

**Joint Declaration  
Between the Government of the Hellenic Republic  
and the Government of the Republic of Turkey**

H.E Mr. Alexis Tsipras, Prime Minister of the Hellenic Republic and H.E. Mr. Ahmet Davutoglu, Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey met in Izmir on March 8, 2016 within the framework of the 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the High-Level Cooperation Council (HLCC) between Turkey and Greece. The two Prime Ministers co-chaired the session of the 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the HLCC with the participation of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs as coordinators and the Deputy Prime Minister, Ministers responsible for Health / Economy / Economy, Development and Tourism / Culture and Tourism / Transport, Maritime and Communication / Maritime Affairs and Insular Policy / Energy and Natural Resources / Environment and Energy / Justice / EU Affairs / Interior / National Education, Alternate Ministers responsible for Citizen Protection / Immigration Policy / Tourism / Education and Deputy Ministers responsible for Foreign Affairs.

The two Prime Ministers have noted the following:

- Greece and Turkey reaffirm that a structured framework of their cooperation, based on mutual respect, trust, international law and good-neighbourly relations, is instrumental in further enhancing regional peace, stability and prosperity, as well as stimulating the economic growth of the region. They remain committed to opening up additional areas of cooperation with a view to further promoting bilateral relations.
- Both sides, as also expressed by two Prime Ministers during the Business Forum that took place on the sidelines of the 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the High-Level Cooperation Council, reiterated their will to explore ways and means to give a fresh impetus to their commercial and economic cooperation.
- Both sides remain dedicated to working on bilateral projects which will contribute to an intensified cooperation in the fields of transport, commerce and tourism. Furthermore both sides welcome the signing of a "Memorandum of Understanding in the Field of Maritime Cooperation between the Thessaloniki Port Authority SA-Greece and the Port of Izmir (Alsancak)-Turkey". On this occasion Turkey and Greece encourage and are willing to facilitate commercially viable projects of the private sector, concerning the establishment of a Ro-Ro, Ro-Pax line between the two ports.
- Both sides reiterated their interest in promoting co-operation in the field of rail and inter-modal transport. In this regard, the two sides expressed their readiness to convene the Joint Expert Group on Rail and Intermodal Transport, consisting of representatives of the competent authorities and bodies. In this framework the two Parties will examine the development of the rail and the multi-modal corridor Igoumenitsa-Thessaloniki-Istanbul.
- Greece and Turkey agreed to keep the momentum in the Exploratory Talks.
- Turkey's membership to the EU has importance for both countries. Turkey and Greece look forward to achieving this goal in accordance with the rules and principles of the EU. Greece supports Turkey's accession process in accordance with the agreed criteria.

-They acknowledge that cooperation in the field of tourism is of great importance for both countries and welcome the signing of the "Joint Declaration on Cooperation in the Field of Tourism between the Alternate Minister of Economy, Development and Tourism of the Hellenic Republic and the Minister of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Turkey". To this end, they are committed to strongly encouraging joint projects targeting important overseas markets. The two countries also welcome the results of the Pilot Project (1 April 2015–31 October 2015) aiming at facilitating the short-stay tourist visits from certain Turkish coast areas to seven (7) Greek islands in the Eastern Aegean under simplified entry procedures.

-Taking into consideration the escalated migration crisis both sides agreed that the implementation of the Turkey-EU Joint Action Plan on Migration, which was activated at the Turkey-EU Summit held in Brussels on 29 November 2015, remains a priority in order to stem migration flows and to tackle traffickers and smugglers networks. Recalling also that the Plan builds on and is consistent with commitments taken by Turkey and the EU in the context of the Visa Liberalization Dialogue, both sides agreed to advance their cooperation aiming at its full and speedy implementation. They have also agreed on more effective implementation of the bilateral Turkish-Greek Readmission Protocol, also by initiating a new fast-track procedure, to ensure the swift return of migrants who are not in need of international protection to their countries of origin. The Coast Guards of Greece and Turkey agreed to establish a system of electronic exchange of information. An experts meeting will be convened for the technical details to allow for the functioning of the system as soon as possible.

-Turkey and Greece aim at further promoting their cooperation in the field of energy, in particular natural gas pipelines and electricity interconnection networks. Both countries are committed to supporting the timely realization of the Trans Anatolian Natural Gas Pipeline (TANAP) and the Trans Adriatic Pipeline (TAP) projects which are interlinked within the Southern Gas Corridor. These pipelines, representing the most efficient route for bringing Caspian gas to Europe, will have a significant role for the regional energy supply security.

-Floods in the Evros /Meriç River Basin are causing damages every year, especially during rainy and snow melting periods. The Joint Declaration signed between the relevant Ministers of the two countries on 14 May 2010 in Athens, along with Water Directive 2000/60/EC and Flood Directive 2007/60/EC, provide the framework for water management and prevention of floods in the Evros /Meriç River. In light of the above, Turkey and Greece express their commitment to strengthen their collaboration aiming to address and mitigate the impact of the floods in the Evros /Meriç river, welcoming any goodwill cooperation from other relevant parties involved in water management and flood protection in the Evros /Meriç River Basin.

-Both countries expressed their determination to fight against the scourge of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, and agreed to increase their cooperation bilaterally and at the international platforms, including in the framework of the global coalition to counter the terrorist threat stemming from the situation in Syria and Iraq.

-The two countries desire to further consolidate their cooperation in the field of justice.

-Greece and Turkey agree to further intensify their already existing cooperation in the areas of protection and preservation of cultural heritage as well as identification and repatriation of cultural goods illegally removed from their countries of origin and to strengthen their joint efforts undertaken so far in UNESCO and other international organizations and fora with this aim.

-The two countries have agreed to expand their cooperation in international organizations and, to the extent possible, to give favourable consideration to each other's candidatures in international organizations.

-The two Prime Ministers, along with bilateral issues, had a comprehensive exchange of views on regional and international developments.

A stylized handwritten signature in black ink, featuring a large, sweeping initial 'A' followed by several smaller, connected loops and a final horizontal stroke.

Alexis Tsipras

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a series of connected loops and a long, horizontal stroke extending to the right, ending in a small hook.

Ahmet Davutoğlu