



**Trilateral Meeting of Committees in charge of foreign affairs in the
Parliaments of Cyprus, Greece and Israel,
Nicosia, 3rd of March 2016**

Joint Declaration

The Chairpersons and Members of the Committees in charge of foreign affairs in the Parliaments of Cyprus, Greece and Israel;

Having gathered on this day in Nicosia, in their first meeting, on the invitation of the Chairman of the Foreign and European Affairs Committee of the Cyprus House of Representatives;

Valuing their historical ties linking them since ancient times, through the Mediterranean, as their shared and common sea, which has been the cradle of civilizations and a place of exchanges for centuries;

Stressing that the region of the Eastern Mediterranean is going through alarming and threatening developments, which necessitate the urgent diffusion of tension;

Highlighting the need for joint efforts to tackle threats such as terrorism and the challenges posed by the humanitarian crisis caused by conflicts and instability;

Acknowledging that regional cooperation is an important tool which could contribute to safeguarding peace, stability and prosperity in the Middle East, the Mediterranean and beyond;

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Welcoming the establishment of the trilateral partnership between the governments of Cyprus, Greece and Israel, which will result in joint action towards promoting peace, stability, security and prosperity in the Mediterranean region;

Acknowledging that regional problems should be solved with peaceful means, based on the UN Charter and universally recognized norms and principles of international law and with full respect to human rights;

Expressing their full and unwavering support to the ongoing negotiation process, under the United Nations Good Office Mission, for a just, comprehensive and viable settlement of the Cyprus problem, based on international law and the relevant UN Security Council Resolutions. Such a solution, which will reunify the island, based on the respect of democratic principles, human rights and fundamental freedoms of all Cypriots, would not only benefit the people of Cyprus in its entirety, but also significantly contribute to the peace and stability of the region, through Cyprus' independent foreign policy;

Emphasizing the importance of closer political cooperation and coordination between Cyprus, Greece and Israel, to the benefit of the countries' people and of the turbulent region in general, where peace, stability and security must be safeguarded; Inviting third parties to join our efforts in regional cooperation, efforts which are not directed against any third party;

Considering the grave threats that wars create to the geopolitical stability of the Eastern Mediterranean;

Considering the unprecedented refugee flows into Europe as a result of wars, conflict and terrorism in the Eastern Mediterranean region;

Considering that the discovery of important hydrocarbon resources in the Eastern Mediterranean could serve as a catalyst for peace, stability and cooperation in the region;

Underlining the important contribution that the trilateral cooperation could make to relations with the European Union and to the energy security of the Union;

Underlining the importance of the trilateral parliamentary cooperation in promoting policies for environmental protection of the Mediterranean Sea, as well as sustainable development, including the wide use of renewable energy; Acknowledging that the enhanced trilateral relations can also lead to substantially improved exchanges in the field of tourism;

Underlining the legislative and representative role of Parliaments and considering the importance of the trilateral parliamentary partnership, in fostering cooperation in a number of additional sectors;

Sharing the view that common positions should be formed with due respect to each partner state's particularities and national policies;

Having gathered in their first trilateral meeting in Nicosia, on 3rd March 2016, they jointly:

1. Reiterate their wish to increase parliamentary cooperation, exchanges and contacts through bilateral visits and regular trilateral meetings;
2. Resolve, therefore, to establish regular, annual meetings of the Committees in charge of foreign affairs in the Parliaments of Cyprus, Greece and Israel;
3. Agree that matters to be discussed in future meetings include, inter alia, parliamentary cooperation; sharing views on regional issues and matters related to energy; on research and development and technology; cyber security; counter-terrorism; joint emergency response to natural disasters; exchange of information in emergency situations; agriculture; tourism; culture; education and migration.
4. Undertake to explore areas of further cooperation.

5. Call upon the International Community, the United Nations and the European Union to take all measures necessary to pacify the Eastern Mediterranean region, to stop the population flows into Europe and to help financially, politically and physically the states receiving and those along the refugee route.
6. Call upon the States on the refugee route to refrain from unilateral actions that hinder the movement of refugees and increase the intensity and scope of the humanitarian crisis.
7. Decide to meet again when the three Heads of State / Government will meet, before or after their meeting in Israel in the second half of 2016.

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