

PROTOCOL
OF THE ELEVENTH SESSION OF
THE TURKISH-ALBANIAN ECONOMIC, COMMERCIAL, INDUSTRIAL
AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION JOINT COMMISSION

The Eleventh Session of the Turkish-Albanian Economic, Commercial, Industrial and Technical Cooperation Joint Commission (hereinafter referred to as the Joint Commission) was held between 29-30 November 2011 in Tirana.

The Turkish Delegation was led by H.E. Fatma Şahin, Minister of Family and Social Politics of the Republic of Turkey and the Albanian Delegation was led by H.E. Nasip Naço, Minister of Economy, Trade and Energy of the Republic of Albania.

During her visit, H.E Fatma Şahin, Minister of Family and Social Politics of the Republic of Turkey received by H.E Jozefina Topalli, Speaker of the Albanian Parliament and H.E Sali Berisha, Prime Minister of the Republic of Albania, met with H.E Spiro Ksera, Minister of Labor, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities.

The members of the two Delegations are listed in Annexes I and II, respectively.

During the Session, the Heads of the two Delegations stated that the development of stronger commercial and economic ties, as well as the promotion of investments and trade relations between Turkey and Albania are the shared objectives of the two Governments. They discussed the ways and means of enlargement and diversification of the bilateral economic cooperation in all economic areas.

The Commission adopted the agenda of the session shown in Annex III.

The Eleventh Session of the Commission was held in an atmosphere of friendship and mutual understanding, reflecting the will and determination of the parties to further improve their trade and economic relations.

The results of the deliberations of the Joint Commission are summarized as follows:

Economic and Trade Outlook

The two Sides made comprehensive presentations on the economic developments in their respective countries, exchanged information on their relations with the WTO and the EU and reviewed the trends in the overall bilateral trade and economic relations between Turkey and Albania.

They noted that the economic relations between the two countries have developed well during the last years, even though there is still a potential for further strengthening them. They underlined that since 2010, trade volume between two countries has risen again after the decrease in 2009 due to the global financial crisis and investments have increased steadily during the last years.

The two Sides stated their satisfaction with the smooth and successful functioning of the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) that entered into force on 1 May 2008.

The two Sides welcomed the entry into force of the Joint Committee Decision No 1/2009, which amended Protocol II of the FTA concerning the definition of the concept of originating products and methods of administrative cooperation allowing diagonal cumulation of origin among the European Union, Turkey and Albania.

The two Sides agreed to ensure this Agreement contributes to the increase of the bilateral trade. To this aim, both Sides expressed their willingness to hold the second Joint Committee Meeting of the FTA between Turkey and Albania at the earliest convenient time for both sides.

The two Sides stated their commitment to intensify the cooperation in view of the economic and trade potentials of the two countries. In this respect, they underlined the importance of regular high level meetings in the economic field.

The two Sides expressed that the state visit of H.E. Bamir Topi, the President of the Republic of Albania between 10-12 October 2011, gave a strong incentive to the reinforcement of bilateral relations in the economic field. The Turkish-Albanian Business Council which took place in Istanbul during the visit of H.E Bamir Topi offered to business circles the opportunity to develop closer relations and search for new cooperation areas.

The two Sides agreed that Turkey and Albania have much to gain from establishing a more frequent and strategic dialogue on a range of economic and business issues.

The two Sides agreed to work on a well structured agenda at the senior level of technical delegations. The technical delegations will meet at least once a year to discuss on specific areas of interest.

Trade and Investment Promotion Activities

The two Sides underlined the importance of exchanging trade delegations for market investigation and analysis of each other's comparative advantages.

The two Sides, in this respect, agreed to promote reciprocal participation of their business communities in trade, investment and tourism fairs and exhibitions organized in each country.

The two Sides agreed to explore the possibilities to develop an e-platform for business partners and searching customers and commercial information.

To increase bilateral trade and to foster linkages in priority sectors as identified by Turkish and Albanian business circles, the two Sides agreed to encourage to hold regular Business/CEO Forums one in Turkey and other in Albania with TOBB (The Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey)-DEİK (Foreign Economic Relations Board) and the Union of Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Albania and Albanian Investment Development Agency/AIDA.

The two Sides, considering the opportunities offered by Turkish and Albanian markets, agreed to organize economic forums and seminars in order to build awareness and explore further opportunities in their markets as well as in third countries.

The two Sides confirmed their interest to promote bilateral economic relations on a mutually beneficial basis and eliminate their business communities' problems.

Legal Framework

The two Sides expressed with pleasure that legal framework between Turkey and Albania has mainly been completed.

Recognizing the need to renew the Agreement on Reciprocal Promotion and Protection of Investments between Turkey and Albania the two Sides noted with satisfaction the ongoing negotiations and agreed to sign this Agreement as soon as possible.

The two Sides expressed their intention to finalize negotiations on Cooperation Agreement between Ministry of Labor and Social Security of the Republic of Turkey and Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities of the Republic of Albania, in order to strengthen the relations between the two Ministries. Turkish side informed kindly that a draft text was submitted to Albania through diplomatic channels.

Investments

The two Sides expressed their willingness to provide favorable market conditions for investments. The Turkish Side provided information about new investment environment in Turkey and YOIKK (The Coordination Council for the Improvement of Investment Environment) and reiterated its invitation for Albanian relevant authorities (i.e. AIDA) to benefit from Turkey's Experience of Sharing Program.

Contracting and Technical Consultancy Services

The Turkish Side expressed the willingness of Turkish construction companies to undertake Albanian projects of infrastructure, hydro electric power plants, gas infrastructure (transmission, distribution, etc.), highways, ports and mass housing, etc.

The two Sides reemphasized the necessity of establishing a mechanism for regular consultations and setting up an action plan to develop efficient cooperation between the two countries on construction and consulting engineering services.

The two Sides, in this respect, agreed to hold a meeting at the earliest convenient time with the participation of the relevant authorities to determine the terms of reference of the mentioned mechanism.

Cooperation in the multilateral area

Recognizing the growing importance of services in the development and growth of their economies, and in compliance with the WTO General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) and within the bounds of their own fields of competence, the two Sides agreed to encourage the cooperation with each other in services sectors.

The two Sides, in this context, decided to determine the mutually beneficial sectors, which cooperation will be focused on. This cooperation will be aimed at promoting the productivity and competitiveness in services sector.

Industry

The two Sides decided to explore further cooperation in following sectors: ready-to-wear, automotive industry, iron and steel, cable and wires, furniture, plastic goods, white goods, packing supplies, processed aluminium, electrical machines, glass, ceramics and construction materials.

The two Sides, furthermore, agreed to share information and exchange experience in the establishment and management of industrial zones, technology development zones, incubators, business and technological parks and R&D centers.

Small and Medium Sized Enterprises

The two Sides, considering the necessity of establishing a cooperative relation between the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Organization of Turkey (KOSGEB) and Albanian Investment Development Agency (AIDA), reiterating their interest to enhance collaboration between these institutions, agreed to sign a collaboration agreement for development and promotion of SMEs between two countries. In this respect, KOSGEB will present a draft Memorandum of Understanding to the Albanian Side within a month, through diplomatic channels.

The two Sides, stressing the importance of cooperation between SMEs of the two countries for their economies, agreed to organize business to business (B2B) meetings between SMEs, with a special emphasis on manufacturing industries.

The two Sides agreed to exchange experience in the centers of innovation and government support schemes for innovation, on policies for increasing the competitiveness of SMEs.

Patents and Standardization

The two Sides noted with satisfaction the accelerating relations between Albanian General Directorate of Standardization and Turkish Standards Institution within the framework of Memorandum of Understanding, signed on 8 December 2009, in Tirana.

The two Sides also expressed their pleasure on signing of the Protocol of Cooperation between The General Directorate of Patents and Trademarks of Albania (GDPT) and the Turkish Patent Institute, in Ankara, on 19 June 2009. The two Sides agreed to enhance cooperation between the two institutions and effective protection of industrial property rights in accordance with the above mentioned Protocol.

The two Sides appreciated the developing cooperation between The General Directorate of Metrology, (GDM) and Turkish counterpart TUBITAK-UME that has been institutionalized through a Memorandum of Understanding signed on 16 June 2006.

Considering the importance of technical harmonization, exchange of information and creating a suitable metrology infrastructure, the two Sides expressed willingness to further strengthening the cooperation between the homologue institutions that operate in the field of metrology.

The two Sides declared their satisfaction on the Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Accreditation between Albanian General Directorate of Accreditation (GDA) and Turkish Accreditation Agency (TURKAK), signed on 18 February 2009.

The two Sides enhanced the cooperation between TURKAK and the GDA in organizing training programs for Albanian accreditation and decided to further develop this cooperation.

The two Sides agreed that deepening cooperation in the field of quality infrastructure will facilitate the development of trade relations between the two countries.

Energy

The two Sides expressed the significance of the strategic cooperation in the field of energy and agreed to increase the existing collaboration between their countries.

The Albanian Side expressed the interest regarding:

- Development of the possible regional gas transmission projects, part of Southern European Gas Corridor (TAP), that will supply Albania and the European markets with natural gas from the Caspian and Middle East gas resources via Turkey;
- Evaluation of the opportunities for Turkish Gas companies to participate in development of gas network and gas market in Albania;
- Participation of Turkish energy companies in the privatization process of Albanian energy companies on the field of electricity and petroleum activities;
- Support of the co-operation between private companies for supply of Albanian energy market with petroleum by-products, and especially for gaseous products;

The Turkish Side noted the interest of Albanian Side and its proposals and will submit them to the relevant Turkish authorities.

Both Sides agreed to evaluate the opportunities for cooperation between institutions and companies that operate in energy sector and believe that strengthening the cooperation in the following directions is of great interest:

- Cooperation and exchange of experiences between respective institutions responsible for development and implementation of energy policies;
- Cooperation and exchange of experiences between agencies and research institutions and technical specialists in the energy sector;
- Support for strengthening cooperation and increasing institutional capacity and continuous training of human resources of energy policy-making authorities, and technical and research energy experts, as well;
- Encouraging the cooperation of private companies and joint investments in power generation, mainly from renewable resources.

The two Sides recognized the importance of Trans - Adriatic Pipeline (TAP) and Ionian-Adriatic Pipeline (IAP) which would, when operational, further enhance the interconnection of Caspian /Middle Eastern natural gas resources to the European markets via Turkey, thereby contributing to the supply security and diversification of gas resources for Turkey, Albania and Europe. Within this understanding, the two Sides agreed to encourage further cooperation between relevant Turkish and Albanian institutions in this area.

Mining

The Albanian Side informed the Turkish Side that with the entry into force and implementation of the legal framework regarding the mining sector in the Republic of Albania, the involvement and getting the mining license to executed the interested companies is done on the basis of Ministry of Economy, Trade and Energy (METE) planning, in collaboration with institutions under its dependence, with a high level of information on mining areas planned (which are published in advance on the website of METE) and full transparency through the implementation of open competition procedures (which are published in the Bulletin of the PPA and on the website of METE).

By assessing the current relations in mining sector, the two Sides believed that cooperation in the following areas is of great interest:

- Encouraging the cooperation of private companies and joint investments in the field of mineral extracting and mining processing industry especially copper and chromium;
- Promoting cooperation in the field of metallurgy;
- Exchanging experiences between relevant institutions responsible for mutual development and implementation of policies in the fields of mining industry;
- Promoting corporate social responsibility projects in the mining industry;
- Co-operation and exchange of experiences between research institutions and technical specialist in mining industry sector;
- Determining joint project possibilities in the fields of geological research, Remote Sensing & Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and to organize training programs;

Transport

The two Sides, underlining the importance of the development of intermodal transportation between the two countries, agreed to take necessary measures to develop joint intermodal transportation projects, including but not limited to the proposed Istanbul-Durres Ro-Ro Line.

The two Sides, in this respect, agreed to hold a meeting in 2012 with the participation of the relevant institutions of two countries, aiming to make the above mentioned project effective by examining the legislative, technical and administrative aspects.

The Albanian Side expressed its interest to further strengthening cooperation in the maritime transport and particularly receiving technical assistance for the consolidation of Albanian Maritime Administration, in compliance with IMO standards.

Scientific and Technological Cooperation

The two Sides, in order to realize joint activities in the fields of science, technology and research, agreed to make efforts in accordance with "Protocol on Scientific and Technologic Cooperation" signed on 6 April 2010 between The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TÜBİTAK) and Ministry of Education and Science of Republic of Albania.

The two Sides agreed to encourage direct contacts and cooperation between the Turkish Academy of Sciences (TÜBA) and the Academy of Sciences of Albania within the framework of the Agreement and Executive Protocol for Scientific Cooperation, signed between the two Academies in 2001, and encourage also the joint efforts of the two Academies at bilateral and relevant international forums, such as the Global Network of Science Academies (IAP), the ALL European Academies (ALLEA) and the International Union of Academies (Union Académique Internationale - UAI).

Customs

The two Sides noted with satisfaction the positive trend of cooperation between the Customs Administrations of both countries and agreed to foster this cooperation in the future for the mutual benefit.

The Albanian Side, in this respect, expressed its interest on the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding on exchange of information between the Albanian General Customs Directorate and the Ministry of Customs and Trade of the Republic of Turkey and submitted a draft text to the consideration of the Turkish Side.

Finance

Both Sides noted with satisfaction the current relations in the field of banking, combating on money laundering and terrorism financing, and sharing of experience in the insurance sector.

The two Sides agreed to further develop cooperation between banks and financial institutions of both countries, based on the needs of Turkish and Albanian business circles.

Tourism and Culture

Both sides agreed to establish a Joint Tourism Working Group between Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Republic of Turkey and Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports of Republic of Albania for further development of tourism relations between two countries. The two Sides, in this respect, decided to convene mentioned working group at the earliest convenient time.

The two Sides reemphasized to encourage the cooperation between two countries' relevant authorities and institutions in order to increase and facilitate reciprocal touristic visits.

The two Sides agreed to cooperate in the following areas:

- Providing technical cooperation on tourism legislation, classification of tourism certificated facilities, documentation, green star etc. between Turkey and Albania;
- Initiating mutual vocational education programs by relevant authorities;
- Undertaking joint projects in collaboration between Turkish organizations such as TURSAB, TUROB, TUOFED etc. and

Albanian National Tourism Agency, Union of Albanian Tour Operators, and Albanian Tourist Association;

- Promoting regional tourist destinations in both countries;
- Encouraging reciprocal investments in the field of tourism by providing necessary support for legal, social and technical matters;
- Exchanging experience in the fields of management of hotel services, tour guide, tour operators etc.;
- Benefiting from Turkish experience on domestic tourism promotion;
- Promoting twinning projects between regions with similar characteristics to develop tourism promotion and benefit from mutual experiences.

Emphasizing the importance of realizing mutual cultural and educational projects, the two Sides noted with satisfaction the establishment of Yunus Emre Culture Centre. The Turkish Side requested further support of the Albanian Side in activities of this institution especially in providing education in a professional and effective manner.

The two Sides expressed their satisfaction on broadcasting Turkish TV series as subtitled in Albania. The two Sides, in this respect, agreed to organize "Turkish Cultural Week" and "Film Festival" with the participation of actors and actresses of TV series and vice versa.

The two Sides agreed to further strengthening relations with the media and the Turkish Side invited the Albanian media members to Turkey.

The two Sides, agreed to cooperate in order to establish twinning among the respective national cultural heritage institutions, both tangible and intangible, archeological parks and historical centers to promote the contacts and exchange of experts in the respective fields of mutual interest.

Environmental Issues

Stating their appreciation for the cooperation on multilateral framework in regional and international level in environmental field, the two Sides expressed their willingness to sign the Agreement of Cooperation between the respective governments in the field of environment.

The two Sides agreed to exchange experience in the areas of protection and management of natural resources, prevention of coastal and industrial pollution, waste management, climate change, monitoring of forest areas threatened by fire and major industrial accidents.

To this aim, the two Sides decided to exchange experts and organize mutual training programs in the fields of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) systems, Strategic Environmental Evaluation (SEE), water and soil pollution management etc.

Furthermore, the two Sides expressed their willingness in further cooperation on sharing of knowledge in the areas of preventing and controlling the domestic, industrial and agricultural pollution; advanced treatment technologies applied in order to satisfy water reuse and wastewater recovery; identification, monitoring of contaminated sites; and management of the marine environment.

Agriculture

The two Sides noted with satisfaction the positive trend of cooperation in the field of agriculture and appreciated the technical support program for enhancing organic farming in Albania, and experts training program in the field of veterinary and animal health, food safety, irrigation and water source management within the framework of cooperation program held by General Directorate of Herbal Production Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Animal Husbandry of Republic of Turkey and Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TİKA).

The two Sides identified the following areas as the main potential agricultural cooperation:

- Animal breeding and husbandry;
- Agricultural products processing and marketing;
- Fruit and vegetable production especially olive cultivation and oil processing, nut trees production, processing of dried fruits;
- Biologic diversity and plant genetic resources;
- Impact of climate change on agriculture;
- Seed production.

This cooperation will be in the form of:

- Exchange of information and experience;
- Initiating training programs and technical cooperation;
- Implementing joint projects and R&D operations between two countries' relevant research institutions;

- **Technical assistance (TA).**

The Turkish Side underlined the opportunities in information transfer and cooperation in the areas of artificial insemination, transfers of embryo and freezing of bull, ram and goat sperms. Turkish Side also offered Albanian Side to import progeny tested and tried bull sperms from Turkey.

Health

The two Sides decided to develop cooperation in the area of health, medicine and pharmaceuticals by exchanging experts and organizing mutual training programs and workshops with the support of TİKA.

The Turkish Side welcomed the request of Albanian Side on introducing short and long-term master trainings on different health specialities in Turkish health institutions.

Technical Assistance

The two Sides emphasized the significance of the technical cooperation between TİKA and the Albanian Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Trade in the context of Memorandum of Understanding ratified on 12 October 2001 to foster economic and social cooperation.

The two Sides, in this respect, agreed to organize technical assistance and training programs in the fields of energy, infrastructure, privatization, agriculture and livestock, SMEs, tourism, health, environment, education, marketing, foreign trade, ICT, etc. in line with a programme to be prepared by relevant institutions

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The two Sides decided to hold the Twelfth Session of the Turkish-Albanian Economic, Commercial, Industrial and Technical Joint Commission in Ankara at a date to be agreed upon later on through diplomatic channels.

Done and signed in Tirana on 30 November 2011, in two originals in English.

**FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF
THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY**

**FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF
THE REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA**

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