and Türkiye. In the research, the rate of those who know about the European Green Deal is 36% and 61% of them think that Türkiye should adapt to the European Green Deal, while 65% believe that it will be beneficial for Türkiye. There is a need for more public information on green transformation and Green Deal, which are among the EU's priority targets.

The continued support of our people for EU membership and the updating of the Customs Union is promising. In the centenary of our Republic, we observe that our citizens' orientation towards Europe continues and the search for prosperity, democracy and modern living standards remains important."

MINISTER OF TRADE PROF. BOLAT VISITED IKV BRUSSELS OFFICE



Minister of Trade Prof. Ömer Bolat visited the IKV Brussels Office on 10 October 2023 on the margins of his visit to Brussels and met with representatives of the private sector and NGOs at the business meeting hosted by TOBB. The visit was accompanied by Prof. Haluk Kabaalioğlu, Vice President of IKV.

In his speech, Minister Bolat said that he recently had various contacts with EU officials; such as the Vice President of the European Commission Valdis Dombrovskis at the G20 meeting in India, European Commissioner for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Policy Oliver Varhelyi during his visit to Ankara, and European Commissioner for Economic Affairs Paolo Gentiloni in Brussels.

Minister Bolat stated that the Member States would decide on how to improve relations with Türkiye according to the road map to be prepared by the Commission at the Leaders' Summit to be held in Brussels in mid-December and emphasised that they informed the EU authorities about their views and solution requests regarding the visa, transportation quotas and customs procedures problems faced by the business world between Türkiye and EU countries. Stating that the EU officials took note of these issues and problems, Minister Prof. Dr. Bolat said, "We had a very positive impression that Türkiye's rightful demands on these issues should be resolved."

IKV CHAIRPERSON ZEYTİNOĞLU PARTICIPATED IN THE 41ST TÜRKİYE-EU JCC MEETING



IKV Chairperson Ayhan Zeytinoğlu attended the 41st Türkiye-EU Joint Consultative Committee meeting held in Brussels on 4 October 2023. The meeting of the Joint Consultative Committee, which brings together with social partners like business associations, trade unions and non-governmental organisations from Türkiye, and the EU Economic and Social Committee, started with the opening speeches of the Member of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) Veselin Mitov and President of TOBB M. Rifat Hisarcıklioğlu. In the first session, Permanent Representative of Türkiye to the EU Ambassador Faruk Kaymakçı, Vice President of the EESC Laurentin Plosceanu, Head of the European Commission's Türkiye Unit Bernard

Brunet, Head of the Türkiye/Eastern Mediterranean Section of the European External Action Service Baiba Aleksejuka-Tavaresa and Head of the External Relations Department of the EESC Dimitris Dimitriadis delivered speeches. Topics such as revitalising the Türkiye-EU accession process, updating the customs union, the importance of the accession perspective and visa liberalisation were discussed.

In his speech, Chairperson Zeytinoğlu emphasised the importance of revitalising Türkiye-EU relations for the entire region and the world. Chairperson Zeytinoğlu discussed the issues of revitalising accession negotiations, the need to update the customs union and making progress in the visa liberalisation process. Announcing the results of the public opinion survey conducted by IKV in September by MetroPoll public opinion research company, Chairperson Zeytinoğlu emphasised that 66% of the public supports EU membership and that the EU should take into account this public support.

İKİV AGENDA

İKİV CHAIRPERSON ZEYTİNOĞLU MADE THE OPENING SPEECH OF THE GREEN DIPLOMACY WEEK



IKV Chairperson Ayhan Zeytinoğlu attended the EU Green Diplomacy Week event organised by the EU Information Centre of Kocaeli Chamber of Industry and delivered the opening speech of the event on 25 October 2023. At the event, which was organised as a seminar followed by a workshop, Chairperson Zeytinoğlu stated that both IKV

and Kocaeli Chamber of Industry, of which he is the Chairperson, hosts EU Information Centres and that both Kocaeli Chamber of Industry and IKV attach great importance to green transformation. In his speech, Chairperson Zeytinoğlu also mentioned the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism, which entered into force as of 1 October

2023 and stated that an additional carbon cost will be activated in exports to the EU in the cement, iron, steel, aluminium, fertiliser, hydrogen and electricity sectors.

In the seminar section, IKV Secretary General Assoc. Prof. Çiğdem Nas delivered a speech on "The European Green Deal and its implications for Türkiye". In her speech, Assoc. Prof. Nas emphasised that the European Green Deal is a green growth strategy and that the basic orientations of the European economy are undergoing a significant transformation. Assoc. Prof. Nas emphasised that Türkiye as an EU candidate and Customs Union partner is also affected by this transformation. The seminar continued with the speeches of Prof. Beyhan Pekey and Prof. Engin Özdemir from Kocaeli University.

İKİV HELD A MEETING TO ANNOUNCE "RESULTS OF RESEARCH ON EU SUPPORT AND PERCEPTION OF EUROPE IN PUBLIC OPINION 2023"



IKV organised a press conference where the results of the "Results of Research on EU Support and Perception of Europe in Public Opinion 2023" were announced and a panel titled "Relations with the EU in the Centenary of the Republic and Public Perception of Europe" was organised by IKV on 27 October 2023.

A press conference where the results of the "Results of Research on EU Support and Perception of Europe in Public Opinion 2023"

were announced and a panel titled "Relations with the EU in the Centenary of the Republic and Public Perception of Europe" was organised by IKV on 27 October 2023.

IKV Deputy Secretary General M. Gökhan Kilit, who moderated the meeting, invited IKV Chairperson and KSO President Ayhan Zeytinoğlu to make the opening speech, after celebrating the 100th anniversary of our Republic. In his speech, Chairperson Zeytinoğlu evaluated the current situation in Türkiye-EU relations and underlined the importance of the 66% support for EU membership in our country in the public opinion survey prepared by IKV with the support of TİM and

MetroPoll research company.

Following the opening speech, IKV Secretary General Assoc. Prof. Çiğdem Nas shared the results of the public opinion survey with the press and participants. Following the presentation of IKV Secretary General Nas, the panel discussion started under the moderation of IKV Deputy Secretary General M. Gökhan Kilit. The first speaker of the panel, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the GRF Ambassador (Ret.) Selim Yenel, Director of Institut du Bosphore, Dr. Bahadır Kaleağası, Faculty Member at Okan University and Founder of the Women in Foreign Policy Platform Prof. Zeynep Alemdar, evaluated the results of the survey.

İKİV PARTICIPATED IN THE CONFERENCE ON THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE REPUBLIC AND THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE TÜRKİYE-BELGIUM LABOUR AGREEMENT



On 16 October 2023, The Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Türkiye (TOBB) President M. Rifat Hisarcıkıoğlu, IKV Secretary General Assoc. Prof. Çiğdem Nas and IKV Deputy Secretary General M. Gökhan Kilit attended the conference titled "100th Anniversary of the Turkish Republic and 60th Anniversary of the Signing of the

Türkiye-Belgium Labour Agreement" organised by the Embassy of the Republic of Türkiye in Brussels and the Egmont Royal Institute of International Affairs in Brussels, Belgium. During the meeting, Türkiye-Belgium relations, changes in the Turkish economy, historical process and Türkiye-EU relations were discussed.

TIMELINE OCTOBER 2023

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4	İKİV Chairperson Zeytinoğlu participated in the 41 st Türkiye-EU JCC meeting.
5	İKİV Secretary General Nas spoke at the Eastern Mediterranean Climate Workshop.
6	İKİV Secretary General Nas made a presentation at the Congress of the Turkish Political Science Association.
7	
8	
9	Foreign Minister Fidan came together with Bulgaria's Minister of Interior Kalin Stoyanov.
10	İKİV İstanbul EUIC participated in the New European Bauhaus Event.
11	Minister of Trade Prof. Ömer Bolat visited IKV Brussels Office.
12	İKİV organised a session at the Mülkiye International Relations Congress.
13	
14	Foreign Minister Fidan came together with his German counterpart Annalena Baerbock.
15	İKİV participated in the Conference on the 100 th Anniversary of the Republic and the Anniversary of the Türkiye-Belgium Labour Agreement.
16	President Erdoğan had a phone call with Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis.
17	TOBB President Hisarcıkıoğlu elected as President of the World Federation Of Chambers.
18	İKİV organised a meeting titled "Türkiye-EU Relations, The Green Deal and The Future of Europe".
19	
20	İKİV participated in a meeting on Climate-Trade Measures in Ankara.
21	
22	
23	İKİV Secretary General Nas participated in the 60 th Anniversary of Türkiye-EU Relations Conference.
24	Deputy Foreign Minister Ambassador Bozay came together with Albanian Deputy Foreign Minister Megi Fino.
25	İKİV Chairperson Zeytinoğlu made the opening speech of the Green Diplomacy Week.
26	
27	İKİV held a meeting called "Results of Research on EU Support and Perception of Europe in Public Opinion 2023".
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29	
30	Foreign Minister Fidan came together with Ambassador Nikolaus Meyer-Landrut.
31	İKİV organised a meeting titled "Türkiye-EU relations, Green Deal and the Future of Europe" in Kocaeli.

IKV SECRETARY GENERAL NAS PARTICIPATED IN VARIOUS EVENTS



IKV Secretary General Assoc. Prof. Çiğdem Nas attended the workshop titled "Eastern Mediterranean Climate Change: Green Transition to a Low Carbon Economy Based on Renewable Energy" organised by TEPAV on 6 October 2023. Assoc. Prof. Nas emphasised that the Eastern Mediterranean is a region experiencing the most serious effects of climate change and drew attention to the importance of cooperation against climate change among the countries of this region. Other participants were TEPAV Founding Director Prof. Güven Sak,

French Development Agency (AFD) Climate and Environment Sectors Senior Project Manager Zeren Erik Yaşar, Boğaziçi University Climate Change and Policies Application and Research Center Director Prof. Levent Kurnaz and Sustainable Economy and Finance Research Association (SEFİA) Founding Director Bengisu Özenç.

IKV Secretary General Assoc. Prof. Çiğdem Nas made a presentation at the II. National Political Science Congress organised by the Turkish Political Science Association at Bilkent University on 7 October 2023. Speaking at

the panel titled "The Future of Globalisation, the EU and Change in the International System", Assoc. Prof. Nas discussed the impact of the European Green Deal on Türkiye-EU Relations. The panel was chaired by Nilgün Arisan Eralp, Director of EU Studies at TEPAV, and the other speakers were Prof. Atila Eralp and Prof. Fuat Keyman.

On 24 October 2023, IKV Secretary General Assoc. Prof. Çiğdem Nas attended the conference titled "60th Anniversary of Türkiye-EU Relations" as a speaker, hosted by İstanbul Kent University and jointly organised by the Global Equality and Inclusion Network and BDU International Businessmen and Diplomats Association. At the meeting, Assoc. Prof. Nas made a presentation titled "Updating the Customs Union, Opening the Path to Free Movement and Full Membership". Other speakers of the conference were Prof. Fahri Erenel, Assoc. Prof. Deniz Tansi, Dr. Ayhan Koç, Assistant Teacher Güney Ferhat Batı ve Doctorate Ayşe Kaşıkırık.

IKV ORGANISED A MEETING TITLED "TÜRKİYE-EU RELATIONS, THE GREEN DEAL AND THE FUTURE OF EUROPE"

IKV organised a meeting titled "Türkiye-EU Relations, Green Deal and the Future of Europe" in cooperation with FNF and hosted by Çukurova University on 18 October 2023. The opening speech of the meeting was delivered by Prof. Serkan Yılmaz Kandir, Dean of the Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences at Çukurova University. Prof. Kandir mentioned that there is a significant lack of information on the European Green Deal in Türkiye and emphasised the importance of this meeting's content and timing. Following the opening speech, Prof. Harun Arıkan from Çukurova University, Department of Political Science and International Relations moderated the panel discussion and



thanked IKV and FNF for organising this meeting and introduced the panellists briefly.

The first speaker of the meeting, Prof. Sanem Baykal from TOBB University of Economics and Technology, discussed the history of Türkiye-EU relations and how the EU enlargement process is affected by the current developments. Following

Prof. Baykal, IKV Secretary General Assoc. Prof. Çiğdem Nas evaluated the Green Deal and Türkiye-EU relations. In her presentation, Secretary Generale Nas explained the historical development of the climate crisis, the scope of the Green Deal put forward by the EU as a new growth model and how it has brought a significant transformation process. The last speaker of the meeting, IKV Deputy Secretary General M. Gökhan Kilit, evaluated the process of updating the Türkiye-EU Customs Union, how the services and agriculture sectors will be affected in this context and the effects of the European Green Deal on the customs union updating process. The meeting ended with the questions from the participants.

IKV ORGANISED A MEETING TITLED "TÜRKİYE-EU RELATIONS, GREEN DEAL AND THE FUTURE OF EUROPE"



IKV, in cooperation with FNF and hosted by Kocaeli University, organised a meeting titled "Türkiye-EU Relations, Green Deal and the Future of Europe" on 31 October 2023. The opening speeches of the meeting were delivered by Academic Advisor of the POW-EU-R Jean Monnet Module at Kocaeli University Dr. İtir Aladağ Görentaş, Head of the Department of International Relations at Kocaeli University Prof. İrfan Kaya Ülger, Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences at

Kocaeli University Prof. Recep Tarı, Chairperson of IKV and President of KSO Ayhan Zeytinoğlu, and Rector of Kocaeli University Prof. Nuh Zafer Cantürk.

In the panel moderated by Kocaeli University POW-EU-R Jean Monnet Module Coordinator Assoc. Prof. Pelin Sönmez, TOBB ETU Faculty Member Prof. Sanem Baykal, IKV Secretary General Assoc. Prof. Çiğdem Nas and IKV Deputy Secretary General M. Gökhan Kilit discussed various aspects of Türkiye-EU relations.

IKV ORGANISED A SESSION AT THE MÜLKİYE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS CONGRESS



The Economic Development Foundation organised a session at the VII. Mülkiye International Relations Congress held on 12 October 2023. IKV Secretary General Assoc. Prof. Çiğdem Nas and IKV Deputy Secretary General M. Gökhan Kilit attended the Congress. The session titled "Current Dynamics and Future of Türkiye-EU Relations" was moderated by Prof. Sinem Akgül Açıkmeşe from Kadir Has University and the speakers were IKV Secretary General Assoc. Prof. Çiğdem Nas, Prof. Sanem Baykal, Prof. Dr. Özgehan Şenyuva and Associate Professor İnan Rüma.

Assoc. Prof. Nas touched upon the identity dimension of the relations and its importance for Turkish foreign

policy and stated that the deadlock in the EU process and a distancing at the identity level occurred simultaneously. Assoc. Prof. Nas emphasised that in the EU membership process, it is as important to adapt to common values and perceptions of identity as the benefits of membership. Among the other speakers, Prof. Sanem Baykal questioned the search for models other than membership in Türkiye-EU relations, while Prof. Şenyuva discussed the perception of the EU among the youth. Assoc. Prof. İnan Rüma touched upon the political economy dimension of the relations and evaluated the customs union process and trade relations. The panel was concluded with a question-and-answer session.

IKV İSTANBUL EUIC PARTICIPATED IN THE NEW EUROPEAN BAUHAUS EVENT



IKV İstanbul EU Information Center participated in the New European Bauhaus event as part of the Türkiye-EU Youth Forum, organised by the EU Delegation to Türkiye between 9-12 October 2023 in Ankara, with four students. At the event, EU Information Center coordinators from 19 different

cities and young architects, designers and engineer candidates from all over Türkiye sought answers to the question of how sustainable cities can be built.

The opening speech of the event was delivered by Ramunas Janusauskas, Head of the Communication Section of the EU Delegation

to Türkiye on 9 October 2023. On the second day, Head of the European Union Delegation to Türkiye Ambassador Nikolaus Meyer-Landrut also attended. During the rest of the week, students actively participated in the workshops and presented their ideas to create liveable cities.

HIGH-LEVEL EXCHANGES

PRESIDENT ERDOĞAN DISCUSSED THE ISRAEL-PALESTINE CONFLICT WITH THE LEADERS



President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan held bilateral meetings with world leaders about the Israel-Palestine conflict. He had a telephone conversation with French President Emmanuel Macron, to discuss solutions to the ongoing Israel-Palestine conflict. Both leaders committed to making efforts to establish peace in the region. President Erdoğan stated that it was unacceptable that the rights of innocent people in Gaza were violated and added that Türkiye would bring aid to the people of the region. On the other hand, he underlined that Western countries should avoid taking steps that would increase tension and should contribute to peace. President Erdoğan proposed a two-state solution mechanism for the Israel-Palestine conflict. President Macron addressed that if the parties approach the issue sincerely, a solution that would bring relief first to the region and then to the world could be found. In his conversation with UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, President Erdoğan emphasised that he expected effective initiatives from the international community, especially Western

countries, against human rights violations.

President Erdoğan also discussed the Israel-Palestine conflict with Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis. He promised that Türkiye would take steps to reduce conflict and tension in the region. In addition, President Erdoğan explained that the aim should not only be to ensure peace in the region but also to prevent human rights violations.

President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva of Brazil is another leader President Erdoğan had a conversation over the phone to seek a solution to the Israel-Palestine conflict. During the call, the importance of the ceasefire and the need to deliver humanitarian needs such as food aid to the region were discussed.

President Erdoğan has repeatedly emphasised in his meetings with world leaders that human rights violations must be prevented together. As a result of these bilateral meetings, no common decision was reached between the leaders; however, no differences of opinion or disagreements were observed either.

TURKISH DEFENCE MINISTER CONDEMNS ATTACKS ON CIVILIANS IN ISRAEL-PALESTINE CONFLICT

Turkish Defence Minister Yaşar Güler addressed the ongoing Palestinian-Israeli conflict during a meeting at the NATO headquarters on 12 October 2023.

The Middle East experienced a significant escalation of tensions as Israeli forces launched a robust military offensive against the Gaza Strip in response to a military attack by the Palestinian group Hamas on Israeli territory. This development has drawn global attention and debate over the situation in the Middle East and Türkiye's stance on various international issues.

Minister Güler, strongly condemned all attacks on civilians and civilian-populated areas, underlining Ankara's determination to prioritise the release of hostages, prevent the conflict from spreading to other fronts, and work towards a swift resolution.



PRESIDENT ERDOĞAN MET WITH CHANCELLOR NEHAMMER OF AUSTRIA



President Erdoğan met with Chancellor Karl Nehammer of the Republic of Austria during his official visit to Türkiye. Chancellor Nehammer came to Türkiye at the invitation of President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan on 9-10 October 2023 and also participated in the Türkiye-Austria Business Council Round Table Meeting which took place in Ankara.

Expressing his congratulations on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Republic, Austrian Chancellor Nehammer noted that next year will mark the first century of diplomatic relations between Türkiye and Austria. He expressed his wish to strengthen economic relations between the two countries. Pointing to the intense mutual relations, Chancellor Nehammer said they wanted to increase the level of Austrian exports to Türkiye which increased by 20%

last year and which today is around 4.6 billion euros. Stating that the development of economic relations requires trust, he said Türkiye is a reliable partner for Austria and that they are open to this cooperation and want to develop it both in terms of industry and trade.

Nehammer underlined that Türkiye and Austria are "partners and friends" and emphasised that both countries can make very good progress in economic relations. Nehammer pointed out that Austria is the 10th largest investor in Türkiye and it is in the Turkish market with machinery, services, financial services and that tourism holds a special place. Chancellor Nehammer said that the participation of Austrian representatives in the Business Council meeting is proof of the importance they attach to these relations. He said that the industry in Austria is innovative and that he was impressed with the innovative nature and "the creativity of the Turkish industry and how far it has come in research."

Austrian Federal Minister of Labour and Economy Martin Kocher also stressed the importance of economic cooperation since there is huge potential between the countries in this respect. He emphasised that 1500 Austrian-based companies are active in Türkiye and that Austria is strong in the fields of renewable energy, microchips and pharmaceutical industry, working together with Türkiye on these issues.

TÜRKİYE PROPOSES NEW GUARANTOR STRATEGY FOR ISRAEL-PALESTINE CONFLICT

During the Peace Summit meeting held in Cairo on 21 October, Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan suggested that many states, including Türkiye, become guarantors when the Israeli-Palestinian conflict ends and reconciliation is achieved. This proposal has brought up the issue of a new guarantee for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Foreign Minister Fidan expressed his belief that the problem will be resolved in a sustainable way with these guarantor countries. In his statements, Minister Fidan emphasised that the international community should play a more active role by advocating a two-state solution to the Israel-Palestine conflict.

Foreign Minister Fidan stated that Türkiye is ready to take steps for this purpose and conveyed the message that Türkiye wishes to be a guarantor on behalf of Palestine if the parties find it appropriate. He also added that countries in the region can be guarantors for Palestine while Western countries can be guarantors for Israel, and they can support the process for the full and complete implementation of a potential peace agreement.



In this guarantor strategy, it is envisaged that the guarantor countries are first determined and then the parties sign a memorandum of understanding. It is crucial that this agreement is maintained through supervision. The first positive response and support to Türkiye's guarantor formula came from Russia. British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak also commented that Türkiye could provide balance and reduce tension in the Israel-Palestine conflict. There has been no response from other countries to this strategy yet.

TÜRKİYE'S FINANCE MINISTER ENGAGES WITH GLOBAL INVESTORS



Minister of Treasury and Finance Mehmet Şimşek with global financial leaders showcasing Türkiye's economic strategies and investment opportunities.

The recent visits of the Minister of Treasury and Finance Mehmet Şimşek, who has held many meetings with international investors since he took office following the presidential and parliamentary elections in May, were to London and Paris.

During the London visit between 4-6 October 2023,

Minister Şimşek met with managers of international asset management companies, investment funds, multinational banks, and infrastructure funds with total assets of more than 75 trillion dollars and held meetings with more than 100 senior executives from approximately 85 different institutions, including credit rating agencies. Minister Şimşek presented Türkiye's latest economic strategies and the initiatives for objectives and reforms outlined in the medium-term plan to

international investors and credit rating agency representatives, inviting them to consider investment opportunities in Türkiye.

Within the scope of his visit to Paris on 19 October 2023, Minister Şimşek met with members of MEDEF (Mouvement des Entreprises de France), the largest business association of France, hosted by Jean Lemierre, Chairman of the Board of Directors of BNP Paribas. Afterwards, Minister Şimşek, hosted by Société Générale, explained Türkiye's economy programme to France-based investment funds and senior bank executives, who manage approximately 4 trillion euros. Minister Şimşek also held a meeting with Fatih Birol, President of the International Energy Agency, on the outlook of the global energy market. Minister Şimşek's last meeting was with his French counterpart Bruno Le Maire, during which consultations were held to increase bilateral trade and mutual investments.

TÜRKİYE'S DEFENCE INDUSTRY CONTINUES ITS TRANSFORMATION



Türkiye will invest 1.13 trillion Turkish Liras in its defence budget in 2024, an increase of 150% compared to 2023. Türkiye aims to increase exports, employment and localisation in the defence and aerospace industry with the policies and measures it will implement in the 2024-2028 period. Defence industry exports will be increased from 6 billion dollars to 11 billion dollars and the self-sufficiency rate is expected to increase from 80% to 85%.

The government aims to support innovative, technology-focused entrepreneurial companies that develop cutting-edge defence technology. In this regard, large-scale defence industry companies will focus on strengthening their domestic supply chains and on supporting entrepreneurship. Platforms that will encourage cooperation among stakeholders will be created and studies will be carried out to increase the global competitiveness of the sector.

The turnover of the defence and aerospace sector is expected to increase from 12.2 billion dollars in 2023 to 26 billion dollars in 2028. Exports are targeted to increase from 4.4 billion dollars in 2023 to 11 billion dollars in 2028.

At this point, it should be noted that Türkiye's transformation in the defence industry took place under the influence of a series of Western embargoes. Since 2002, Türkiye has aimed to reduce foreign dependence on Western branches through innovative engineering initiatives, domestically developed technologies and self-sufficiency. This situation, in addition to the development of domestically produced air, land and sea platforms, has also led to an unprecedented demand for Turkish UAVs, which have been exported to dozens of countries in recent years. Drone manufacturer company Baykar's Bayraktar TB2 drones have attracted international attention for their role in changing the course of conflicts in Azerbaijan, Libya and Ukraine. Türkiye had also unveiled its domestically developed fifth-generation fighter jet KAAAN, in May 2023.

THE THIRD TEKNOFEST OF THE YEAR TOOK PLACE IN İZMİR



In order to celebrate the centenary of the Turkish Republic, three TEKNOFEST events were organised in three different cities this year. The first TEKNOFEST took place in İstanbul between 27 April and 1 May. The second one was in Ankara and was held between 30 August and 3 September. Izmir hosted the last TEKNOFEST of 2023 which attracted 1 million visitors from 27 September to 1 October.

TEKNOFEST is a festival of technology and aerospace, featuring diverse array of competitions, shows, workshops and simulations. It is jointly organised by the Ministry of Industry and Technology and T3 Foundation while several public institutions, corporations and universities also cooperate in the organisation of the festivals. The first one kicked off in 2018; from that year onwards, nine TEKNOFEST events were organised in which more than 9 million people visited the festival.

The festival in Izmir witnessed a lot of activities including competitions. Three

Turkish students, Zeynep İpek Yanmaz, Azra Ayşe Bıçakçı and Hilal Başak Demirel, received an award from President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan with their project of producing bioplastics from acorns. The project also came first in a competition in last year's TEKNOFEST in Samsun, which allowed them to go to Antarctica to make experiments. They said the bioplastic they have been developing is more ecofriendly while it dissolves in nature within 45 days and production is cheaper than conventional plastic.

Other than competitions, there were also some projects aiming to raise the awareness and interest in aviation and technology. For example, within the context of "Let a Child Come and Touch a Plane" project, a lot of children from neighbouring provinces got the chance of experiencing helicopter flights. Muhammet Saymaz, who is the Secretary-General of TEKNOFEST, said that they had aimed 100.000 children to experience flight; and that this target was reached in Izmir.

EU GRANTS 400M EUROS WORTH OF SOLIDARITY AID TO TÜRKİYE AFTER EARTHQUAKES



The European Parliament approved on 4 October 2023 an aid of around 455 million euros from the EU Solidarity Fund in response to the recent natural disasters in Romania, Italy, and Türkiye. EU MEPs expressed their deepest solidarity with all victims, families and individuals affected by the drought in Romania, the devastating floods in Italy and the earthquakes in Türkiye,

as well as with the national, regional and local authorities and civil society organisations involved in the relief efforts.

Türkiye, with 400 million euros, is the largest beneficiary of the aid package approved by 593 votes in favour, 11 against and 22 abstentions, Romania will receive 33.9 million euros and Italy will receive 20.9 million euros from this aid.

CULTURE AND ART AGENDA

HISTORIC INAUGURATION OF THE FIRST CHURCH IN TÜRKİYE'S MODERN HISTORY

President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan inaugurated the first-ever church built in Türkiye since the founding of the Republic. The St. Ephrem Syriac Ancient Orthodox Church, situated in İstanbul's Yeşilköy neighbourhood, has opened its doors to worshippers, marking a significant milestone in the nation's history. President Erdoğan expressed his hope that the church would bring good fortune to the Syriac community, emphasising the careful coordination with community administrators to ensure the project's success. He also highlighted the registration of properties in the name of community foundations, demonstrating a commitment to preserving cultural and religious heritage.



Syriac communities worldwide had closely followed the construction process and eagerly awaited the opening ceremony. The construction itself spanned a decade, with seven years dedicated to formalities and procedures.

During the opening ceremony, Susin expressed his heartfelt appreciation to the authorities and all those in attendance, recalling the pivotal decision to construct this historic church during President Erdoğan's tenure as prime minister. The new church, designed to accommodate the spiritual and communal needs of the Syriac

congregation in İstanbul, boasts a capacity of 750 individuals for worship. One floor of the five-story structure serves as a cultural hall for community gatherings, while the ground floor houses the bishop's quarters, guest rooms, and a parking lot. With an estimated 17,000 Syriac residents in the city, the newly constructed church in Yeşilköy will play a crucial role in meeting the spiritual needs of the Assyrian community. This remarkable milestone opens a new chapter in Türkiye's history, celebrating diversity and religious pluralism.

The foundation laying ceremony for this five-story church project took place in 2019, attended by President Erdoğan. However, the opening was briefly delayed due to the devastating 6 February earthquake. Sait Susin, the President of the İstanbul Assyrian Kadim Foundation, expressed immense excitement about the long-awaited inauguration. He emphasised that

TÜRKİYE'S TOURISTIC EASTERN EXPRESS TO INCREASE FREQUENCY FOR SCENIC TRAIN JOURNEYS



The Turkish Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure has announced plans to expand the operations of the Touristic Eastern Express, a renowned scenic train route running between Ankara and Kars. This picturesque journey is celebrated as one of the world's top four most beautiful train routes and is set to increase its weekly trips from December.

Minister Abdulkadir Uraloğlu emphasised Türkiye's unique geographical advantage for

both domestic and international train tours, highlighting the country's historical involvement in organising such tours from the 1990s to the mid-2000s. The Touristic Eastern Express, operating on the Ankara-Kars route, provides a distinct and high-quality holiday experience suitable for travellers of all ages, particularly young people, nature enthusiasts, and photography groups.

In recent years, this scenic train journey has surged in

popularity, captivating the interest of travel enthusiasts from various nationalities. The new schedule will see the Touristic Eastern Express depart from Ankara on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, with return trips from Kars on Wednesdays, Fridays, and Sundays, totalling 84 trips for the season – 42 in each direction.

The train will comprise eight sleeping cars and a dining car, accommodating up to 160 passengers. Tickets for six of the sleeping cars will be available through travel agencies, while the remaining two can be purchased individually from Turkish State Railways.

Moreover, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, along with travel agencies and non-governmental organisations, will explore the possibility of introducing more tourism-oriented train routes in response to demand. These efforts aim to further enhance the country's appeal as a travel destination and provide visitors with unique and captivating experiences.

100TH YEAR OF TURKISH REPUBLIC CELEBRATED IN 4TH PRESIDENTIAL YACHT RACES

The 4th Presidential International Yacht Races celebrated the 100th anniversary of the Turkish Republic in a vibrant and spectacular event held on 29 October. Held under the auspices of the Turkish Presidency, the annual race is organised by the İstanbul Offshore Yacht Racing Club, in collaboration with the Ministry of Youth and Sports and Ministry of Culture and Tourism. The event started in Muğla on 25 July and the İstanbul leg painted a vibrant spectacle on the centenary of the republic with nearly hundred sailboats fiercely cutting through the waters of İstanbul's Bosphorus. The excitement of the 100th Year Republic Cup took center stage of the world's only yacht race that spans two continents.



The race, featuring 100 sailboats and approximately 1,000 competitors, commenced with a moment of silence in honour of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and his comrades.

Competitors paid their respects to Atatürk by sounding their horns and waving flags, then engaged in fierce competition against strong winds and currents. As the sailors set their sails between Ortaköy and Anadoluhisarı, colourful scenes unfolded in the Bosphorus. President of the İstanbul Offshore Yacht Racing Club Ekrem Yemlihaoğlu said: "We have been waiting for this day for four years. This year has a special meaning for us, beyond just a race. We are very grateful to everyone who made it possible for us on this day, the 100th year of our Republic. We express our thanks."

CULTURAL HERITAGE OF THE SPANISH-SPEAKING COMMUNITY CELEBRATED IN İSTANBUL



The 'Encounter of Ibero-American Literature' event which was held in İstanbul in collaboration with the Spanish Embassy in Türkiye and İstanbul Cervantes Institute brought together renowned Ibero-American writers, ambassadors and readers over 3 days between 10-12 October 2023. The main purpose of the event was to celebrate the heritage, cultural richness and diversity of the Spanish-speaking community and writers whose works were translated into Turkish. It is considered to be the most significant and comprehensive cultural event ever conducted in Spanish and provided an opportunity for countries under the umbrella of the Spanish language to narrate their own stories reflecting their own heritage.

One of the main reasons for holding this event in İstanbul was the increasing translation of Spanish literary works into Turkish, resulting in the greater recognition of the Spanish

culture among the readers in Türkiye.

The conference featured discussions by Panamanian writer Juan David Morgan, Vanessa Monfort, Ecuadorian writer Natalia García Freire, Cuban author Leonardo Padura, Santiago Roncagliolo from Peru and Spanish writer Javier Moro, Cuban novelist and journalist Leonardo Padura Fuentes, a Colombian novelist, essayist, and journalist Hector Abad Faciolince, and a Turkish author of Sephardic Jewish descent Mario Levi.

Alongside these writers, esteemed ambassadors carrying out their missions in Türkiye, including Ambassador Hector Jaime of El Salvador, Ambassador Rodrigo Arcos of Chile, Ambassador Jose Luis Martinez y Hernandez of Mexico, Ambassador Julio Anibal Riano Velandia of Colombia and Ambassador Mariela Sagel of Panama, showcased the cultural richness of the Spanish-speaking community in Türkiye.

SEVENTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE FACILITY FOR REFUGEES IN TÜRKİYE

The report, examining the state of the facility initiated by the EU, has been published by the European Commission

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The EU continues its efforts to deal with the refugee crisis, which aggravated especially with the outbreak of the Syrian Civil War in 2011. In addition to the work within the EU, such as the New Pact on Asylum and Migration, which aims to solidify the EU framework on the topic, attempts to prevent irregular migration through various agreements and financial support programmes with the third countries are being made.

The EU has been closely cooperating with Türkiye as well. In 2013, a Readmission Agreement was signed by the EU and Türkiye. Then, on 18 March 2016, the parties agreed on and published a joint statement on the refugee crisis. Still, cooperating on the refugee issue with Türkiye, which is located on the transit route for those coming from both the Middle East and countries like Afghanistan and Pakistan, remains a priority for Europe. In the European Political Community Summit held in Granada, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz stated that the cooperation with Türkiye on refugees has worked effectively and that he supported the negotiations with Türkiye on the extension of the cooperation agreement. Vice President of the European Commission Margaritis Schinas also declared that he was for developing the partnership on the issue with Türkiye, which was first established in 2016.

2023 Report on the Facility for Refugees in Türkiye

Within the context of this partnership, the European Commission initiated the Facility for Refugees for the first time in November 2015. The facility is annually evaluated with the reports published by the European Commission. This year's report, the seventh of these evaluation reports, was presented on 22 September. The



report examines in detail the projects carried out within the framework of the facility, the types of support, and the results aimed with the facility.

The report emphasises that due to its location, Türkiye is both a destination country and a transit country for refugees. Türkiye hosts more than 3.5 million registered Syrian refugees, in addition to 305 thousand Afghan, Iraqi and Iranian refugees. Such a high number has a great impact on the host community and Türkiye's efforts are highly significant on the subject. Moreover, it is indicated that even though the resettlement of refugees from Türkiye to the EU continues after a short break due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Türkiye has not accepted to readmit refugees who arrived on the Aegean Islands since March 2020. Furthermore, it is noted that in comparison to 2021, the year 2022 witnessed a considerable increase in irregular migrant crossings to Bulgaria, Greece and the Greek Cypriot Administration of Southern Cyprus.

Türkiye is still facing with migration pressure, the report suggests. It is said that the number of deported irregular migrants from

Türkiye went up in 2022. The report also gives the number of resettled refugees from Türkiye to the EU as 37,397.

The report mentions that the EU began to support refugees in Türkiye via the facility established in 2015. The aim of the facility is shown as a coordination mechanism facilitating the efficient, swift, and rapid use of the financial support and ensuring that the EU support tools are used both as humanitarian and developmental aid for the good of the host communities and the refugees. The financial source of the facility is listed as humanitarian aid, the European Neighbourhood Instrument, the Development Cooperation Instrument, the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) and the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace. The conditionality for the continuation of the Facility is underlined, which requires compliance with the Joint Action Plan and the Statement.

The report indicates that apart from 345 million euros which was transferred before the adoption of the Facility, 3 billion euros for the 2016-2017 period and 3 billion

euros for the 2018-2019 period were allocated to Türkiye. Other than 6 billion euros, Türkiye has been supported with another 5 billion euros, the report notes.

The EU support is listed under two main categories, which are humanitarian and developmental. Up until now, 59% of the support is for developmental purposes, while 41% of the support is for humanitarian causes, according to the report.

The Implementation of the Facility in Detail

When the financial support is examined according to the fields to which they are directed, it is seen that education has been allocated 1.5 billion euros. A part of the support is given to refugee families under the condition of sending their children to school on a regular basis within the framework of The Conditional Cash Transfer in Education project. 400,000 euros has been made available to the Ministry of National Education with PIKTES (Promoting Integration of Syrian Kids into the Education System) projects. Plus, the report mentions that 29,049 students who attend Technical and Vocational and Training and higher

education have received scholarships funded by the Facility.

211 million euros of the support provided by the Facility have been used for protection, which includes the registration and verification of refugees in Türkiye and facilitating their access to services such as establishing and furnishing elderly day care centres and Child Protection Units. In the field of health, SIHHAT projects have been funded by the Facility to enable the Ministry of Health to provide refugees with healthcare services in a free and equity-based manner. 187 Migrant Health Centers have been opened in addition to two hospitals in Hatay and Kilis. Infrastructural support has also been provided, as municipalities have been supported in their works for water supply, water treatment and wastewater management. 2.83 billion euros have been allocated for the refugees' vital and socio-economic needs through the Facility. The report notes that 2.6 million refugees have benefited from monthly payments under the framework of the Emergency Social Safety Net.

The report says that 26 thousand refugee women have attended short-term vocational skill training, while 40 thousand refugee women have benefited from employment counselling services. Additionally, 25 thousand adult refugee women and 20 thousand female students have completed Turkish language courses. 55 thousand female refugee children have been able to attend pre-school and primary education with the help of the Facility-funded projects.

At the end of the report, it is stated that 2022 witnessed appreciable progress in the implementation of the Facility. The next steps will focus on the efficient implementation of all projects for both host communities and refugees, the continuation of communication activities regarding the projects, and planning and implementing additional support to make the Facility's achievements sustainable, the report concludes.