



IKV MONTHLY

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TURKEY'S EU EXPERT IKV CELEBRATED ITS 50th ANNIVERSARY

IKV's 50th anniversary ceremony was organized on 9 May 2015 in Istanbul with the participation of President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Minister for EU Affairs and Chief Negotiator Volkan Bozkır, TOBB President M. Rifat Hisarcıklıoğlu and Presidents of IKV's Founder Organizations.



At the occasion of IKV's 50th anniversary, a ceremony was hosted on 9 May 2015 by IKV Chairman Ömer Cihad Vardan, with the participation of President

Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Minister for EU Affairs and Chief Negotiator Volkan Bozkır along with TOBB President M. Rifat Hisarcıklıoğlu and Presidents of IKV's Founder

Organizations, ISO Chairman Erdal Bahçivan and ITO Chairman İbrahim Çağlar. The ceremony welcomed around 400 guests, mainly representatives from the

business world.

At the end of the ceremony, IKV Chairman Vardan and TOBB President Hisarcıklıoğlu presented a plaque to President Erdoğan in

memory of IKV's 50th anniversary. President Erdoğan also gave plaquets to former IKV Chairmen Jak Kamhi, Davut Ökütçü, Prof. Halûk Kabaalioğlu and İbrahim Bodur.



2015 which corresponds to the 10th year of Turkey-EU accession negotiations, embodies a special meaning for IKV. IKV is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year, having been founded in 1965 as the main representative of the Turkish business community regarding

EU affairs. The 50th anniversary of IKV is not only a celebration for us but also a golden opportunity to increase the awareness in Turkey regarding the EU and Turkey's recognition in Europe.

Established only two years after the signing of the Ankara

Agreement in 1963 that founded the relations between Turkey and the European Economic Community of the time, IKV as "Turkey's EU Expert" became the symbol of the European perspective of Turkish business community.



PRESIDENT ERDOĞAN: “IKV IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT ACTORS OF TURKEY’S EU JOURNEY”

At the ceremony, President Erdoğan emphasized the importance of choosing this day since it's the 65th anniversary of the Schuman Declaration that laid the foundations of the European Peace Project and 9th May Europe Day. President Erdoğan said that IKV, celebrating its 50th anniversary, is one of the most important actors of Turkey's EU journey. While witnessing every stage in Turkey-EU relations with its crises as well as successes, IKV members helped contribute to overcoming obstacles with its informative activities aiming to raise awareness on this process among Turkish private sector and the public.

President Erdoğan stated that it is a well-known fact today that EU membership process cannot be carried out solely by government bodies and he declared the importance of stakeholders like IKV for all institutions especially for the Ministry of EU Affairs. President Erdoğan said the following: “I believe that this companionship will continue till Turkey's EU membership is achieved. In order to reach our goal, we will sustain this long and difficult struggle with cooperation and willingness”.

“EU MEMBERSHIP IS STRATEGIC FOR TURKEY”

Expressing that IKV is one of the most significant actors of Turkey's EU journey, President Erdoğan said that there has been three important turning points in this journey; the Ankara Agreement in 1963, the establishment of a Customs Union in 1996 and the confirmation of Turkey's candidacy for EU membership at the Helsinki Summit in 1999. Voicing that the accession process has started 10 years ago, President Erdoğan explained that “14 chapters have been opened in the negotiation process that started in 2005. One of them, the 25th chapter entitled Science and Research has been provisionally closed. All other chapters, which should be opened, are blocked due to political reasons. We have been determined to maintain the negotiation process even with its ups and downs in the last 10 years. We, as Turkey, always express that we approach strategically to EU membership. We are sorry to witness that the Union does not adopt a united and consistent attitude while we maintain our determined stance.”

“TURKEY IS A PART OF EUROPE AND ASIA”

Criticizing those, who obstruct the process by stating that “The EU is for the European Continent, Turkey is

in Asia minor, Turkey should continue being a bridge between East and West,” President Erdoğan underscored that Turkey is located in both Europe and Asia and reminded that there are EU members that are not located in Europe.

President Erdoğan also said: “There are chapters in accession negotiations which cannot be opened because of political reasons. Chapter 23 on Judiciary and Fundamental Rights is one of the blocked chapters and all of EU Member States that I visited agree to overcome this blockage. Chapter 24 on Justice, Freedom and Security is regarded as the first chapter to be opened and the last one to be closed.”

“AFTER THE CRISIS IN UKRAINE, IT IS DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND WHY ENERGY CHAPTER IS STILL BLOCKED”

Emphasizing that the blocked chapters are the backbone of the accession process and that they are directly related to the political reform process, President Erdoğan said the following: “The EU's criticism directed at Turkey is mainly related to these chapters. On one hand they criticize Turkey; on the other hand they prevent Turkey's integration to the EU acquis by blocking these chapters. If you care about these chapters so much, open them immediately so that Turkey can realize a transformation in accordance with them. Moreover Chapter 17 on Economic and Monetary Policy, which does not have any opening criteria, cannot be opened to negotiations. We also cannot understand why Chapter 15 on Energy is still blocked, although the negative effects of the Ukrainian crisis underlined the importance of cooperation in the area of energy.”

“IT IS UNACCEPTABLE NOT TO OPEN CHAPTER 31”

President Erdoğan, claimed that in a period of changing regional dynamics it is unacceptable not to open Chapter 31 on Foreign Security and Defence Policy to negotiations. Reminding that almost all of the EU Member States are also NATO members, President Erdoğan said the following: “We're together here; why do you prevent it? We should act together in solidarity. However, they still have difficulty making a decision. Such attitudes make us question whether the sincerity and the approach of the EU towards Turkey are sincere”



“THE EU NEEDS TURKEY NOW MORE THAN EVER”

Expressing that Turkey's EU accession should be viewed differently in the light of the regional and international developments, President Erdoğan emphasized the following: “Turkey and the EU have to act together in the face of the developments in our region from Syria to Ukraine, from the Middle East to North Africa. There is no other way. The EU needs Turkey now more than ever because of the effects of the global financial crisis and the fragility of its internal dynamics. Because Turkey is like a monument of security and peace with its economic performance and political stability despite being located in a turbulent geography where critical developments have taken place.”

“THE EU SHOULD FURTHER IMPROVE ITS RELATIONS WITH TURKEY INSTEAD OF EXCLUDING IT”

Stating that the EU continues to lose blood due to political turbulences and its introverted policies, President Erdoğan explained the following: “The Union needs to adopt a vision that benefits its position as a global power. It needs to conduct the enlargement negotiations in a consistent, principled and fair way. Our goal for a new Turkey is not independent of the EU. We believe that we can achieve our goal for a new Turkey, which means more powerful, prosperous and democratic Turkey, faster through full accession to the EU. We have sustained the relations between Turkey and the EU so far based on

a win-win strategy. We would like to continue with the same understanding. Turkey and the EU share a common ground in a wide array of areas ranging from foreign policy, economic and commercial relations, security and border management to employment and migration policies. The conflicts in our region require the EU to further improve its relations with Turkey instead of excluding it. The security of the EU begins at our Eastern borders, not the Western ones. All members and bodies of the EU should understand this very well. Besides, Turkey is key to not only political but also to the economic stability of the EU”.

“OUR NATION IS DETERMINING OUR EU VISION”

Indicating that it is the nation who determines Turkey's perspective and roadmap in its relations with the EU, President Erdoğan explained that “We should not lose our self-confidence at this point. We have taken all our steps in line with the requests and demands of our nation. Similarly, we have undertaken the reforms based on the consent and approval of our nation. Our subsequent roadmap will certainly be drawn by our nation.” Stating that Turkey wants to move the negotiations process to a different level and pointing out that since 18 September 2014 a new vision has been put forward, President Erdoğan indicated that Turkey's new EU strategy is based on three foundations namely; “determination in the political reform process”, “continuity in socio-economic

transformation” and “effectiveness in communication”.

“WE NEED PUBLIC DIPLOMACY AT AN INTERNATIONAL LEVEL”

Emphasizing that for the current impasse to be resolved to enable progress in the accession process a new vision should be adopted and owned by Turkey's counterparts, President Erdoğan indicated that the relevant ministries as well as civil society organizations such as IKV have an important responsibility in this process.

Highlighting that IKV has been carrying out exemplary activities since 1965, President Erdoğan said: “We have greatly benefited from these activities; today however, this support and these contributions need to be stepped up and pushed forward in a coordinated manner. An ambitious public diplomacy is needed. This should be at the international level, rather than the national level. We should be determined, enthusiastic and complete the process in this way. We need to intensify our efforts within the framework of Turkey's EU vision, ensuring that our European friends approach the issue from a healthier perspective. We cannot let old fears, hesitations, unproductive discussions and political ambitions of a few countries take our relations with the EU hostage.

Lastly, President Erdoğan thanked IKV for their efforts and contributions in Turkey's accession process to the EU and celebrated their 50th anniversary and 9th May Europe Day.

MINISTER FOR EU AFFAIRS BOZKIR: “VISA REQUIREMENTS WILL BE REMOVED WITHIN TWO AND A HALF YEARS”

Minister for EU Affairs and Chief Negotiator Volkan Bozkir gave a speech at IKV's 50th anniversary ceremony. Reminding that in 2003 the European Court of Justice ruled in a decision that the European Parliament's resolution on the 1915 events was not legally binding, Minister Bozkir underlined the following: “If such decisions of disturbing nature for Turkey continue to be issued, this will help neither Turkey-EU relations nor the European Parliament itself”.

“TURKEY'S AIM IS TO INCREASE ITS TRADE VOLUME THROUGH THE CUSTOMS UNION”

Underlining the importance of the Customs Union for Turkey-EU relations, Minister Bozkir mentioned

the decision to update the Customs Union in January 2016 to include agriculture, services and public procurement which would help increase Turkey's trade volume with the EU from 150 billion to 300 billion dollars. Minister Bozkir also explained the following: “In the agreement reached 20 years ago, there are certain factors that might have been omitted or not yet realized. Indeed, in the event of the signature of a trade agreement by the EU with third countries, the agreement is not applied to Turkey automatically. We therefore hope to overcome this problem with the introduction of an article which will also for instance be applied in the case of TTIP which is to be signed between the EU and the USA”.

“VISA REQUIREMENTS TOWARDS TURKISH CITIZENS WILL BE REMOVED WITHIN TWO AND A HALF YEARS”

Minister Bozkir explained the problems encountered in regards to visa requirements applied towards Turkish citizens which, in fact, stem from the 1980 military intervention in Turkey. Underlining Turkey's effort to remove the obstacles on visa-free travel to Turkish citizens, Minister Bozkir mentioned that the process is proceeding within the framework of an agreement. He further stated the following: “Visa requirements towards Turkish citizens will be removed within two and half years. If this does not happen, Turkey will suspend the Readmission Agreement that it has signed with the EU”.



TOBB PRESIDENT HİSARCIKLIOĞLU: “OUR PERSPECTIVE IS BASED UPON A WIN-WIN PERCEPTION”



At IKV's 50th anniversary ceremony, in his speech delivered on behalf of IKV's founders and trustee organizations, TOBB President M. Rifat Hisarcıklioğlu emphasized that as the business world, their perspective on the EU is based upon a win-win perception.

Stressing that democracy and citizens will gain with Turkey's EU

membership, TOBB President explained the following: “The young population and women will gain; employees will gain; craftsmen will gain; farmers will gain. In other words, all segments of the society will gain. Likewise, the EU will also gain. With Turkey's membership, the EU will become economically and politically more powerful and dynamic. In this way, the EU will ensure greater regional and global

stability; world peace will gain”.

Reminding that IKV was established with this vision 50 years ago by the business community, TOBB President Hisarcıklioğlu stated that IKV embraced this vision and contributed to its developments.

“THE EU MEMBERSHIP PROCESS REQUIRES COMPREHENSIVE REFORMS”

In regard to Turkey's EU accession process, TOBB President Hisarcıklioğlu gave this following statement: “The EU membership process requires comprehensive reforms. In the previous period, with the leadership of our President, Turkey has made significant steps in this field. Important reforms have been achieved to enable Turkey in fulfilling the Copenhagen criteria. Reforms were conducted to ensure the rule of law, the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms as well as a functioning market economy”.

“Today, while many EU Member States are unable to comply with the Maastricht criteria, we fulfil these criteria to a large extent as a result of our comprehensive reforms carried out in the economic field. Nevertheless, it is without doubt that still important reforms in economic and political areas

need to be implemented.

It is difficult to conduct reforms since it needs the large support and consensus of the public. In order to ensure this consensus, under the umbrella of IKV, a large number of joint events in Turkey and abroad with the aim of bringing together professional associations from various segments of society, trade union confederations and civil society organisations have been organized. Our President has also attended these events in the past”.

“We will pursue our efforts also in the future. On Thursday, in Brussels, together with the chairman of EUROCHAMBRES, I met with European Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations Johannes Hahn. I explained to him Turkey's expectations in regard to Turkey's EU negotiations process”.

“THE MODERNISATION OF THE CUSTOMS UNION IS ON OUR AGENDA”

TOBB President Hisarcıklioğlu also pointed out that “The modernisation of the Customs Union is on our agenda. Our Prime Minister explained the latest developments in regard to this

issue at the TOBB General Assembly held on 2 May 2015. We are waiting for the negotiations to start in this area in a very short time. I would like to thank our Government for their decisive approach in that respect”.

“AS ALWAYS, WE WILL CONTINUE TO STRIVE FOR TURKEY'S EU MEMBERSHIP”

On the other hand, TOBB President Hisarcıklioğlu pointed out to the importance for Turkey not to be left out of the TTIP negotiations which are being conducted between the EU and the USA. In this respect, TOBB President Hisarcıklioğlu emphasized the following: “We should work together in all of these topics. The new Parliament which will be formed after the general elections should focus on the EU accession process. The necessary reforms should be completed quickly and with the participation and consensus of all parties. We should succeed in this endeavour for ourselves, regardless of the visionless, unjustified and unacceptable attitudes of some leaders of EU Member States. I believe that we will succeed. As always, we will continue to strive for Turkey's EU membership”.

IKV CHAIRMAN ÖMER CİHAD VARDAN: “WE WISH THAT TURKEY HAD ALREADY BECOME AN EU MEMBER ON OUR 50th ANNIVERSARY”

At IKV's 50th anniversary ceremony, IKV Chairman Ömer Cihad Vardan said the following: “Today we came together to celebrate our Foundation's 50th anniversary which was founded in 1965 by ISO and ITO and supported by all of Trustee and Supporter organizations, especially by TOBB.”

“Today we are here to celebrate one of the most deep-rooted and reputable NGOs of Turkey that pursued over the years many functions, i.e. preparing recommendations and opinions, publishing books and magazines as well as informing public opinion through the organization of panels and seminars. On the one hand, we are proud of our Foundation for being one of the few institutions that have managed to stand for such a long time in Turkey. But on the other hand, we deeply regret not being able to celebrate the 9th May Europe Day with Turkey as an EU Member State. We regret that all our efforts have not been compensated completely.”

“WE CANNOT EVEN OPEN CHAPTERS TO NEGOTIATIONS”

“Thanks to our President's outstanding efforts and goal-oriented endeavours, Turkey's EU journey in 2004 gained a more concrete and significant dimension perhaps in a way that our EU allies had never expected. And finally Turkey started the accession negotiations in 2005. For us, the fact that we started the accession negotiations means accession to the EU since according to the EU's own rules, so far there has not been a country that started the negotiations and did not end up with membership except for Norway that rejected membership as a result of popular vote.”

“While Turkey cannot even open chapters to negotiations as a result of some of the EU Member States' vetoes, Croatia which started the accession negotiations at the same time became the 28th EU Member State. As our President underlines, the EU and some Member States have continuously aimed to ‘change the rules of the game at the last minute’. Turkey has encountered with several problems with various reasons put forward by EU leaders such as ‘absorption capacity’, ‘lack of reforms’, ‘Cyprus issue’ and ‘privileged partnership’. In this period, the European Commission has published 17 Progress Reports on Turkey whose total page number is 1,789. If these

reports are not enough to make Turkey a Member State of the EU, then the question is: How many more reports do we need in this process? Therefore the tone, method and the impacts of the Progress Reports should be questioned. Both parties who chose the path to become partners should also act in good faith and in a result-oriented way to overcome the existing problems between them.”

“IF THE EU CARRIES OUT A SINCERE AND FAIR POLICY TOWARDS TURKEY, TURKEY WILL IN RETURN MAKE AN EQUIVALENT EFFORT”

“All these developments remind us again the phrase often used by elderly to describe a process that is ‘a long thin road’. The EU accession process for Turkey is also a long thin road. In this process, we encounter problems and try to overcome these obstacles. Yet, the one and only expectation we have in this process is for Turkey to be treated in a democratic and fair way the EU is defending and on which it is itself built upon.”

“We surely believe that, if the EU applies a sincere and fair policy towards Turkey, Turkey will make an equivalent effort in return.”

“TURKEY IS THE FASTEST GROWING COUNTRY OF THE REGION”

“The process, which was initiated by the then Prime Minister of Turkey Adnan Menderes in 1959 and was started in 1963 with the Ankara Agreement should have been completed even years before. Today, Turkey is different than it used to be in 1960s, 1980s and 1990s. In fact, it is not similar to Turkey even in the beginning of 2000s. Currently, Turkey is a country which continues to have a stable growing trend better than most of the EU countries with a young and dynamic population. Together with increasing investments and further projects to be conducted, Turkey will be the fastest growing country of the region.”

“THESE TWO ECONOMICALLY INTEGRATED PARTNERS SHOULD ACT TOGETHER”

Underlining the importance of the EU for Turkish business community, IKV Chairman Vardan reminded that the EU accounts for almost half of Turkey's exports and 70 % of the investments to Turkey are made by business people from EU Member States. IKV Chairman



Vardan further added: “Is it possible to declare that the EU is not important for Turkey? Yet, we would like to see these two economically integrated partners act together. Further, we believe that we have the right to expect such a relationship between Turkey and the EU. Integration between two parties should not be obstructed by visa and quota requirements. While European businessmen and citizens can travel to Turkey and sell their products, Turkish citizens encounter numerous problems because of the visa procedures. We do not wish to queue and to share personal and professional information during the visa application process. Furthermore this process reveals to be costly and time consuming. Once we succeed in sending our products despite all these difficulties, we do not want to deal this time with quota problems while transferring goods produced in Turkey. Moreover, considering that Turkey and the EU established a Customs Union since 1996, we do not want to be left out of the FTAs signed by EU with third countries especially TTIP.”

“61% OF TURKISH CITIZENS ARE IN FAVOUR OF EU MEMBERSHIP”

IKV Chairman Vardan in his speech announced the results of the public opinion survey commissioned by IKV and stated the following: “Besides the perspective of Turkish business people, we, as IKV, have conducted a public

opinion survey in 18 provinces in Turkey with the participation of 2,500 citizens”.

“With this public opinion survey, we first wanted to understand the level of support to EU membership of Turkish public opinion. According to the result of the survey, 61% of Turkish citizens are supporting Turkey's EU membership. As we all remember, this rate decreased to 30 % in 2011. In this respect, the increase of this share is encouraging. Nevertheless, only 30 % of the participants to the survey believe that Turkey will become a Member State of the EU in the near future. This means that 70 % of them do not believe that Turkey will become Member State of the EU in a short period of time.”

“THE LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE OF THE EU IS VERY LOW IN TURKEY”

IKV Chairman Vardan pointed out to another striking result of the survey concerning the level of knowledge of the EU in Turkey, and stated the following: “It is important and surprising to see that the level of knowledge on the EU in Turkey is really low despite the 56-year-long relationship between Turkey and the EU. While 4 out of 5 persons that participated in the survey have stated that they have heard of the EU before, 85 % of participants declared that they have ‘none’ or ‘little’ knowledge of the EU. This is a clear indication that we need to pursue our informative activities

for the civil society, the media and educational institutions.”

“IT IS TIME TO CROWN THIS PROCESS WITH MEMBERSHIP”

IKV Chairman Vardan stated that for the Turkish public, the EU is mostly associated with economic welfare, free movement and democracy. IKV Chairman further stated as follows: “Our expectation from EU membership is in line with these results. The EU remains an important goal for Turkey. Therefore, it is the time to end this process by crowning Turkey with EU membership.”

“WE BELIEVE THAT TURKEY'S EU MEMBERSHIP WOULD BE A SUCCESS STORY FOR THE EU”

IKV Chairman Vardan also stated that they believe Turkey's EU membership would be a success story for the EU. IKV Chairman Vardan also added the following: “The success will not be only in economic terms. The EU, which is a ‘peace project’ at the same time, will regain its founding principles when it integrates with Turkey whose population mostly consists of Muslims. Thus, an important peace message will be given to the rest of the world which is full of conflicts currently. Therefore, we believe that this process should not be given up to non-credible political purposes with no connection to historical facts. As a conclusion, Turkey with its current level of development will not be a burden on the EU; in contrast, it will relieve the burden on the EU.”



TURKEY AND THE EU AGREED TO MODERNIZE THE CUSTOMS UNION

On the 12 May 2015, the European Commissioner for Trade Cecilia Malmström and Turkish Minister of Economy Nihat Zeybekci announced their decision to revise the framework and to expand the scope of the Customs Union between Turkey and the EU which was established 20 years ago.

As IKV, we consider as a positive development the decision to revise the Customs Union which is considered as one of the cornerstones of Turkey-EU relations. We wish that such a step taken at the 10th anniversary of Turkey-EU accession negotiations would make remarkable contributions to the process.

We believe that it is time for the Customs Union between Turkey and the EU to be revised in line with the structure and requirements of the new global economic system. The current status of Turkey and the EU is different from what they used to be 20 years ago. The revision will provide a window

of opportunity for the parties to overcome the chronic problems of the current Customs Union such as visa issue and transport quotas as well as enabling Turkey to build a solid ground for the new generation of Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) that are becoming more important in EU trade policy.

REVISION OF THE CUSTOMS UNION IN 5 QUESTIONS

1- What is the revision of the Customs Union?

The revision of the Customs Union aims to ensure a deeper economic integration between Turkey and the EU and to overcome the obstacles in the current functioning of the Customs Union.

2- Why is the Customs Union being revised?

The increasing momentum of the new generation FTAs in the EU's trade policy and Turkey's exclusion from decision-making mechanisms has negative impacts on Turkey's trade relations. It is feared that if Turkey is not included in the TTIP process which is currently negotiated between the two biggest economies, would affect Turkey's economy negatively. Moreover, Turkey and the EU needed to address the chronic obstacles encountered in the current functioning of the

Customs Union. The transport quotas and visa restrictions applied towards Turkish citizens constitute a major source of concern for the Turkish business community.

3- What is going to change through the revision of the Customs Union?

The revision of the Customs Union will provide the opportunity to deepen the economic integration between Turkey and the EU by expanding the scope of the Customs Union to areas such as agriculture, services and public procurement. The revision is also important for addressing the chronic obstacles related to the transport quotas and Turkey's absence in the decision making process.

4- What are the stages of the revision of the Customs Union?

During a period of one year,

both parties will carry out impact assessment and consultations with various stakeholders. The European Commission will ask from the EU Council the mandate to conduct negotiations for the revision of the Customs Union with Turkey. It is expected that the negotiations between Turkey and the EU would start in 2016.

5- How should Turkish business community prepare the revision process?

a- To improve the negotiation capacity of public and private sectors: In this process, it is essential for public sector to carry out consultations with the private sector. In this respect, a strong negotiation capacity for public and private sectors should be built up.

b- To build an efficient public-private communication mechanism: It is essential to enhance the

dialogue and the exchange of information between public and private sectors through a strong communication mechanism. In this respect, private sector should also insist on having a permanent representative in the negotiating team of the public sector.

c- Developing a stance for private sector along with a strong will:

Agriculture and services, with no doubt, will be among the most challenging areas of the upcoming trade negotiations. In addition to the challenges, the experience and willingness of the European negotiators to include new rules to the game should also be underlined. For a "successful" negotiation with European counterparts, the Turkish business community should have a strong negotiating stance. Developing such a strong stance depends on the willingness of the Turkish private sector.

IKV VICE-PRESIDENT ZEYNEP BODUR OKYAY IS APPOINTED AS C20 CHAIR



IKV Vice-President, Kale Group President and CEO, ISO President of Assembly Zeynep Bodur Okyay is appointed as the Chair of C20 which is an engagement group representing civil society in the G20.

C20 provides the opportunity for civil society to present its suggestions to G20 governments on the issues of the global economic agenda. The first initiatives towards the establishment of a civil society platform within the G20 were taken during the Canadian Presidency in 2010; but C20 was recognized as an official engagement group by the Russian Presidency only in 2013. The latest C20 Summit was organized in Melbourne, Australia in 2014 with the participation of civil society representatives from all over the world.

The priorities of C20 Turkey were determined through an online consultation. According to the results of the survey to which almost 1,200 people participated, four thematic working groups are identified: "Governance", "Inclusive Growth", "Gender Equality" and "Sustainability". IKV Secretary-General Assoc. Prof. Çiğdem Nas is appointed as Co-Chair of the Inclusive Growth Working Group. On the other hand, IKV Deputy Secretary-General and Research Director Melih Özsöz is also appointed as C20 Sherpa.

C20 Turkey Summit is scheduled to take place in September 2015. More information on C20 Turkey and its working groups can be reached on <http://www.c20turkey.org/>.

CIVIL SOCIETY PRIORITIES FOR G20 2015

1. GOVERNANCE
2. INCLUSIVE GROWTH
3. GENDER EQUALITY
4. SUSTAINABILITY

Decided by

1169 people

Representing

388 organisations

From

81 countries

Find out more about C20 Turkey
www.c20turkey.org

71st TOBB GENERAL ASSEMBLY CONVENED

71st TOBB General Assembly took place on 2 May 2015 in Ankara with the participation of Prime Minister Prof. Ahmet Davutoğlu, CHP President Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, MHP Vice-President Oktay Vural and TOBB delegates. In his opening speech, TOBB President M. Rifat Hisarcıklioğlu emphasized the Turkish business community's interest in creating a new growth model. In this regard, Hisarcıklioğlu highlighted Turkey's need for a new growth model that could be achieved through a new structural reform agenda.

During his speech, TOBB President Hisarcıklioğlu underlined Turkey's G20 Presidency and its importance for providing opportunities to overcome global problems under Turkey's leadership. In this respect, he further emphasized the need for a global coordination structure to address effectively global problems. Finally, TOBB President Hisarcıklioğlu addressed the accomplishments of TOBB since the 70th General Assembly such as the increase in the service capacity of the chambers and exchanges and in the number of entrepreneurs as well as bringing advanced technology to Turkey.

CHAIRMAN VARDAN ATTENDED ICCL 2015

IKV and DEİK Chairman Ömer Cihad Vardan gave a speech on 6 May 2015 at the opening session of the 21st International Energy and Environment Fair and Conference (ICCI). He also chaired the Special Session of the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources Taner Yıldız's Term Reviews.

In his speech, Chairman Vardan expressed his satisfaction regarding the increasing level of cooperation between Turkey and the EU in the energy sector. Chairman Vardan pointed out that the geopolitical developments which took place in Turkey's neighbourhood have proven its indispensable role for Europe's energy supply security. However, Chairman Vardan stated that Turkey is faced with an EU which cannot open the chapter on energy to negotiations due to political obstacles. He thus called for the opening of this chapter to negotiations without further delay.

6 OUT OF TURKISH CITIZENS SUPPORT EU MEMBERSHIP

A survey commissioned by IKV was conducted by Realta Research Company with the aim of identifying the level of information and awareness among the Turkish public opinion on EU and further analysing the support for Turkey's EU membership is published. The survey was conducted on 4-5 April 2015 in 18 provinces of Turkey with a participation of a total of 2,489 persons among which 45.6 % were women.

The main outcomes of this survey are as follows:

- While 4 out of 5 participants to the survey have stated that they have heard of the EU before, 85 % of participants declared that they have "none" or "little" knowledge of the EU. This indicates a lack of general information as regards to the EU within the Turkish public opinion.
- In geographical terms, the level of knowledge on the EU is decreasing when moving from the western to eastern regions. It can also be observed that the level of knowledge on the EU is higher among the young population (18-30 age group) in contrast to older age groups (such as the 45 and above age group).
- The main sources of information as regards to the EU are traditional media tools such as television, newspapers and radio. The internet is also a widely used tool to find information related to EU. In contrast, the official institutions of the EU and Turkey are not considered as primary source of information among the public opinion.
- 61.8 % of the Turkish public opinion is supporting Turkey's EU membership. Nevertheless the belief for Turkey's EU membership has decreased to 73 % of the participants to the survey. Furthermore, while 30 % of the participants believe that Turkey will become a member of the EU and 23 % expect that Turkey will join the EU within the next five years.
- As regards to the level of support granted to Turkey's EU membership, there is a rather mixed picture from the geographical point of view. With a rate of 47.7 %, South Eastern Anatolia is the region with the highest rate of belief for Turkey's EU membership while Central Anatolian region has the lowest rate of belief with 22.8 %. In all the geographical regions, it can be observed that the expectation for EU membership is below 50 %.
- Taking into consideration the age range, it can be observed that the population under age 45 is showing more support and has a higher rate of expectations for Turkey's EU membership.
- Among the main reasons behind the support for Turkey's EU membership are the prospect of more welfare and further economic development as well as the free movement, right of settlement and educational opportunities. These are followed by consolidation of democracy and human rights. For the 18-30 age groups, the expectation of increased opportunity for free movement is high. On the other hand, when analysing the reasons for opposing to EU membership, EU's application of double standards to Turkey (26 %) and the fear that Turkish culture and identity would be weakened with EU membership (26 %) are among the reasons coming to the forefront.
- 1 out of 4 persons that participated to the survey indicated that "free movement" would be the most important contribution of EU membership to Turkey while 1 out of 5 persons pointed out to "new job opportunities" as the main significant contribution. On the other hand, in the third rank, 15 % of participants declared that EU membership would present no benefit for Turkey.
- 65.2 % of participants explained that Turkey needs the EU economically. The region where this rate is the highest is the South Eastern Anatolian with 78.3 %.



"CHAIRMAN VARDAN ATTENDED THE EU TRADE COUNSELLORS' MEETING"

IKV and DEİK Chairman Ömer Cihad Vardan attended the EU Trade Counsellors meeting held in Istanbul on 18 May 2015. The meeting which brought together trade counsellors of EU Member States' embassies and consulates was chaired by the Counsellor and Head of Section of Trade, Economy and Agriculture of the EU Delegation to Turkey Balazs Gargya.

During the meeting, Chairman Vardan explained the current problems encountered by the Turkish business community within the



Customs Union, especially in regards to the visa policy applied towards Turkish citizens, the quotas imposed on Turkish trucks and free trade agreements signed by the EU with

third countries. Chairman Vardan also emphasized that Turkey should take part in the TTIP process. Reminding that both parties agreed recently to revise the Customs Union, he

further added that a Customs Union whose scope has been expanded and shortcomings overcome will be economically more beneficial for both parties.

123rd TURKEY-EU ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE WAS HELD

The 123rd meeting of Turkey-EU Association Committee took place in Brussels on 30 April 2015. As it is well known, Turkey-EU Association Committee is responsible for observing

Turkey-EU relations at technical level, evaluating the association relations and preparing the agenda of the Association Council. Representatives of the EU Council, the European Commission, various

Ministries of Turkey along with officials from EU Member States who participated to this meeting discussed the latest developments in Turkey's EU accession process, especially in areas related to political

and economic criteria, justice and home affairs, environment and climate change, energy dialogue, transportation, Customs Union and trade issues, taxation and Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance.

EU'S ECONOMIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TURKEY AND WESTERN BALKANS

EU Economy and Finance Ministers Council and the Finance Ministers of candidate and potential candidate countries adopted on 12 May 2015 recommendations aiming to increase the competitiveness and long term growth in Turkey and Western Balkan countries. The recommendations are based on individual economic reform programmes which countries developed following the Commission's request. The three-year programme focuses on macroeconomic and fiscal framework and on structural reforms especially in physical infrastructure, education and employment, industrial structures, business environment and trade integration. The recommendations specifically addressed to Turkey are as follows: promoting domestic savings, ensuring price stability, improving the business environment to attract investments and accelerating structural reforms. These recommendations are aimed at strengthening these countries' respective capacities in order for them to meet their obligations within the framework of the EU macroeconomic surveillance, the "European Semester".

TURKEY-EU ASSOCIATION COUNCIL MEETING WAS HELD

The 53rd meeting of the Turkey-EU Association Council was held on 18 May 2015 in Brussels with the participation of Minister of Foreign Affairs Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu and Minister for EU Affairs and Chief Negotiator Volkan Bozkır. The EU delegation was represented by the Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations Johannes Hahn and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Latvia Edgars Rinkēvičs. The current state of Turkey's EU accession negotiations and the latest developments on a wide range of topics such as the counter-terrorism cooperation, illegal migration, economic dialogue, Customs Union and

Cyprus issue were discussed during the meeting.

At the press conference, Minister Çavuşoğlu stated that political reasons still remain an important obstacle in Turkey's accession process to the EU. On the other hand, Minister Bozkır emphasized that Turkey already fulfils the requirements for opening Chapter 17 on Economic and Monetary Policy to negotiations. The European representatives emphasized the importance for Turkey to carry out the necessary reforms to meet the Copenhagen criteria and confirmed once again their commitments to resolve current problems encountered within the Customs Union.



WORLD SME FORUM FOUNDATION WAS LAUNCHED IN ISTANBUL



The opening ceremony of the World SME Forum Foundation initiated by TOBB, International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) and World Chambers Foundation (WCF) was held in Istanbul on 23 May 2015. Deputy Prime Minister Ali Babacan, TOBB President, B20 Turkey Chairman and Board Member of the ICC M. Rifat Hisarcıklioğlu and Secretary-

General of ICC John Danilovich attended the opening ceremony.

In his opening speech, Deputy Prime Minister Babacan underlined that the Foundation would introduce a permanent platform in regards to sustainable success for SMEs. Deputy Prime Minister Babacan also reminded that the Turkish Government already implemented the new

banking regulations through which SMEs could obtain loans easier.

During his speech, TOBB President Hisarcıklioğlu stated that World SME Forum Foundation would create a global platform to resolve current problems faced by SMEs in regards to their integration to global trading system and their difficulties in reaching to financing mechanisms. Underlining that these problems can be overcome by building coordination mechanisms, Hisarcıklioğlu stressed that G20 Presidency of Turkey would be a major part in this process. President M. Rifat Hisarcıklioğlu, however, noted that SMEs that are accounting for 60 %

of the global employment have not been mentioned in G20 priorities since its establishment. In this regard, Hisarcıklioğlu pointed out that special focus within the framework of the principle of "inclusiveness" under the G20 Turkey priorities was given to SMEs. Furthermore, "SMEs and Entrepreneurship" was introduced as the additional objective of the B20 goals. TOBB President Hisarcıklioğlu also announced the certification system brought by the newly-established Foundation would increase the trust for SMEs among the international business world and enable SMEs to be part of the global value chains.

TOBB PRESIDENT HISARCIKLIOĞLU MET WITH EUROPEAN COMMISSIONER HAHN



TOBB President and EUROCHAMBRES Vice-President M. Rifat Hisarcıklioğlu met with European Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations Johannes Hahn on 6 May 2015 in Brussels. EUROCHAMBRES President Richard Weber and Secretary-General Arnaldo Abruzzini also attended this meeting during which information on the activities conducted by EUROCHAMBRES in regards to the EU's enlargement process and regional policy were presented. The latest developments on Turkey-EU relations, the revision of the Customs Union, Turkey's inclusion in the FTAs signed by the EU including TTIP and cooperation between Turkey and EU in the energy sector were among the main topics discussed during the meeting.

TURKISH CITIZENS' RIGHTS WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF EU LAW

A seminar on Turkish citizens' rights within the framework of EU law was organized by İKV in Istanbul on 25 May 2015. Lawyer in Soysal Case Prof. Rolf Gutmann and Member of the Yeditepe University Faculty Law Dr. Murat Uğur Aksoy informed the public about the latest developments regarding Turkish citizens' rights.

Prof. Gutmann, who is the titular of an honorary PhD from the Yeditepe University and is pursuing activities regarding foreigners law in Germany, gave

detailed information on the latest developments regarding Turkish citizens' rights within the framework of EU law. He also referred to some cases that have been discussed at the European Court of Justice with a special emphasis on the Naime Doğan case.

Furthermore, Prof. Gutmann also updated the participants about family reunification and residence permit in Germany. Prof. Gutmann and Dr. Aksoy underlined that the obligation put

upon family relatives of Turkish citizens working in Germany to take German language courses at A1 level is contrary to the standstill clause which is the cornerstone of Turkey-EU common law. In the case opened by Naime Doğan against the requirement of having a basic knowledge of the German language, it has been ruled that this requirement is contrary to the EU law which is bound by the Soysal case.

On the other hand, taking

the legal dimension apart, Dr. Aksoy stressed the importance of the language and integration education for Turkish citizens who wish to settle in Germany from the perspective of cultural and social integration. In light of the latest decisions taken by the Federal Administrative Court of Germany, differences between residence permit and right of establishment were assessed and it was stressed that settlement is the previous step before gaining full citizenship

ELFA GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING AND CONFERENCE WERE HELD



The 2015 General Assembly Meeting and Conference Programme of ELFA (European Law Faculties Association) was held at Yeditepe University Faculty of Law on the 16-19 April 2015 with the participation of Faculty of Law Dean Prof. Halûk Kabaaloğlu, Groningen University Professor of EU Law and ELFA First Vice-President Prof. Laurence Gormley and Yeditepe University Rector Prof. Nurcan Baç.

During his speech, ELFA President Prof. Kabaaloğlu mentioned that ELFA is cooperating with faculties of law outside of Europe to strengthen the international recognition of ELFA and to reinforce the coordination between members. During the General Assembly, Prof. Gormley was also appointed as the next President of ELFA.



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On behalf of İKV

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UN-LED REUNIFICATION TALKS IN CYPRUS RESUME

The leaders of the two communities in Cyprus came together on 15 May ending a 7-month stalemate following the Greek Cypriot side's unilateral decision to suspend the comprehensive settlement talks.



As it might be recalled, the latest round of UN-sponsored talks, which began in February 2014 with the Joint Declaration agreed by the leaders of both sides, reached an impasse in October following the Greek Cypriot side's unilateral actions concerning the hydrocarbon resources around the island in its so-called Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). After the SAIPEM 10,000 drilling vessel belonging to the ENI-Kogas consortium unilaterally licensed by the Greek Cypriot side entered the so-called EEZ totally disregarding the rights of Turkish Cypriots, Turkey announced its intention to conduct seismic research on behalf of the Turkish Cypriot side and sent the seismic survey vessel "Barbaros Hayreddin Paşa" to the area and issued a maritime order

(NAVTEX) reserving areas in the Greek Cypriot side's so-called EEZ. The Greek Cypriot side announced its decision to unilaterally suspend the comprehensive settlement talks on the grounds that its sovereign rights in its so-called EEZ were being violated.

In March, failing to find any exploitable hydrocarbon resources, SAIPEM 1,000 withdrew from the so-called EEZ. Following this development, seismic research vessel Barbaros departed from the region and Turkey decided not to renew the NAVTEX which expired on 6 April. All of the Greek Cypriot side's arguments put forward for leaving the negotiations table were therefore addressed. Encouraged by the positive developments, the comprehensive settlement talks between the parties were expected

to resume within weeks following the completion of the presidential elections in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). After none of the candidates reached 50 % in the first round of the presidential elections, which were held on 19 April 2015, the two independent candidates who got the highest percentage of votes; namely incumbent President Dr. Derviş Eroğlu and former mayor of Nicosia, Mustafa Akıncı qualified to compete in the second round. The second round of the elections were held on 26 April 2015 and resulted in the victory of Akıncı who won 60.4 % of the votes.

Following this presidential election, UN Secretary General's Special Adviser on Cyprus Espen Barth Eide, visited the island to complete the preparations for the

resumption of the talks. Special Adviser Eide announced the resumption of the comprehensive settlement talks following the first meeting between the TRNC's newly elected President and Greek Cypriot Administration of Southern Cyprus (GCASC) leader Nicos Anastasiades on 11 May 2015. Leaders of both sides, who were accompanied by negotiating delegations as well as UN Special Adviser Eide and UN Secretary General's Special Representative in Cyprus Lisa Buitenhuis, came together for the latest round of comprehensive settlement talks on 15 May 2015. According to official statements, during the meeting, leaders were expected to revise the issues subject to negotiations and decide on the structure and frequency of the negotiations.

PANEL ON TURKEY-EU VISA LIBERALISATION DIALOGUE

IKV, in cooperation with TOBB and the European Stability Initiative (ESI) organized on 4 May 2015 a panel entitled "The Road to Visa-Free Travel for Turkish Nationals: Problems and Prospects" in Ankara. The opening speeches of the panel were made by the Director of TOBB's EU Department Mustafa Bayburtlu and IKV Secretary-General Assoc. Prof. Çiğdem Nas. In the panel which was chaired by ESI Senior Analyst Alexandra Stiglmeier, IKV Deputy Secretary-General and Research Director Melih Özsoz, ESI Chairman Gerald Knaus and Kasia Lach from the EU Delegation in Turkey discussed about the latest developments and tackled the legal,

political, economic and human dimensions of the Turkey-EU Visa Liberalisation Dialogue.

During the panel, it was emphasized that visa liberalisation negotiations should not lose impetus in the course of 2015 and that it was still possible for these negotiations to be completed in 2017. Furthermore, it was pointed out that, contrary to the accession negotiations, visa liberalisation negotiations did not require the unanimity of all 28 Member States, as shown in the case of Moldova.

It has been acknowledged that the Syrian refugee crisis constitutes an important cause of concern within the framework of the visa liberalisation dialogue. Although Turkey adopted an open-door policy for Syrian

refugees and succeeded in preventing approximately 13,000 illegal immigrants from entering Greece, the efforts shown by the Turkish government were not well-reflected to the EU public opinion. In this respect, it was stressed that Turkey and the EU should bear the burden together.

During the panel, the speakers explained that the emphasis should be given to three main issues as regards to the visa liberalisation dialogue which are, respectively, data protection, fundamental rights and freedoms in Turkey and the implementation of the Readmission Agreements with EU countries. While the full compliance with all the criteria of the Visa Liberalisation Roadmap is without doubt of

utmost importance for Turkey, the proper implementation of the readmission system is also considered as an essential benchmark. This successful implementation can be achieved only through an enhanced cooperation between EU Member States, EU institutions and Turkey.

The economic burden of the visa issue upon parties was also one of the main topics discussed during the panel. Within this framework, it was stressed that the Turkish passport is still currently the most expensive passport after the TRNC's passport. In addition, Turkey is also the fifth country that applies the most for the C type Schengen visa.