



**PROTOCOL
OF THE SECOND SESSION
OF THE MALTESE-TURKISH JOINT ECONOMIC AND TRADE
COMMISSION (JETCO)**

3 February 2023

Istanbul

The Second Session of the Joint Economic and Trade Commission (hereinafter referred as the JETCO) between the Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs and Trade of the Republic of Malta and the Ministry of Trade of the Republic of Türkiye was held in Istanbul on February 3, 2023.

The Maltese Delegation was headed by H.E. Ian BORG, Minister for Foreign and European Affairs and Trade and the Turkish Delegation was headed by H.E. Mehmet MUŞ, Minister of Trade of the Republic of Türkiye.

During the meeting, various issues of mutual interest were discussed, and the results of these deliberations are summarized as follows:

I. TRADE RELATIONS

Bilateral Trade

Both Sides reviewed the development of bilateral trade between the two countries and agreed that the volume of bilateral trade did not reflect the economic potential and the goodwill of cooperation between both countries. In this regard, Both Sides reiterated their will for further increasing their bilateral trade, in a balanced way.

Both Sides discussed mechanisms for boosting economic activities disrupted by COVID-19 pandemic in their respective countries, as well as the effect of the pandemic has had on the bilateral economic relationship between the two countries.

Both Sides underlined the negative impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic and the repercussions from the war in Ukraine on the bilateral economic and commercial relations between Malta and Türkiye. In this context, Both Sides expressed their common desire to seek opportunities to strengthen and diversify their bilateral economic and commercial relations in various areas.

Trade Promotion Activities and Investments

Both Sides underlined the importance of supporting cooperation among their private sectors and vitalizing promotion activities towards enhancing bilateral economic and commercial relations between the two countries.

Both Sides appreciated the contribution of Maltese-Turkish Business Summit and B2B meetings held simultaneously with the official visit of H.E. Marie-Louise COLEIRO PRECA, President of Malta, to Türkiye on January 23-24, 2019, and reaffirmed that such events undoubtedly pave the way for further development of bilateral commercial and economic cooperation.

Both Sides also look forward to the organisation of a Maltese-Turkish Business Forum/Roundtable as a follow-up to the Second Session of the JETCO through the participation of private sector representatives of both countries, as well.

In this context, Both Sides underlined the importance of the cooperative approach of Institutions such as Trade Malta and Foreign Economic Relations Board of Türkiye (DEİK) in promoting bilateral trade and investment relations between the two countries.

Both Sides, in line with this, also expressed their willingness to launch common initiatives, encourage the participation of their private sectors to fairs and exhibitions to be organized in their respective countries and arrange visits of business delegations in potential sectors with a view to achieving higher level of bilateral trade and investments.

Both Sides also underlined the importance of increasing mutual investments between Malta and Türkiye. Both Sides agreed to encourage the cooperation between relevant Maltese and Turkish business circles in order to identify specific joint commercial and investment opportunities in their respective countries.

Cooperation in Third Countries

Both Sides, underlining the significance of investments, joint projects, and joint ventures towards the development of bilateral economic and commercial relations, as well as emphasizing the importance of foreign investments, agreed to encourage further cooperation between Maltese and Turkish businesses through identifying specific joint commercial and investment opportunities in third markets.

Contracting and Technical Consultancy Services

Both Sides noted the possibility of improving the existing cooperation in the field of contracting and consultancy services.

II- EU RELATED ISSUES

Visa Issues

Both Sides emphasized the importance of handling the visa procedures in a transparent way in accordance with relevant rules and regulations.

The Turkish Side emphasized the positive economic outcomes that would be brought by the removal of visa requirements for Turkish citizens by the EU and asked for the cooperation of the Maltese Side on this issue. While acknowledging the benefits of such an outcome, the Maltese Side underlined the importance of alignment with EU visa policy and that the relevant technical criteria would have to be met.

Modernization of the Customs Union

Both Sides underlined that Türkiye and the EU could benefit substantially in economic terms from the modernization of the Customs Union. Both Sides stressed the importance of adequately addressing the priorities of both Parties within this process.

Both Sides, accepting the existing Customs Union as a good basis, agreed to make every efforts to improve the trade and economic relationship between the EU and Türkiye.

III- ECONOMIC AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION

Both Sides agreed that particular attention will be paid to the following fields: Investment, Small and Medium Sized Enterprises, Energy, Technology, Science, Tourism and Hospitality, Film, Culture, Education, Standardisation, Accreditation, Agriculture, Maritime, Infrastructure Development, and Industry to improve economic and technical cooperation between two countries.

Both Sides, stressing the importance of economic cooperation between the two countries, agreed to further encourage their respective organizations to enhance cooperation in the following fields:

Investment

Both Sides highlighted the importance of further developing and broadening cooperation between both countries in the field of investments and invited each other to invest more in potential sectors in their respective countries, particularly High Value-Added Manufacturing, including Pharmaceuticals, ICT, and Research and Development.

Both Sides also recognized that it would be mutually beneficial to promote technical exploration visits in order to improve bilateral investment relations between their respective countries.

Cooperation on Small and Medium Scaled Enterprises (SMEs)

Both Sides agreed to cooperate towards strengthening relationships and capacity building of SMEs through joint activities. In this respect, the Malta Chamber of SMEs and the Small and Medium Enterprises Development and Support Administration of Türkiye (KOSGEB) voiced their readiness to cooperate on areas of mutual commercial interest, including but not limited to the sharing of knowledge and experience on SMEs support models and the importation and exportation of raw materials and manufactured goods.

Energy

Both Sides have expressed their willingness to cooperate in areas such as infrastructure, supply chain and financing related to the promotion of alternative fuels such as LNG and hydrogen and the development of these fuels to ensure the compliance of the Mediterranean Region with the IMO (International Maritime Organization) 2020 regulation in terms of marine fuels and to facilitate the access of ships to alternative fuels.

Technology

Both Sides agreed to enhance cooperation and strengthen their relationship in the field of technology through joint initiatives.

To this end, the Maltese Side stated that Tech.mt is ready to establish contacts with businesses and academic institutions specialising in Türkiye's technology sector in order to explore avenues for cooperation. More specifically, Tech.mt is willing to cooperate with its Turkish counterparts to:

- Create and attract investment opportunities for tech start-ups and businesses;
- Assist it in the exportation of technological solutions being developed in Malta;
- Expand support for joint research and development in the digital sphere;
- Identify and participate in tech events, conferences, and summits.

The Turkish Side suggested enhancing R&D collaboration on chemistry, pharmaceuticals and medical devices, watercraft, aviation and space, information and communication Technologies.

Science

Both Sides welcomed the signing of Science, Technology and Innovation Cooperation Protocol in May 2020 between Malta Council for Science and Technology (MCST) and

Scientific and Technological Research Council of Türkiye (TÜBİTAK) to support joint research, R&D and innovation projects of Turkish and Maltese researchers.

Both Sides welcomed the joint projects supported as a result of the first joint call opened by MCST and TÜBİTAK in 2021, and a third project that was selected for award as a result of the second joint call in 2022. Both Sides stated their satisfaction with the third joint call planned to be opened in 2023 within the framework of PRIMA Section 3.

Tourism and Hospitality

Both Sides stated their readiness to enhance technical cooperation between the national tourism authorities of both countries cooperation in order to create mechanisms aimed at increasing the two-way flow of between the two countries, including through the promotion of twin destination marketing, and the promotion of Malta and Türkiye in long haul markets.

Furthermore, in view of the importance of the Hospitality sector in both countries, the Maltese Side expressed its willingness to launch a joint task force aimed at addressing hospitality and tourism education and training mobility, between the two countries.

Film

Both Sides agreed to explore possible cooperation in the Film Industry, including through co-productions, the translation and subtitling or dubbing of national works, film festivals, film markets, training, conferences, and networking. Furthermore, Both Sides agreed to enhance the cooperation in the promotion of the local film industry firms in their respective local markets.

Culture

Both Sides agreed to make efforts to improve cooperation in order to prevent and prohibit the illicit import, export, transit and transfer of ownership of the cultural property, including return and restitution of cultural property that are illegally removed from their country of origin.

Both Sides expressed their willingness to continue bilateral negotiations on the “Memorandum of Understanding on Cultural Cooperation”.

Education

Both Sides agreed to further enhance cooperation in the field of Education. In this regard, the Turkish Side underlined the importance of finalizing the negotiations of the agreement on cooperation in the field of education at the earliest convenience. The

Maltese Side expressed the readiness of the University of Malta to explore ventures with recognised Türkiye partners. The Maltese Side noted that opportunities for collaboration exist particularly in the Pharmaceutical, Nursing, and Language courses.

Standardization

Both Sides agreed to support each other at international and regional platforms such as International Organization for Standardization (ISO), International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC), European Committee for Standardization (CEN) and European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization (CENELEC).

The Turkish Side, within this context, expressed its readiness on initiating cooperation with Malta Competition and Consumer Affairs Authority (MCCAA) in the fields of standardization and conformity assessment.

Accreditation

Both Sides agreed to explore possible cooperation areas in accreditation, to develop a technical cooperation framework regarding these areas, and to cooperate in developing expertise and knowledge sharing on accreditation related issues.

The Turkish Side expressed its willingness to share experience and information with Malta in the field of halal accreditation and halal quality infrastructure.

Agriculture

Both Sides specified the following areas of common interest for further cooperation where applicable:

- Scientific and technical cooperation between the two countries' research institutes on vegetable, fruit, viticulture, organic agriculture, soil and water resources, plant health, animal husbandry, and aquatic products;
- Participation in international fairs to be organised in their respective countries.

Maritime

Both Sides, stating with content that the Maltese-Turkish Joint Maritime Committee held its first meeting on 30 March 2016 in Ankara, agreed to encourage their related authorities towards furthering collaboration within the framework of the existing "Agreement on Mutual Cooperation" between the two countries. Furthermore, Both Sides agreed to explore potential cooperation in the blue economy in general.

Infrastructure Development

The two Sides agreed to support their related authorities in cooperating on the following areas:

- Spatial planning at a Strategic Level;
- Urban development policies for sustainable cities;
- Environmental management;
- Rural area planning, urban renewal projects and risk management issues;
- Projects related to infrastructural development.

The Turkish Side also expressed its readiness to cooperate with Malta for sharing knowledge and experience in the fields of land registry and cadastral modernization.

Industrial Zones

The Turkish Side expressed their willingness to exchange knowledge and experience on Organized Industrial Zones and Industrial Zones between Malta and Türkiye.

Shipbuilding Industry

Both Sides underlined the cooperation opportunities in the field of shipbuilding and announced their readiness to support collaboration in modernisation and construction of shipyards in Türkiye and Malta as well as shipbuilding, ship repair and maintenance.

IV. THE NEXT SESSION OF THE JETCO

Both Sides agreed to hold the Third Session of the JETCO in Malta on a date to be mutually determined through diplomatic channels.

Done on 3 February 2023 in Istanbul in two (2) original copies in the English language, both texts being equally authentic.



Ian BORG

**Minister for Foreign and
European Affairs and Trade
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Mehmet MUŞ

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