



GREEK TURKISH FORUM (GTF) STATEMENT

Greek-Turkish Relations: Consolidating a Resilient Positive Agenda

November 1, 2023

The Greek Turkish Forum members, having met in Athens on 30-31 October 2023 to discuss recent developments in Greek-Turkish relations, agreed that there emerged a window of opportunity to improve the atmosphere between the two countries and to make a conscious effort to enhance trust.

Safeguarding a good climate in relations and defusing factors that increase tension is crucial for securing peace and stability between Greece and Türkiye. In this respect, the upcoming High-Level Cooperation Council meeting under President Tayyip Erdoğan and Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis in Thessaloniki on December 7, 2023, can be instrumental in making progress in this direction.

As stated by Greek and Turkish officials, a prerequisite for a long-standing improvement in bilateral relations is the establishment of a climate of trust. The GTF, in previous statements, has observed that this can be built by a) establishing reliable lines of communication at various levels between decision-makers and officials of the two countries, b) avoiding destabilizing acts and inflammatory rhetoric, c) encouraging the communication and cooperation between relevant civil society actors. In this context, GTF noted with satisfaction the reactivation of all the communication channels between the two countries.

To support and add to the “positive agenda” in the framework of the further improvement of bilateral relations between Greece and Türkiye ahead of the upcoming High-Level Cooperation Council meeting, the GTF had decided to contribute to the process by preparing a set of suggestions on the “Positive Agenda” and delivered them to foreign ministries of both countries.

Since its inception, the GTF has been dedicated to facilitating the search for constructive approaches and solutions in the relations between Türkiye and Greece. It has maintained that a process of broader cooperation would be conducive to better understanding and would build the confidence needed to address the solution of outstanding political issues in due course.

Hence, welcoming the current positive effort undertaken by the two governments, we suggest first focusing on the non-political bilateral issues to start rebuilding trust between the two governments and acclimatizing the two societies for further progress.

We believe the two societies will benefit on all levels to move from a ‘rapprochement’ approach to a ‘mutual and beneficial collaboration’ context. As the GTF, we are ready to support this process in the coming months and years.

The GTF Members