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KOSTAS FRAGOIANNIS

**Economic Diplomacy acquires is
deserving place in the Greek
political mainstream**



David Dondua
Ambassador
of Georgia
*Democracy, Greece's
heritage*





Kyriakos Kenevezos
Ambassador
of Cyprus
*Discussions in Geneva
proved successful*



Fadey Charchoghlyan
Ambassador of the
Armenian Republic
*U.S.A. restores
historical justice*

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EDITORIAL

By Pantelis Maravelias

Greece in the middle of the U.S.-Turkey crisis

There is a constant change of balance on the International chess-board. The violence of the last days in East Jerusalem within the period of the Muslim Ramadan, proves once more how difficult and fragile remains our region.

The exclusive interview of the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs **Kostas Fragogiannis** on the significant place of Economic Diplomacy and the actions supporting the outward trend of the Greek economy, juxtaposes over the general pessimistic climate the endeavors of Greece to find its stepping back toward the recovery of social and economic normality.

Undoubtedly, the live broadcast of the controversy between the two Foreign Ministers of Greece and Turkey goes down in the history of our bilateral relations as it is now a fact that neither side can question that this was a dialogue that didn't take place behind closed doors, or in exploratory talks. There was criticism as to what extend the motives of the Minister of Foreign Affairs were personal and whether he was indeed in collusion with the Prime Minister in order to raise the tones inside Ankara. The tension climate affected the talks on the Cyprus issue as these are analyzed in the pages of GR Diplomatic Review.

In his exclusive interview, the Ambassador of Cyprus in Greece, Mr. Kyriakos Kenevezos, explains why he is not satisfied with the developments and why he considers the informal meeting about Cyprus, which was held in Geneva, as a successful meeting. "At the same time though there can be no one who would have expected a different outcome with "such" a Turkey. A Turkey, which, with its



position sets up and undermines the future itself of the Turkish-Cypriots" he states, and describes the reasons.

As the market is opening and the government is searching for ways to raise the morale of the citizens and the

“ The revision of the U.S. policy against Ankara remains to be seen as to how far it will go ”

economy after the pandemic, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Kostas Fragogiannis speaks exclusively about the next steps.

Having taken over the portfolio of Economic Diplomacy in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he explains an ambitious plan with an integrated program of actions of specific policy and target setting.

In this issue we are also concentrating in the future of the U.S.-Turkish relations, which cause severe concerns to the international analysts. The revision of the U.S. policy against Ankara remains to be seen

as to how far it will go, and whether **Tayyip Erdogan** will show some signs of compliance to the directives of **Joe Biden**. However, until now the indications are not encouraging.

The President of Turkey, after 20 years of complete dominance wants to leave the ideological legacy of the great leader, much more now with the upcoming anniversary of establishment of the Turkish Republic in 2023. However, the question remains open as to what extend Greece always reads correctly

the statements and moves of the Turks.

The recognition of the Armenian Genocide, certainly has deteriorated the relations and it is of interest to have a look at the interview of the Ambassador of the Armenian Republic in Greece, Mr. Fadey Charchoghlyan, who mentions that this action by the President of the U.S.A. is the confirmation of Historical Justice. This provides them with serious grounds, so that the historical fact of the Armenian Genocide can be recognized and condemned by as many countries as possible, as well as it gives serious grounds that the United States can utilize their international role, their gravity and their capabilities to force Turkey, until the latter proceeds with the recognition that will finally restore Historical Justice.

The 26th of May marks the completion of the thirtieth anniversary of the restoration of the independence of Georgia from the Soviet Union, and the Ambassador of Georgia in Greece, Mr. David Dondua speaks exclusively to the GR Diplomatic Review about the Greco-Georgian bonds "lost" in the depths of history and about the democracy that the entire humanity inherited from Greece. ■



Economic Diplomacy acquires its deserving place in the Greek political mainstream

The Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr. **Kostas Fragogiannis**, in charge for Economic Diplomacy and Openness, speaks to the GR Diplomatic Review about the concrete actions that support the extroversion of the Greek economy and utilizes the basic principles of the project

By Ms Alexia Tasouli

The Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs in charge of the economic diplomacy and extroversion (outward perspective), Mr. Kostas Fragogiannis took over a portfolio that he adjusted to his own philosophy, as he learned it from the mainstream competitive market, which he has served successfully for years before accepting the proposal of Mr. Kyriakos Mitsotakis to participate in his cabinet. Besides, Diplomacy for him is particularly

useful and an effective tool for the achievement of goals. He is now explaining to us why, before we start the actual interview:

“Having taken over the portfolio of Economic Diplomacy in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, I am trying to implement an ambitious plan through an integrated program of actions of a specific policy and target setting. At this point I must point out the instrumental contribution of the prime minister Mr. Kyriakos Mitsotakis and of Mr. Nikos Dendias the Minister of Foreign

Affairs: the former is fighting to realize his vision for a different type of Greece with the main axis being entrepreneurship and extroversion, while the latter implemented with resolve the reform of the structures within the Ministry by the voting of his Organogram, which brought about changes in our way that we operate.

Specifically, I am referring to the bold decision to transfer all of the competencies of the international economic relations to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, that is of

the Enterprise Greece (i.e., the competent state agency to attract investments and promote exports), of OAEP (Organization of Insurance for Export Credits), as well as all of the structures involving our bilateral and multi-lateral relations international relations.

At the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, we have designed jointly with the General Secretariat of International Economic Relations specific actions supporting the outward perspective of the Greek economy and utilize the key principles of the plan. We have launched a campaign to support the Greek businesses abroad on the basis of the triptych: (a) highlighting the country's economic and trade position at a regional and international level, (b) highlighting the extroversion structures, and (c) empowerment of our multi-lateral relations. Parallel to this, using an extensive plan of digital integration, we are connecting all of the extroversion services with modern tools of cyber governance, while following the voting of a new ministry organogram, we move forward with all of the necessary reform changes in the

reinforcement of our services”

What changes have you made in your policy in order to adjust the economic diplomacy to the restrictions imposed by the pandemic?

Before we start the interview, I would

“ *The National Plan for Recovery and Durability 'Greece 2.0' presented by the Prime Minister shall constitute the road map for the reformation of our country for the following decades and it is a significant structural restart for our homeland* ”

like at first to congratulate you for the issue of the new magazine GR Diplomatic Review. As you can understand, for me the Economic Diplomacy is one of my favorite terms, and I am glad that I see it acquire the place that it deserves within the Greek po-

litical mainstream. This specific magazine is rolling out with a material focused on issues of diplomatic interest and I am especially happy for this initiative of yours.

You know, for several years we were associating ‘diplomacy’ with a somewhat negative connotation. Besides, two out of the three definitions that appear in the Greek Wikipedia about the word ‘diplomat’ are partly negative. Even now, for many people the diplomat is a “person who knows how to maneuver, [...] skillfully and possibly cunningly, [...] the smooth operator [who] can hustle you”.

Now, to answer your question, we did not lose any time whatsoever at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs from the start of the pandemic. Simply, the procedures of digital transformations that we had already started were significantly accelerated. With the digital meetings and interfaces, we managed to rescue most of the events that we had planned. Some actions, such as our visit to the island of Astypalaia, which were necessary to be done live, were made with great caution and in observance of all sanitary protocols.





The cut that the pandemic imposed on the global economy was proven at the same time to be a “crisis”, but also an “opportunity”. And as it is well known, the successful handling of a “crisis” makes you stronger, while the decisive exploitation of the “opportunity” robust”.

Throughout time, the cut that the pandemic imposed on the global economy was proven at the same time to be a “crisis”, but also an “opportunity”. And as it is well known, the successful handling of a “crisis” makes you stronger, while the decisive exploitation of the “opportunity” robust. In the case of Greece, we actually compressed large time intervals of digital transformation within a few months. Greece will obviously be the winner, as much in relation to a more effective function of the public sector, as also in relation with the improvement in the life of our citizens.

What are the key points of the National Plan for Recovery and Durability “Greece 2.0”?

The National Plan for Recovery and Durability ‘Greece 2.0’ presented by the Prime Minister a few weeks ago shall con-

stitute the road map for the reformation of our country for the following decades and it is a significant structural restart for our homeland. The primary target of the plan is to cover a great void in investments, in national product (GDP), and in employ-

“ As neighboring countries, we have all types of interest to promote this collaboration, presented a series of proposals regarding the promotion of our bilateral economic and trade collaboration ”

ment with the focus on competitiveness, extroversion, and digital integration. The investment-friendly policy of the government, as of July 2019, created a radical change on the country image in the international community despite the attack of the pandemic.

The National Plan for Recovery and Durability “Greece 2.0” is intended to mo-

bilize significant forces by reinforcing private investments and using collaborations between the public and private sector. The objective is that the next day of the health crisis can offer competitiveness that will ensure the fact that Greece shall remain an actually attractive destination for investments.

The reform of the Economic Diplomacy in the ministry of Foreign affairs has already begun. A significant work is in an implementation course, while new perspectives are opening. The following period starting upon the end of the quarantine shall constitute a field for intensive work.

Recently you escorted the Minister of Foreign Affairs to Turkey. What are the basic points in the collaboration of the two countries in the economic sector?

As you know, during our recent visit in Ankara, the Greek side presented a series of proposals regarding the promotion of our bilateral economic and trade collaboration.

As neighboring countries, we have all types of interest to promote this collabora-

tion, as it has a direct positive impact on entrepreneurship and on trans-border trade. In this context, the collaborations sector is focused, among other things, in the reactivation of several joint committees and work groups with a view to the reinforce-

“Greece is established in the ‘entrepreneurial consciousness’ of every one as an attractive destination”

ment and facilitation of trans-border trade (by road, railroad and by sea), the collaboration in the tourism sector, the environment, telecommunications, as well as the general business collaboration. Our proposals are not bringing anything new in the agenda of our bilateral economic and trade relations, but they are targeted into giving a new push on “low politics” issues in a direct, nevertheless, positive impact to the citizens of the two countries.

How would you describe the economic relations with major partners such as the U.S.A. and Germany?

I find your question to be particularly interesting, since the United States of America are the global dominant power, while Germany plays a decisive role in the European Union. Both are for us important allies and trade partners in the framework of NATO as well as of the European Union.

Already from last year, during periods of hard quarantine, in fact, we moved forward with investment agreement of emblematic character with projects which shall leave a footprint on the country for several decades and advertise Greece in the global investment community.

Let’s begin with the US giant corporations like Pfizer, Microsoft and CISCO which went ahead with major investments. Pfizer, the American pharmaceutical industry that was the first to roll out the vaccine against the corona virus in Greece, has already set in operation a new hyper-center of services in Thessaloniki, which joints the innovations centers of the company all over the world, by matching digital solutions

with the pharmaceutical developments.

Microsoft has proceeded with the initiative “GR for Growth”, a magnanimous scheme that includes the development of new data centers and the selection of Greece as a Microsoft Cloud region. This is the greatest investment that the company has made in its 28 years of presence in our country, which it committed itself in facilitating the digital transformation of the country, offering skills development programs for 100.000 employees in the public and private sector.

CISCO is already running the “International Center of Digital Transformation and Digital Skills” in the city of Thessaloniki in the building of the old Municipal Slaughterhouses and accepts daily associates, representatives of company’s and public agencies who can actually see the solutions leading toward the digital transformation.

In the end of 2020, we achieved the signing of the MoU (Memorandum of Understanding) between the Greek government and Volkswagen with a view to the creation of the first ‘green’ and ‘smart’ island in the Mediterranean with absolute energy autonomy. The project includes the gradual replacement of the conventional vehicles in Astypalaia with electric ones, the introduction of innovative transit and transportation services, as well as the en-

“There is still a lot of red tape and slow procedures, although recently our classification in the international indices of these parameters has improved significantly”

ergy production from Renewable Energy Sources. We are already in the implementation phase and we are working hard with the company, the Municipality of

Astypalaia, but also the other four co-competent ministries for a project that is unique and pioneering.

Also, the German company, Westwego Mobile SE, the only independent industry for the production of electric vehicles with a battery in Europe, commit-

ted itself to explore the creation of plant to manufacture electric cars in Greece (initially 30.000 annually, with a maximum production being 45.000), while it is estimated that 1.000 direct and up to 5.000 indirect jobs will be created.

These are only a few of the emblematic investments implemented or planned in our country. As you can understand, this investment action can operate only positively, since Greece is established in the “entrepreneurial consciousness” of every one as an attractive destination.

What is the key disadvantage of the country which throughout time hinders it from being an effective pole to attract investors?

During this period, we are a pole of attraction for investors and this is demonstrated with all that I mentioned above. Don’t forget that the investment made at Hellenikon constitutes the largest investment of urban regeneration in Europe. It is true though that there are certain factors that contribute to the making of investment decisions that could be even more positive. The taxes for example, despite the reductions that this government introduced (from 29% for the companies to 23%, and from 15% to 5% in the returns of shares), remains high if compared to some of our neighboring countries. There is still a lot of red tape and slow procedures, although recently our classification in the international indices of these parameters has improved significantly.

Let’s close this interview by concentrating on the advantages of the country as in investment destination, and these are quite a lot. We are a market to be counted numbering 10 million consumers that offers access to the 350 million consumers of the European Union. There is political stability, let’s not forget that we are the first single-party government in the Parliament with a majority in the last decade. Our human resources are excellent, while now we receive the investments in a different manner than in the past. We offer several motives to investors and we do a lot in order to facilitate their work. Finally, the quality of life in Greece, which is associated with our culture, the great weather and the great beauty of the country are selection factors of the country not only for vacations, but also for investments. ■

Greece is one of the major partners in Europe Historical justice the decision of U.S.A.

The Ambassador of the Republic of Armenia in Greece Mr. **Fadey Charchoghlyan** speaks exclusively among other things about the recognition of the Armenian Genocide by the United States of America, which as he points out, he had been expecting.

By Alexia Tasouli

The Armenian Genocide has been recognized and condemned by about 30 countries among them - Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Poland, Paraguay, Romania, Russia, Syria, Slovakia, Sweden, Switzerland, Uruguay, France as well as reputable International Organizations.

How would you describe the diplomatic relations between Armenia and Greece?

Greece is one of Armenia's key partners in Europe and Armenia attaches great importance to its partnership with Greece and makes efforts aimed at broadening and deepening of this partnership.

Due to the epidemic crisis, the Armenian-Greek bilateral relations have been carried out in a state of emergency for the past year and a half, and the hostilities on the Armenian-Azerbaijani border and the war unleashed by the Azerbaijani-Turkish alliance on September 27 have had an impact on Armenian-Greek relations. A number of agreements reached during the year - high-level bilateral reciprocal visits and other events - were postponed, but it is especially commendable that the brotherly people of traditionally friendly to Armenia Greece, in these difficult times for them too, express good will to support Armenia unconditionally and this is something for which the Armenian people are deeply grateful.

Was the decision of the President of the United States to recognize the Armenian Genocide expected for you?

Yes, we expected it, because the recognition and condemnation of the Armenian Genocide is a universal issue.

Unlike all United States Presidents, the incumbent President, Joseph Biden in his message on April 24th, for the first time, instead of the term "Great Massacre" used the phrase "Armenian Genocide", calling thus, the massive atrocities that took place almost a century ago against the Armenian people in the Ottoman Empire with their real name - Genocide.

In our opinion, this step of the President of the United States is, first and foremost, the confirmation of historical justice.

This gives us a solid basis in order the historical fact of the Armenian Genocide to be recognized and condemned by as many countries as possible, as well as solid basis for the United States to use its international role, significance and its capabilities to pressure Turkey to go to recognition, which will finally restore historical justice.



Recognition of the Armenian Genocide means recognition of the crime against humanity. We are convinced that one of the tools to prevent genocides and genocidal policies is recognition and condemnation.

It should be noted that resolutions condemning the Armenian Genocide were adopted in 2019 by the US House of Representatives, Senate.

The recognition of the Armenian Genocide by the United States of America is a much-needed message to the international community that reaffirms the supremacy of human rights and values in international relations.

From that point of view, it is an encouraging and inspiring example for all those who want to build a just, tolerant international society together.

Recognition of the Armenian Genocide is important not only in order to pay tribute to a half million innocent victims, but also to prevent the recurrence of similar crimes. The recognition for the Republic of Armenia is a matter of historical truth and justice, and security, especially in the light of the events that took place in our region last year.

The crimes committed by the Turkish-Azeri alliance during the second war in Artsakh remained unanswered and one of the reasons is that the world as a whole has not yet condemned the Ar-

menian Genocide. I believe that the condemnation of the Armenian Genocide would help to a certain extent in order the world would have paid more attention to the aggressive and violent policy of Turkey and Azerbaijan during the second Artsakh war. This aggressive, violent policy of Turkey during the recent years is a typical of the provocative and dangerous behavior of Turkey in a number of regions. Ankara's actions even today perceived as a "source of expanding instability" in the Eastern Mediterranean and the South Caucasus.

Regarding relations with Turkey, Turkey is carrying out hostile and aggressive policy towards Armenia since the restoration of Armenia's Independence in 1991. Turkey refused to establish diplomatic relations with Armenia, closed its borders and is pursuing a growing hostile policy against Armenia. Moreover, Turkey is directly involved in Azerbaijan's attack on the people of Nagorno-Karabakh, sending thousands of armed terrorists to our region every day.

Apart from the economic sector, in which other sector has moved forward the collaboration of the two countries? The cooperation between the two countries are developing dynamically, including political, defense, trade, educational, scientific, cultural, tourism and other areas of mutual interest. There is a solid legal framework between the two countries.

The Armenian-Greek Intergovernmental Commission on Economic, Industrial, Technical and Scientific Cooperation is functioning effectively. Political consultations between the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of Armenia and Greece are also regular. There are Parliamentary Friendship Groups in the parliaments of the two countries.

The cooperation in international fora as well as in the framework of multilateral dimensions holds an important place in Armenian-Greek relations. Both, Armenia and Greece, to a large extent, have common approaches around many issues of the international agenda.

Armenia also appreciates Greece active role in strengthening Armenia - EU relations and Armenia - NATO dialogue, including cooperation in the field of peacekeeping.

On July 7, 2020, the Greek Parliament ratified the European Union-Armenia Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement, which is a new legal basis for Armenia's relations with the EU and the Member States.

Besides bilateral relations, the positive prospects are also outlined on the agenda of Armenia-Cyprus-Greece trilateral cooperation.

On June 4, 2019 in Nicosia was held the first trilateral meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Armenia, Greece and Cyprus, as a result of which was adopted a Joint Statement.

The second trilateral meeting of the Foreign Ministers took place on September 25, 2019 in New York, within the framework of the 74th session of the UN General Assembly.

The first Armenia-Greece-Cyprus trilateral summit was scheduled to take place in Armenia, but was postponed due to the pandemic crisis, but it is on the political agenda of the three countries.

On August 15, 2020, in the context of the escalating Greek-Turkish conflict in the Eastern Mediterranean, the Armenian Foreign Ministry issued a statement saying that this destabilizing stance in the Eastern Mediterranean demonstrates Turkey's aggres-



sive, expansionist policy in its neighboring regions, reaffirms Armenia's unconditional support and solidarity with Greece and Cyprus.

On October 16, 2020, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Hellenic Republic, Mr. Nikos Dendias, paid a working visit to Armenia.

As from the beginning of the hostilities on the Armenia-Azerbaijani border in July, as well as from the very first assault of the Azerbaijani side on the Artsakh-Azerbaijani contact line on September 27, many Greek officials, parliamentarians, politicians, intellectuals and ordinary citizens who were concerned about the hostilities, expressed their support and sympathy to the people of Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh and condemned the Azeri-Turkish aggression, calling and visiting the Embassy.

How do you assess the development of Greek-Turkish relations?

The tense Greek-Turkish relations and many issues still remain pending - such as the actions related to the management of energy resources in the Eastern Mediterranean, the drilling operations carried out by Turkey in the Exclusive Economic Zone of Cyprus and refugee issues.

It is obvious that the conflict in the Eastern Mediterranean has already turned into a Turkey-EU issue and the ongoing tactics of Brussels can not yet change the situation. The EU openly calls for a rule of law in Turkey, while recognizing the need to cooperate with Ankara in areas of mutual interest.

The current economic downturn associated with COVID, combined with a sharp drop in global oil and gas demand, has already led to delays in major energy projects in the region.

Tensions between NATO members (Turkey-France) or NATO allies (UAE, Egypt, Israel) in the Middle East in 2020, as well as Ankara's approach in Libya, suggest that Turkey's aggressive strategy is aimed at increasing its military presence in the region. For its part, Athens expects more tangible support from NATO.

It should be noted that since the beginning of the year, Turkey has repeatedly violated and continues to violate Greek airspace, as well as to enter Greek territorial waters.

Reviewing and summarizing the latest developments in the region and in this context the Greek-Turkish relations, it is clear that the competition between the main actors of the Cold War, the superpowers, in the region, is to acquire the strategic, energy, trade, economic advantage over the geostrategic corridors of the region, which has a direct impact on the current Greek-Turkish relations. ■



By **Andreas Loverdos**
MP, PASOK -
Kinima Allagis
former Minister

Greece must insist on the solutions coming out of the UN Resolutions

Prior to the elections in the occupied part of Cyprus, Turkish Cypriot leader Ersin Tatar spoke openly about partition, namely, about the two-State solution. President Erdogan repeated this proposal during his visit to the occupied territories of Cyprus. After Tatar's victory, the two-State proposal was formalized. Surprisingly, the Greek side did not react strongly to the direct violation of the UN resolutions, both of the Security Council and its General Assembly. The solution that would be based on the bi-zonal bi-communal federation was rejected by the Turkish Cypriots and the Turks, while the Republic of Cyprus and Greece too were not quick to denounce the new violation of the UN resolutions. The thought that the Turkish side would not officially support the policy of partition in the Quintet of April provides perhaps an explanation of the Greek stance, which means that of both Greeks and Greek Cypriots.

I already mentioned that the two-State solution represents a partition. The shell of a confederation does not negate this partition, whatever its individual arrangements may be. As is well known, the cohesive elements of confederate states do not reach the point of creating a single state, namely, a state in which an overarching political will operates. On the contrary, there is an overarching political will in federations. Foreign policy and defense are the most notable cases highlighting this overarching political will, namely, the federal power. A historical point is also useful for understanding the difference between a confederation and a federation: the confederations either gradually evolved into federations, e.g. the USA, or disintegrated, e.g. the recent Russian one. There is no living confederal model today.

Finally, in the Quintet of April, the Turkish and Turkish Cypriot sides put forward the proposal of partition. The Turkish Cypriots demanded recognition of the pseudo-state, which means the de jure recognition of the partition, while the Turkish Foreign Minister supported in his statements the position of the political equality of the two communities. The Turkish Cypriot side and the Greek Cypriot one.

“ *The two-State solution represents a partition. The shell of a confederation does not negate this partition* ”

The following comment is useful regarding this last view: in federal regimes the political equality of states, of governments, namely, of the individual subjects of the supreme federal power, is a given. And it is expressed through their equal representation in the second legislature, that is, in the Senate or whatever its name may be in the various federal regimes, for example that of Germany, the USA, Austria, etc. However, this political equality does not mean the absolute lapse of the democratic principle. The majority is a necessary condition for a state's democratic composition and this is ensured through free parliamentary elections, which designate the Government in the parliamentary system, or the President of the Republic in the presidential and semi-presidential system.

In other words, political equality in a federal state does not negate the democratic principle. It simply ensures a relative autonomy of the subjective wills of the states, expressed in the second legislature, as well as in the retention of competences in serious matters, such as education, which however do not belong to the hard core of state authority. Therefore, equality and equivalence of the will of the people, as well as the equality of the individual states

are balanced in federations. This balance was gradually achieved during the centuries of operation of the federal regimes, and thus both Democracy and efficiency coexist in them.

The Turkish and Turkish Cypriot sides, however, no longer make mention of a federation. The Turkish Cypriots demanded in Geneva their recognition as a state, that is, they distanced themselves in the most official way from the solution promoted by the UN, whilst Turkey, under the heading of political equality, talks openly about a confederation. However, both versions mean in practice the partition of Cyprus.

Under no circumstances should Greece accept such a "solution". Now that the Erdogan regime is declining, now that Biden's US administration does not forgive Turkey for regional power games through the Moscow-Ankara-Tehran axis, now that Turkey's game in the Middle East has led it to isolation, Greece must insist on the solutions coming out of the UN Resolutions. To the extent that the status of the guarantor country is still

“ *Under no circumstances should Greece accept such a "solution" Greece must insist on the solutions coming out of the UN Resolutions. We must insist firmly on the solution of the bi-zonal-bi-communal federation* ”

maintained (and wrongly, because the Republic of Cyprus is an EU member state) in Greece, Turkey and the United Kingdom, we must insist firmly on the solution of the bi-zonal-bi-communal federation, accepting as a basis for opening negotiations the Gutiérrez points, the Christofias-Eroglu positions or the resolutions of the UN Security Council themselves, as proposed before the Geneva Quintet by President N. Anastasiadis. ■

Placing Greek-Turkish Relations in a Wider Context



By Dimitrios Triantaphyllou
*Professor of International Relations
 Kadir Has University - Istanbul
 Member of the Greek-Turkish Forum*

The need to champion diplomacy in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Aegean is a given. This has always been the case, even during the Cold War years since the two primary NATO member states in the Alliance's Southern Flank, Greece and Turkey, have been at odds with each other divided over a growing number of issues in their respective lebensraums with repercussions regarding sovereign rights and, even, sovereignty in certain cases. While the Cold War dynamics implied the maintenance of a modicum of uneasy peace as the Soviet threat was real; the post-Cold War era has not necessarily been marked by some sort of consensus in part due to its unstable nature and the evident shift away from a multilateral to a multipolar world. As such, the current reality shows that the region is a long way from long-term stable confidence- and trust-building mechanisms given the extended nature of the current crisis among many of the Eastern Mediterranean stakeholders, whether regional or extra-regional.

“ The nature of Turkey’s relationship with the European Union fundamentally complicates the trust-building process given the former’s status as a candidate state ”

In juxtaposition to the cases of Syria and Libya or other conflict zones in the European Union’s Southern neighborhood such as the Sahel, the role of the EU is at the core of the challenges in the Eastern Mediterranean. The nature of Turkey’s relationship with the European Union fundamentally complicates the trust-building process given the former’s status as a candidate state. This both binds the EU and Turkey to a more normative and comprehensive relationship than with other neighboring countries as well as creates friction given Turkey’s regional power status and potential.

In order to effectively hope to improve the relationship between the EU and Turkey, it is important to recognize that a multifaceted phase of strategic realignment is underway both within countries and between them. Everything is currently in flux be it in terms of US foreign policy priorities, US-EU relations, US-Turkey relations, EU-Turkey relations, EU foreign policy, etc. This fluidity further extends, inter alia,

to the interactions between Russia and the West, the UK’s post-Brexit relationship with the EU and the United States, China’s growing influence, the ramifications of the existentialist threats of climate change and pandemics. This liquid world context has considerable ramifications for the Aegean and Eastern Mediterranean and, by extension the current and future state of relations



between the European Union and Turkey, and consequently between Greece and Turkey, where in the absence of the levers or the checks provided by the accession process, gridlock and uncertainty on how to move forward is evident.

The bilateral relationship between Greece and Turkey cannot be seen or dealt with in isolation from the EU-Turkey relationship or even the Washington-Ankara tandem".

Furthermore, today's complex polycentric world compounded by inter Alliance ruptures, strategic drifts, and foreign malign influences is also further connected with the emergence of linkages that were not as striking previously. The growing arc of connectivity between the Black Sea Region, the Aegean Sea, both the Eastern and Central Mediterranean, and the Gulf is evidence of a changing geopolitical context which implies that the bilateral relationship between Greece and Turkey cannot be seen or dealt with in isolation from the EU-Turkey relationship or even the Washington-Ankara tandem.

In fact, from an EU point of view, two important perspectives or options stand out, with reference to its relations with Turkey. The first, accounting for the divergences between member states, attempts to make do without a fundamental rethink of the relations between the two sides. The second reflects on a paradigmatic reconsideration of the relationship, which is predicated institutionally on the accession process, but is fundamentally frozen, if not irretrievably damaged. In fact, even if Turkey's accession process were for some reason to begin to move forward, it would still need some tinkering to allow for the dynamics of the current state of play in the international order, i.e., the evident emergence of a multipolar world order in which Turkey projects itself as a significant regional pole. In other words, in the absence of the levers and the leverage provided by the accession process, the relationship between the European Union and Turkey is one of a level playing field as the latter does not have to play by the rules, norms, values, and obligations encapsulated in the accession process.

Although the second option seems to be a rather lame duck one at the moment, it should be given more consideration as the inability on the part of the European Union to devise a comprehensive strategy for Turkey, is reflective of the Union's failure to project and protect clearly its interests. The EU's relationship with Turkey is inexorably linked to the debate regarding the need for Strategic Autonomy or Strategic Sovereignty, and the off-again on-again Conference on the Future of Europe. While the Strategic Autonomy debate has been a rhetorical one to date with no serious attempts to formulate and implement one, albeit the growing number of regional and global challenges, the Conference on the Future of Europe looks set to go forward against the backdrop of a clash

between the European Council and the European Parliament and serious doubts as to whether its relevance can have an impact on the hearts and minds of Europe's citizens.

In this new Geopolitical Age, the role of the United States, and in particular that of the Biden Administration, in the region is also of relevance because it reflects an attempt to turn the tables on the transactionalism of the region's stakeholders by ensuring that the parameters of the relations between the region's states, in particular Greece and Turkey, will be established by Washington in its quest to reinforce its regional strategic interests as part of its global national security priorities. In other words, the role of the United States as a balancer is one that transcends the Atlantic Alliance, in that it aims to ensure that it has access to physical assets in the region both for the sake of keeping the calm there as well as for countering the Russian influence in the Black Sea Region, the Middle East, and the Central Mediterranean.

When it comes to Turkey, an EU candidate state which increasingly does not act like one, its behavior could to a great extent be explained by the fact that it is also affected by systemic change and its interpretation of its impact on its national security. Perennially seeing itself as an outlier, both in geographic and normative terms, Turkey is seeking, within the purview of the self-help doctrine, to rationalize its power via the development and practice of more autonomous action and foreign policymaking. Ankara, rightly or wrongly, is evermore convinced that the West – institutionally represented by NATO, the EU, and the presence of the United States – neither understands its security concerns nor provides the requisite guarantees to protect and defend its interests. As such, with projections of demographic growth to a country of at least 100 million within the next 20 years, and growth models showing that it will become a top 10 global economy over the middle to long term, Turkey has sought to strengthen its claim or stake to being a significant pole in this Geopolitical Age. This has been coupled with a strategic drift away from the West that could potentially lead to a strategic re-orientation. Hence, its impact on the normative multilateral framework that defines the West and, the EU, in particular, which seeks to redefine itself without losing its soul.

Consequently, both Greece and Turkey, marked by their history and geography, cannot avoid rationalizing their relationship within a wider context where actors such as the EU and the US undeniable have interests to project and defend as well as have a role to play in moderating the complexity of the bilateral ties between Athens and Ankara, while guiding the two sides towards a resolution of their key differences. ■

“ *This liquid world context has considerable ramifications for the Aegean and Eastern Mediterranean and, by extension the current and future state of relations between the European Union and Turkey, and consequently between Greece and Turkey* ”

“ *The EU's relationship with Turkey is inexorably linked to the debate regarding the need for Strategic Autonomy or Strategic Sovereignty, and the off-again on-again Conference on the Future of Europe* ”

Democracy in the breaking?



By Kostas Ifantis

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Most of the talking about Turkey these days is about foreign policy and the extent to which the priorities and preferences are sustainable and under what conditions. But, equally if not more important is the domestic political and economic state of affairs insofar as it can be a major impediment. There is no doubt that the domestic front is more challenging than at any given moment during the last twenty years. The political standing of President Erdogan is not as imperious as it used to be. And so far, President Erdogan appears to be impervious to the needs for a major policy overhaul in order to reverse the findings of the not so favorable opinion polls.

A few weeks ago, the President fired the central bank governor Naci Agbal in what could – according to the Financial Times – amount to economic suicide. It

“Erdogan strongly believes that a debate on “values” will allow him to dominate the political arena as he has done for the past twenty years”

confirms that economic rationality is at short supply in Turkey. The regime under the stewardship of R. T. Erdogan chased high economic growth based on consumption and cheap credit. Interest rates – “the mother of all devil” according to the President – were kept low and more than \$120

bn were burned in a futile attempt to defend the Turkish lira. In the last two years exemplary monetary mismanagement has meant that the lira has been plummeting at record low exchange rates while inflation has kept rising, undermining Turkey’s regional and international standing. As of the time of writing, Turkey’s foreign exchange reserves are so low that it has to rely on complicated swap deals with local banks where half of deposits are in dollars. By the end of 2021, Turkey needs to refinance roughly \$180bn in foreign borrowings.

Although things do not look up, we should bear in mind that Turkey is a country with strong fundamentals. During the last 40 years, it has built a strong industrial base that has generated an impressive export led growth performance. Considerable public and private funding have transformed higher education to a very dynamic and pro-business setting, while emphasis on domestic R&D champions has allowed for the creation of a strong and modern domestic production environment. Returning to economic orthodoxy can save the day. But such a dramatic shift has potentially devastating political consequences for AKP and its leadership. It entails a quite sharp austerity programme at least in the short and medium term. Such a fiscal tightening will gravely affect the economic standing of those social strata which form the majority of President Erdogan’s electoral constituency. Rallying the troops with only potatoes and onions is not a sustainable political strategy.

It is in this context that other controversial moves can be explained. The President has already demonstrated that he will try to shape the agenda by reverting to issues where he thinks he enjoys a comparative advantage. He strongly believes that a debate on “values” will allow him to dominate the political arena as he has done for the past twenty years. Hence, he believes that at this juncture acting as the religious conservative flag-bearer will stop the electoral bleeding and will cement the alliance with the ultra-nationalist MHP. The latter is far more important than adher-

ence to the Istanbul Treaty for the prevention of violence against women. The fact that this has done no service to the already tarnished reputation of Turkey as a democratic polity is of secondary importance.

Withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention is perhaps the most recent slump into new forms of authoritarianism and the latest episode where democratization expectations that were confounded. The democratic openings in the 2000s proved

“The demand for democratization was more of a means rather than the ends. It was a means to cement emerging social and political coalitions necessary to win and to secure AKP’s positions against the military tutelage. That is why the call for democratization had its limitations”

stillborn. The demand for democratization was more of a means rather than the ends. It was a means to cement emerging social and political coalitions necessary to win and to secure AKP’s positions against the military tutelage.

That is why the call for democratization had its limitations. As soon as AKP fortified its standing with massive electoral and parliamentary majorities, these became the only legitimate ground not only for Recep Tayyip Erdogan onslaught, but also for the demand the opposition to remain acquiescent to his actions and policies. Hence, the promise of democratization turned into a pure authoritarian majoritarianism. In addition, the conviction “what I believe to be good is good for the country” produced a new and strong patronizing form of tutelage, where the leader is best suited to exclusively define the nation’s problems and he alone shall define the solutions. But the solutions – for the time being at least – is pleasing by any means available his Islamist and ultranationalist electoral base. ■

Why the Mitsotakis visit to Libya is a game changer

Greece is establishing a new presence in Libya

By Demetri Dollis

former Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs

Libya is a place that I know well: its history, politics, culture, and tribal rivalries.

I have visited the country on many occasions and can testify to the bravery of our air force as they evacuated hundreds of people during the civil war.

We have a friendship with the Libyan people that is deeply rooted in history. Turkey has tried to change the relationship with its military intervention and the signing of the illegal maritime accord.

Prime Minister Mitsotakis visit to Tripoli is beginning to put to an end to all that.

The visit not only normalised our bilateral relations with the reopening of our Embassy but set things straight regarding the illegal accords that the Sarraj regime signed with Turkey.

“It is geography that determines the framework of our bilateral relations, and not the artificial lines that some people draw on maps”.

Mitsotakis called for the cancellation of “illegal documents presented as alleged transitional agreements but have no legal force”. The Prime Minister made it clear that “it is geography that determines the framework of our bilateral relations, and not the artificial lines that some people draw on maps”.

To understand the illegality of the Turkish claims one would have to go back to the 2012 popular elections held by The Libyan Electoral Commission with the assistance of the UN Special Mission in Libya. The election was “fair and free” and considered such by most Libyan people,

The General National Congress won the popular vote and attempted to form government. However, divisions between the two major groups that made the GNC, the National Forces Alliance and the Justice and Construction Party, fragmented the Congress.

The political fragmentation led to the 2015 UN backed Skhirat agreement in Morocco that formed the Government of National Accord.

Under the Agreement, Sarraj became the transitional Prime Minister and his Government a transitional Government until the “convening of the legislative authority in accordance



with the Libyan constitution”.

The full House of Representatives never met to ratify the GNA and approve the proposed Cabinet. In August 2016, the Tobruk based internationally recognised House of Representatives voted to reject the GNA.

Sarraj became and remained designate Prime Minister and his Ministers remained Ministers designate.

Under Article 8 of the UN sponsored Skhirat Agreement, Sarraj, as the Head of the interim GNA was prohibited from entering into any International agreements without the approval of the full Presidency Council of which he is a member... “any agreement taken by the Presidency Council of the Council of Ministers in accordance with its competencies listed in article 8.2 of the Agreement shall require unanimity of the President and the Deputies”.

Sarraj never asked nor did he try to obtain the approval of the Presidency Council before or after he signed the memorandums of understanding on the maritime jurisdiction in the Mediterranean and the military co-operation accord with Turkey and as a result are null and void. The Skhirat Political Agreement of 17 December which made him Prime Minister makes that clear.

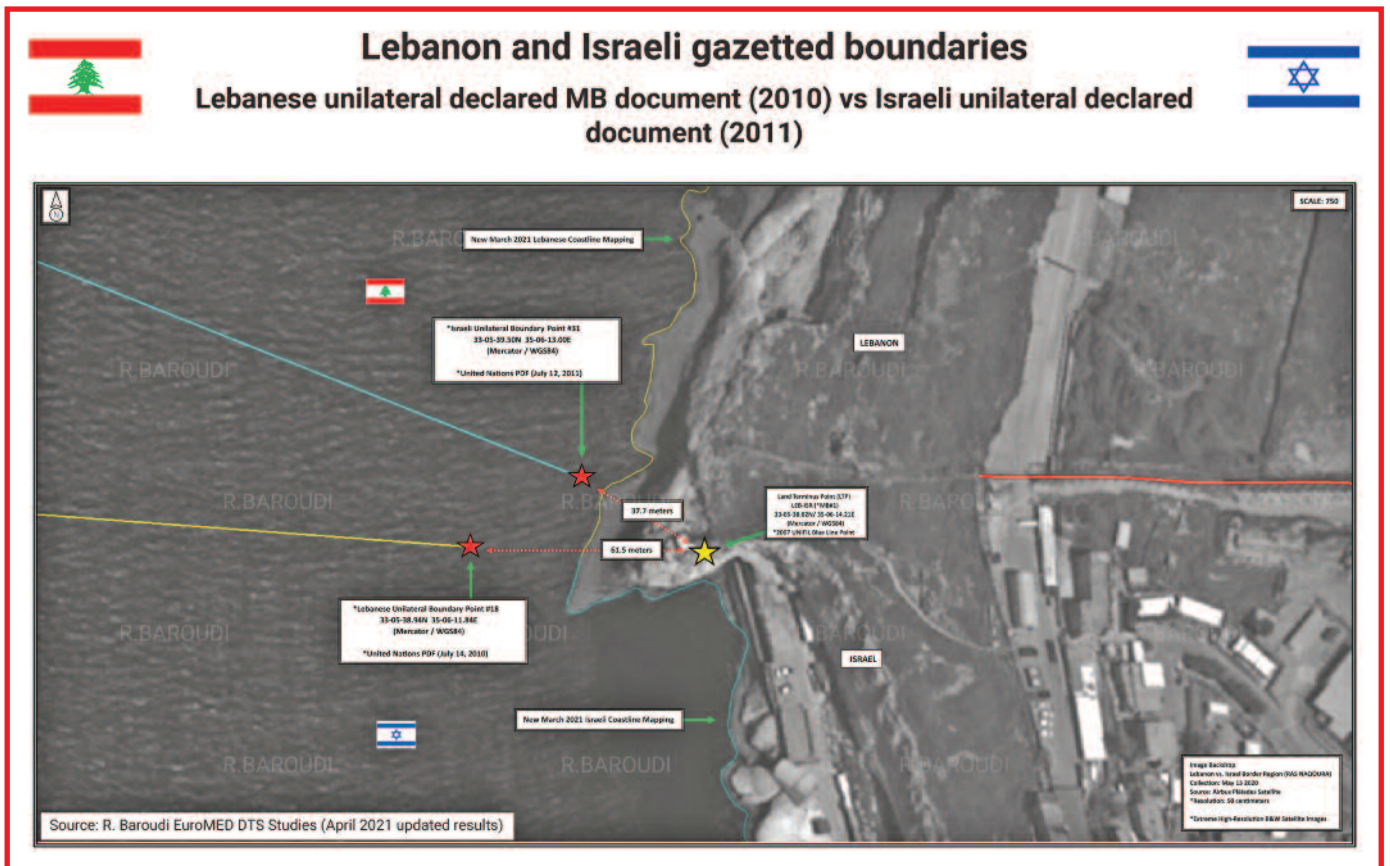
The agreements therefore are illegal and cannot be ratified by the Libyan House of Representatives, and that without ratification from the HoR they cannot be sent to the UN by any Libyan authority.

The regional Libyan Court of Appeals, Al-Bayda has already issued a ruling in that regard. The court annulled the maritime accord and scrapped the security and military co-operation agreement with Turkey.

The Mitsotakis visit put things straight with the new interim Libyan authority. The memorandums or accords that Turkey paddles internationally as agreements are illegal and not acceptable under international law. The maritime boundary accord is in violation of the international Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) because it infringes upon the sovereign rights of third states and it is geographically absurd.

The Skhirat Agreement upon which Sarraj based his legitimacy render both the military and the maritime memorandums null and void.

Greece is establishing a new presence in Libya and will assist the GNU to build a new peaceful and prosperous path for the people of Libya to elect their democratic government in December. ■



East Mediterranean Maritime Borders:

Lebanon vs Israel: Whatever talks achieve both Lebanon and Israel need to update Maritime Boundaries



By Roudi Baroudi
CEO Energy and Environment
Qatar Holdings

Lebanese political circles are in a tangle once again, this time over whether Lebanon should provide the United Nations with new coordinates defining the country's offshore Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).

In reality, two questions need answering:

1) Does Lebanon have the right to update its maritime claims to the UN?

2) If so, should Lebanon avail itself of that right in the present circumstances?

The issue is of critical importance, not only because it relates directly to Lebanon's (currently stalled) maritime boundary talks with Israel, but also because it stands to impact the speed with which it can begin to obtain tangible benefits from any undersea hydrocarbons within its EEZ.

Helpfully, the first question is the easiest. Lebanon's right to update its territorial submissions to the UN is not only enshrined in the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), but also protected by Customary International Law (CIL), and established by innumerable precedents as a standard practice of countries seeking to define and defend their maritime claims, not least because continual technological advance allows increasingly accurate mapping.

It is important to note, too, that Presidential Decree 6433 of 2010, under

which Lebanon's claim was last expressed to the UN, expressly envisaged the possibility of future updates. Article 3 leaves no room for interpretation whatsoever, reading: "As needed, and in the light of negotiations with the relevant neighboring States, the borders of the exclusive economic zone may be refined and improved and, consequently, the list of its coordinates amended, if more precise data becomes available." Lest there be any doubt, and as we will see below, such data has become available.

What is more, when Lebanon's Permanent Mission to the UN submitted the claims authorized under Decree 6433, its accompanying letter included the following advisory: "There is a need to conduct a detailed survey, using a global positioning system, of the shore contiguous to the southern limit, including all islands and spurs, with a view to updating the nautical

charts and the baseline accordingly in the future.” Again, to be perfectly clear: such survey work has been conducted.

Also, while Israeli officials have sought (not very convincingly) to question Lebanon’s right to update its claim, their country’s own October 2010 EEZ agreement (itself based on Israeli coordinates which we now know to be incorrect and which would therefore be rejected by any

“ The border area contains some of Lebanon’s most promising offshore acreage, and in any event, there is no guarantee that giving it up would grease the wheels for a diplomatic breakthrough ”

court or tribunal) with Cyprus also expressly recognizes the fact that under CIL, such coordinates are subject to change. Article 1 (e) of that agreement reads as follows: “Taking into consideration the principles of customary international law relating to the delimitation of the Exclusive Economic Zone between States, the geographical coordinates of points 1 or 12 could be reviewed and/or modified as necessary in light of a future agreement regarding the delimitation of the Exclusive Economic Zone by the three States concerned with respect to each of the said points.”

In addition, in a subsequent unilateral submission to the UN, Israel’s own mis-

sion to the world body not only referred to “the relevant provisions of Article 1 (e)”, but also reproduced the language, virtually verbatim. The submission even repeated mention of “the three States concerned”, which in context can only indicate Lebanon as the third state.

On Lebanon’s right to submit new coordinates, then, the verdict is inescapable: it definitely has that right. Realistically, anyone who argues otherwise is either opposed to the best interests of Lebanon (which needs to develop this resource), the Lebanese (who deserve to reap the attendant economic rewards), and the Lebanese Armed Forces (which are heavily invested in a positive outcome); ignorant of the facts and the rules; or pursuing some other political, financial, and/or other personal/partisan advantage.

Next question: should Lebanon exercise its right at this particular juncture?

On the surface, this answer is almost as clear. In 2011, just months after the Israel-Cyprus deal and Lebanon’s last submission to the UN, the Lebanese government received expert analysis and advice regarding the United Kingdom Hydrographic Office charts – long considered the gold standard of maritime cartography – for the area. What the experts found is that both Lebanon and Israel had used erroneous coordinates as starting points for their maritime boundaries (please see attached map): where such points should be situated at the shoreline, both countries had placed them dozens of meters offshore. This may not sound like

much, but by the time a line drawn out to sea from such a misplaced starting point reaches what should be the trijunction – where the EEZs of Cyprus, Israel, and Lebanon meet – the error could amount to several nautical miles.

Ipsa facto, both Lebanon and Israel have based their previous maritime claims on faulty coordinates, which makes everything that flows from them obsolete, what the French would call “caduc” – meaning null and void. To both, this imparts not only a right to update their claims before the UN, but also an obligation to do so based on each side’s own best interest. In addition, recent experience demonstrates that, especially with such evidence that their respective claims were fatally flawed,

“ No one expects that Washington will abandon its close relationship with Israel, but the LAF’s all-business approach, unsullied by the vagaries of Lebanese politics, encourages the Americans to be as even-handed as possible ”

if the current talks failed and the two countries went to court or arbitration over the issue, the first thing asked of them would be to replace their faulty maps by carrying out detailed surveys and analyses in order to precisely determine any points of contention.

In the technical sense, then, yes, Lebanon should definitely move quickly to update the maritime claims it has previously submitted to the UN. But other considerations also need to be weighed.

For instance, while Lebanon is a sovereign country, it cannot afford to entirely ignore the positions of outside actors. When these run contrary to its own wants and needs, it must weigh the pros and cons and decide accordingly. In this instance, Israeli officials have sought to discourage Lebanon from updating its claims or otherwise delaying the resumption of the aforementioned talks, raising the prospect that doing so could forestall progress, worse-





ning tensions and forcing a longer wait for any offshore oil and gas development.

The latter point could be of particular significance because of what an energy boom could mean for the Lebanese population. Lebanon's economy has shrunk by an estimated 25% over the past year, following a debt default that led to the collapse of its currency and consumer price increases that qualify as hyperinflation. Worse, the political class has demonstrated little stomach for the kinds of reforms required to secure a bailout by the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

The current Cabinet, led by Prime Minister Hassan Diab, resigned seven months ago over an explosion at the Port of Beirut that damaged or destroyed tens of thousands of homes, so it operates in a caretaker capacity. His designated successor is also his predecessor, former Prime Minister Saad Hariri, who himself resigned in the face of popular protests that gripped the country in late 2019. While he enjoys considerable support in certain foreign capitals, Hariri's domestic position can only be described as weak, and the mere fact that he has been unable to form a Cabinet after more than half a year leaves little doubt that even if he succeeds, he largely will be incapable of decisive action on significant issues.

So we have another question: should Lebanon forego some of its rights in order to hasten an agreement that al-

lows it to start earning some badly needed revenues from offshore resources?

The answer to that should be a resounding "no". The border area contains some of Lebanon's most promising offshore acreage, and in any event, there is no guarantee that giving it up would grease the wheels for a diplomatic breakthrough – and even if did, the outside investment required to get an energy industry up and running depends on a whole other set of prerequisites, not least the reforms that no one has been able to see through.

“ *There are ways to compromise on procedure without sacrificing accountability, integrity, or transparency, and the stakes are so high that finding such a formula will be worth whatever effort it requires. And for once, the people of Lebanon might be able to believe their leaders are acting for purely national reasons, not personal ones* **”**

Also, in addition to the 2011 analysis, the Lebanese Armed Forces have carried out detailed studies of their own, which have significantly strengthened the Lebanese position. Senior LAF officers also

have acquitted themselves with a high degree of professionalism in their US-mediated dialogue with the Israelis. In tandem with newly deposited coordinates, the quality of the LAF's work might actually hasten the negotiating process by demonstrating that the Lebanese side will not bluster, but nor will it be bullied or bamboozled. No one expects that Washington will abandon its close relationship with Israel, but the LAF's all-business approach, unsullied by the vagaries of Lebanese politics, encourages the Americans to be as even-handed as possible.

Again, the case for a timely and assertive amendment of Lebanon's maritime submission seems airtight, but only if the issue can be inoculated against Lebanon's dysfunctional politics.

Given the history of Lebanese politics, it is natural that even good-faith actors want to ensure they have sufficient political cover before making any important move. While this is certainly a step of consequence, however, its merits are so obvious that it should require only a bureaucratic and/or legal decision by the appropriate people at the Foreign Ministry. The fact that it requires higher authorization should not be an excuse for yet another chicken-and-egg standoff along the lines of those that have alienated, frustrated, impoverished, and quite literally killed hundreds of thousands of Lebanese over the past half-century.

Rather, it should spur officials to get creative about how to make progress today without hanging people out to dry tomorrow. There are ways to compromise on procedure without sacrificing accountability, integrity, or transparency, and the stakes are so high that finding such a formula will be worth whatever effort it requires. And for once, the people of Lebanon might be able to believe their leaders are acting for purely national reasons, not personal ones.

Roudi Baroudi has more than 40 years of experience in the energy business and has helped design policy for major international oil companies, sovereign governments, and multilateral institutions. He currently serves as CEO of Energy and Environment Holding, an independent consultancy based in Doha, Qatar. ■



By **George Prevelakis**

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A new role for the O.E.C.D.

The O.E.C.D. will also be asked - once more- to play an important geopolitical role

The tenure of the Secretary-General of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (O.E.C.D.) expires on May 31st. After fifteen years of leading the Organization, Angel Gurría is now leaving, after having substantially transformed -and upgraded- its role.

This change of leadership at the O.E.C.D. comes at a time of far-reaching transformations, which have been accelerated by the current pandemic. As in the past, the O.E.C.D. will thus have to change in order to adapt to a new world. This will be the mission of the new General Secretary, Australian Mathias Cormann, who will assume the leadership of the O.E.C.D. on June 1st. In order to understand what is at stake, a historical background is necessary.

Sixty years ago, the O.E.C.D. succeeded the Organization for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC), which was in charge of the management of the Marshall Plan. The Marshall Plan was meant to financially shield Western European countries, Greece, and Turkey, so that their societies would resist communist propaganda. When the Plan was completed, the OEEC was not dismantled. At that time, the Soviet threat had diminished in Europe but had made advances throughout the world, taking advantage of the anti-colonial movements. Thus, the OEEC was transformed into the OECD. The introduction of the term "Development" and the deletion of the term "European" signaled the new global orientation of the Organization. The development of technocratic capabilities in the sphere of the economy gave it legitimacy and rendered its geopolitical function more discreet.

When Angel Gurría assumed its leadership, the international environment had changed once more. The progress of European integration and the increasing technocratic capacities of the European Commission had reduced the relevance of the O.E.C.D. in what had been its traditional focus – the Europe economy. Moreover, the end of the Cold War and the now undisputed American hegemony had made its geopolitical function less important. Last, the rise of globalization was gradually reducing the role of states in managing the economy – which was the main focus of the O.E.C.D.'s expertise.

Angel Gurría therefore assumed the leadership of an organization, the role of which was becoming marginalized. Significant changes were thus necessary in order to maintain and increase its international presence. Gurría succeeded in this, by opening the O.E.C.D. to new challenges. He quickly realized

the growing importance of the Environment; he mobilized the Organization in order to support countries affected by economic crises, such as Greece. He opened it to new questions, such as the opportunities and challenges of digital transformation. He promoted the unification of the world, while at the same time seeking ways to regulate globalization - thus paving the ground for decisions related to the fight against tax evasion and the establishment of the information exchange system.

This work will undoubtedly continue, despite recent concerns around renewed protectionist tendencies. However, the O.E.C.D. will also be asked - once more- to play an important geopolitical role. The rise of China is a concern for the United States and the new administration in Washington does not hide its intention to create a broad coalition to address Chinese pressure. Europe understands the need to address this challenge; it is not, however, enthusiastic about the establishment of a quasi-Cold War logic.

The OECD brings together a large number of EU states, as well as countries like Japan, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand, and Canada. With 38 member states, it represents, to a large extent, a part of the world which may feel threatened by China. It is, in this respect, the ideal forum for elaborating a collective approach towards China, which will be more or less conflicting vs. cooperative towards it. Many questions, which will be crucial for the geopolitical and geo-economic restructuring of the world, will be discussed in the coming years within the OECD.

The expected renewal of the O.E.C.D.'s geopolitical role explains, to a large extent, the international interest in the election of a new Secretary General. Greece took part in the international competition with success, thanks to the charismatic candidacy of Anna Diamantopoulou, who came third among ten candidates - thereby showing Greece's ambition to play a role in the international arena. At the same time, Greece recently sought – and achieved- the election of Kyriakos Pierrakakis as president of the O.E.C.D.'s Global Strategy Group, an institution that brings together Deputy Ministers and Secretaries-General each year to discuss O.E.C.D.'s strategic orientations.

Following the example of Eleftherios Venizelos, Greece claims a role in the shaping of our world. During the campaign for the election of the new Secretary General, the Greek Prime Minister pointed out that one of the four experts who, sixty years ago, were called upon to determine the O.E.C.D. rules was Greek economist Xenophon Zolotas. The current Greek government sees itself as the follower of this tradition: it is investing efforts and energy in what it sees as an enhanced role for the O.E.C.D. in a transitional period for Humanity. From a recipient of suggestions and advice, Greece aims to play a leadership role in ideas and innovations. ■

Our ancestors imported from Greece knowledge and wisdom for centuries

The Ambassador of Georgia in Greece Mr. **David Dondua** speaks exclusively to GR Diplomatic Review regarding the relations of the two countries that go as deep in time as History



Georgia and Greece: Millennials-long friendship On May 26 Georgia marks 30th anniversary of its independence

the Iberian and Tornike Eristavi founded Monastery of Ivron that housed more than 300 Georgian clergy and priests. Ivron Monastery served as Georgian cradle of knowledge and a bridge between Georgian and Greek spiritual cultures.

Since the establishment of ancient Greek colonies, the Greek element always existed in our country. Therefore, social, political, economic and cultural life in Georgia over the past millennia is unimaginable without ethnic Greeks. Greek influence is evident in every sphere, be it social life, education, architecture or any other field of art.

The utmost reverence of the Georgian nation toward Greece, its culture and people is vividly attested by the fact the Georgian word for “Greek” – “berdzeni” – means “wise” or “wisdom.” This name is a tribute to the notion that philosophy originated in Greece. But along with a fondness for philosophy, we Georgians also embraced the biggest gift this country bequeathed to humanity – democracy.

The international name of my country – Georgia, also comes from Greeks. When ancient Greek adventurers sailed to the east shores of the Black Sea they found society there that has profoundly excelled in agriculture. And they used name Georgia – as tillers of land, agriculturalist.

Through centuries many Pontic Greeks found refuge in Georgia. In our country they have established one of the most vibrant and creative Greek diasporas. And by the end of WWI their number accounted 100,000 dispersed in different provinces of Georgia. Later, many of them have been repatriated by the Hellenic government to their historic homeland. Yet, in the last three decades many Georgians have settled in Greece. Today in Greece we have one of the biggest diasporas. As an ambassador of Georgia, I want to express my sincere appreciation to Greek people for their famous

philoxenia, for so warmly embracing and adopting my compatriots.

Over the centuries, our countries have gone through many historical times. There were periods when we fought shoulder to shoulder against common enemies; sometimes we have walked our ways separately or against each other.

However, today our relationship is a perfect example of how modern European democracies should cooperate. Greece was one

On behalf of the editorial board of our magazine, I congratulate all Georgia on this significant Day. We wish our Georgian friends, who reside in Georgia, Greece and all over the world, to live in strong, independent, and prosperous state.

This spring Greece and Georgia have celebrated independence anniversaries - bicentennial of Greek revolution that led to creation of modern Greek state and 30 years of restoration of Georgia’s independence from the Soviet Union.

Georgian-Greek ties go back to millennia. The phenomenon of Greek settlements on the eastern shores of the Black Sea (Evxinos Pontos) begins from XVIII and XVII centuries B.C. Archeologic discoveries made in Georgia, together with the Greek written sources, confirm close ties between Georgian and general Hellenistic civilization.

There is more influence of Greco-Roman culture after the adoption of Christianity by Georgian kingdom. Christian Georgia, squeezed between empires and big powers, chose political unity with the Byzantine Empire, as the most progressive and close to its values and mentality. On Mount Athos Georgian monks John

“ By the fact the Georgian word for “Greek” – “berdzeni” – means “wise” or “wisdom” **”**



of the first European states to establish diplomatic relations with the new Georgian state and opened its embassy in Tbilisi. Likewise, one of our first diplomatic representations we have established in Athens. Today, besides embassy, Georgian General Consulate operates in Thessaloniki, covering northern regions of Greece.

Greece is a staunch supporter of our European and Euro-Atlantic aspirations. Our two countries actively cooperate in multiple directions, be it political, economic, cultural, humanitarian or other.

We spare no effort to further deepen existing ties and at the same time explore new avenues of cooperation. The Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement with the EU, besides other benefits, has opened the Greek market for Georgian products and we are helping our entrepreneurs to make the full use of it. We are also working with Greek companies that are interested in starting business in Georgia.

We are keen to share Greek experience and know-how in the areas where this country has profoundly excelled - sustainable development, renewable energy, green economy, tourism, agriculture, etc.

On our side, I hope we can attract Greek visitors with our alpine ski resorts, monasteries and holy sites, wine tours, agrotourism, culinary diversity and other interesting destinations.

For centuries, our ancestors were exporting knowledge and wisdom from Greece. I am pleased to see that that many of our young people are still studying in Greek universities. However, I think more can be done in this direction. Therefore we are trying to connect Georgian and Greek universities, so that even more Georgian students can get an education where the cradle of European civilization and democracy is laid.

Finally, let me wish that tremendous effort of our governments to tackle down the pandemic, mass vaccination that is underway in our countries will bring its desirable results and gradually we'll open our borders for tourists and visitors. It will allow more people to people contacts, students and academic exchanges, frequent high level meetings. that will further advance our bilateral relationship.

Using this opportunity, I am once again congratulating Greek people and everyone who loves this wonderful country with 200 years of Independence! ■

Areas to Improve

Defense and deterrence work together, not separately



By Dimitrios Tsailas

Rear Admiral has taught for many years, operational planning, strategy, and security, to senior officers at the Supreme Joint War College. He is a member and researcher of the Institute for National and International Security

The most substantial war theorist of the 20th century, **Thomas Schelling**, cites: "Coercion is an operation of the war." Taking this in mind, how likely are we, to be destroyed by the dominant mentality of appeasement of our adversary, when in our geopolitical region everyone else is revisionist and realistic, and all they can understand is powerful and credible deterrence?

Because this question is rhetorical, we will try to give details of deterrence on our part.

As long as the Turks threaten, we need calmness and determination to prepare the defense structures for any developments. In the light of the evolving Turkish threat, decision-makers should periodically reassess the strategy for dealing with it, with consideration given to the following options:

1. Maintaining the current strategy, which is three-pronged: delaying and disrupting the pace of the enemy's buildup by military means (the campaign between the wars) and political means; building deterrence by developing lethal military power, and developing defensive capabilities.

2. Launching a limited military operation to diminish the threat, taking a chance that the situation will deteriorate into a broader war.

3. Initiating a wide-scale war that could devolve into the worst-case scenario, as described above. In any event, the political echelon should be primed to instruct the defense establishment to prepare for war, which could erupt without Greece choosing it or wanting it -in scenarios of deterioration or an initiative by the enemy.

Greek Deterrent Power

Assessing military options in the face of the Turkish threat, in order to prevent war, we formulate a strategy for entering the war by preparing an exit strategy and establishing stabilization mechanisms and decision-making readiness during the war.

In Greece, we have shown that we are too slow in the decision-making process and hard to move in response to modern war, mainly because of the weak institutional framework. The conduct of the war is expected to take place in a lightning way, using new technologies, in an operations theatre to be developed simultaneously in the air, sea, ground, cyberspace, and space, utilizing information and counter-information.

Our opponents, Turks, because they understand this, they have built a lightning war machine capable to take advantage of the slowness of our forces and military mobility. But the hot question remains whether Greece could fight in a short war (lightning-war) if it had the warning or would engage in a long war if the chance is given.

Deterrence in Greece suffers mainly for two reasons: the lack of political will and the reduction of strategic culture, which means the willingness of citizens to make sacrifices in order to defend our national and sovereign interests. Because of the latter, the former needs more than ever. The attitude of deterrence, in public debate, in our country lacks both substance and conviction. The first of these is due to the disadvantaged levels of defense spending over the past decade. This can be corrected by an increase in defense budgets. The second is more serious and more structural.

Deterrence at best is too often seen as an unwelcome reminder of the conflict of evil-implicit nationalism and the public's services potential for free. Deterrence suffers from a crisis of skepticism, at best. This means that the deterrence applied by our armed forces is now based on the self-deterrence and professionalism of its officers. Furthermore, there are concerns caused by the indifference of NATO and European Union allies to guaranteeing mutual defense. The principle of the three bodyguards set out in Article 5 - one for all, and all for one - remains unreliable, at least as far as Greek-Turkish is concerned.

It is necessary to improve our response time and focus on a range of threats, from instability in the Mediterranean to the security of the Aegean, cyberspace, and information, as well as the basic task of our territorial defence. A possible crisis leading to war would leave the southeastern wing of the ally, potentially more exposed to Turkish coercion efforts. However, a strengthened presence of allies in the Mediterranean does not mean that

“ *The deterrence applied by our armed forces is now based on the self-deterrence and professionalism of its officers* ”

it will support Greek positions, but it will certainly support the internationalization of any conflict. So it is estimated that Turkey can never safely calculate that Western powers would not use hard power in response to its attack. This is probably enough to deter any sensible leader in Turkey.

It is also crucial for Greece to demonstrate a revitalized and fully integrated deterrence posture in order to convincingly explain to the public that deterrent power is the main purpose of the promised defense armor. A refreshed attitude of deterrence should not be seen as another "compensation" strategy, which would compensate for some defensive or political inadequacy. Defense and deterrence work together, not separately. On the contrary, deterrence must be the focus of a 'reset' strategy, a concerted effort to rediscover the fundamental objective of deterrence, which is to maintain stability, even in a contradictory environment.

Deterrence must be real, strong, and functioning. Deterrence is about both abilities and intent. In Greece, there are weak points on both these issues. The lack of a stable Greek response to Turkey's non-compliance with international law is not coincidental for a region that is an important geopolitical area of Europe, NATO, and important states. Lately, there has been a conscious awakening because the international environment is now in an increasingly dangerous situation.

In conclusion to this brief analysis, I believe that the following areas still need improvement:

- (1) **Military mobility** to ensure that the main forces can move rapidly or faster than Turkish forces, demonstrating that this is necessary for deterrence.
- (2) **Anti-air and anti-missile defense**, with specialized undertakings during deployment in the field of objective purpose.
- (3) **Maintaining high levels** of readiness and morale of all troops at our armed forces.
- (4) **Immediate upgrading** and improvement of the cyber protection at seaports, transport networks, and political networks.
- (5) **A more flexible** approach to our shipbuilding capacity, which encourages other nations to invest in our capabilities.
- (6) **Adapting us to a kind** of lightning war will enhance our deterrent value by accelerating the response speed of our forces and enhancing our harmful capability. ■

Tourism is Greece's Soft Power

By Ioanna Dretta
CEO Marketing Greece

If asked, "What is Greek tourism?", most people will spontaneously recall memories of beaches, warm sun and the feeling of relaxation and freedom that you experience in Greece. Completely logically, they connect the country with summer.

But Greek tourism is so much more than this classic image.

It is one of the country's soft powers as it disseminates the values, the uniqueness and the experience of living in Greece. It produces a reputation, builds an image and ultimately makes a significant and ongoing contribution to our country's brand.

In the last decade, 245 million people from almost all corners of the world have visited Greece. They lived our way of life, were exposed to our culture, they visited archaeological sites and monuments of world importance and they tasted our cuisine. When they leave the country, they automatically form a huge group of ambassadors who share their experiences of our country and function as an important channel of communication with the international community.

Today, these 245 million people have ranked Greece 5th in the world of international tourism. This has been achieved both through the actual product offered by Greek tourism and through the country's comparative advantage which is the contact that visitors enjoy with those who live in Greece (1).

So Greek tourism is not a superficial



concept, a simple product. It is a concept that places people themselves at the centre of the experience as, in addition to the visitors, it is also of relevance to a very large and wide group of people who invest in,

“ In the last decade, 245 million people from almost all corners of the world have visited Greece. They lived our way of life, were exposed to our culture, they visited archaeological sites and monuments of world importance and they tasted our cuisine ”

develop and are employed in Greek tourism. At a fundamental level, it is governed by the values and principles of Greek culture. It naturally emphasises the positive elements. It highlights the uniqueness of the country at all levels, and ultimately it gathers together all those elements that give it the strength and ability to contribute to shaping the country's image at a global level, and to also be an important vehicle

to promote and showcase Greece in the international arena.

However, in the near future as formed by the pandemic, Greek tourism is being called on to redefine its own existence, to place itself in a new reality with new circumstances, and to redesign its future.

A survey conducted by the members of the Greek Tourism Confederation (SETE) showed a strong need for coordinated promotion to highlight culture, to promote Greek cuisine which reflects the actual philosophy of life embraced by Greeks and to showcase the experiences that Greece offers (2).

This is a multilevel process which gives rise to an important opportunity for Greece.

The opportunity to build its image on new foundations and to promote the country's modern characteristics. Those of a country that understands what people are going through and is sending a message of empathy to the whole world, a country that listens to the deepest human needs and responds to them through sustainable development, a country that combines its strengths and can once again be an example through its dynamism, as it was of old, a country which displays quick reflexes and approaches this new reality through modern processes such as digital transformation, and a country which remains outward-looking and responds to global demands.

With knowledge, courage, self-confidence and an outward-looking mindset, and by putting its valuable experience of the past to good use and responding to the requirements of today, Greek tourism has the power to further strengthen the "brand Greece".

1. Evaluation of the brand "Greece" and comparison with the competition in Southern Europe based on the experience of tourists, INSETE, March 2019

2. Results of MRB research MRB "Η προβολή της Ελλάδας την επόμενη μέρα" (The promotion of Greece in the near future"), Greek Tourism Confederation (SETE) & MARKETING GREECE, December 2020. ■



The Security challenges created with covid-19 and the underlying importance of a Security Consultant



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Entering 2021 has been a new step forward in fighting this coronavirus that has sprung to all nations, causing economical crashes, social disruption, and breaking normalities in our lives. Vaccination campaigns have restored pieces of the defensive mechanisms within our societies however the security shield will take time to be completely restored.

This new security era we have entered has made security counter measures worldwide adapt to this new challenge our world is facing. As soldiers in wars study who their fighting against, learning their opponents' behaviours and styles, as such the learning process to understand this new challenge is underway, placing businesses and their facilities in a slippery slope.

Facilities face all sort of hazards, anthropogenic and non-anthropogenic which can have a detrimental effect on their functionality. It is vital therefore, for all type of facilities to be up to date with new types of threats that would disrupt their operational functions, leading to life endangerment, financial losses, infrastructure damages, ultimately impairing corporate reputation.

Protection of facilities requires professional expertise to be up to date with current legislation, technological advancements, criminal behaviours in addition to possible emergency situations such as natural disasters and public health emergencies. That is the Security consultant's responsibility within a facility. The requirements of such a professional are demanding and variable. A solid educational background in Law Enforcement or Security studies is necessary, in addition to a notable working experience. Consequently, bridging the gap of theory and practise, giving the professional the ability to fully com-

prehend and manage the required security processes, adjusting to the employer's goals and the facility's needs, minimizing as a result exposure for all kind of threats.

The coronavirus has caused major disruption to all businesses, however coping mechanisms should be adhered based on factual data analysed by professionals to avoid mishandling situations which could possibly lead to unwanted legal sanctions against a business. Data Protection laws in addition have made it challenging to install new security surveillance equipment as a full review of all data collection and storage needs to take place. The complexity in security solutions and methods is apparent and the need of a security consultant is evident to avoid errors, sanctions, disruption, and any type of undesirable situation that could impair an institution or its workers.

Recent criminal activities have produced multiple gaps in business facilities, individuals' properties among other infrastructures. Business facilities with budget cuts and less personnel are faced with a potential difficult dilemma over cost control, consequently ignoring certain security gaps at their sites, leaving their businesses exposed to criminals.

That is the role of a Security Consultant, guiding and consulting the Manager/Owner, conducting a site security assessment, reviewing all risks, security vulnerabilities and suggesting the implementation of appropriate counter measures to minimize risk exposures. Through a thorough and well-planned study, a security consultant can customize a plan, based on the essential needs a facility or site requires, always in accordance with contemporary legal requirements. This ensures the protection of facilities including personnel and guests, minimizing any type of disruption, and most notably setting up the appropriate mechanisms to adequately handle any kind of potential volatile situation.

As a Security Consultant and Risk Advisor I conduct security site assessments for the implementation of suitable security and emergency response plans to prevent those risks a facility, house or any type of infrastructure faces against. From gathering information about crime statistics within the area, past criminal acts against the infrastructure, in depth interviews with personnel, to comprehensive risk and vulnerability assessments which will determine the level of security needed along with suitable counter measures to accomplish that. Security is and will emerge further as the top priority of everyone's lives. All people, irrespectively, must feel secure within their workplace, house or wherever they are stationed at any moment. This is what I can guarantee to everyone who needs professional guidance in security related matters. ■



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