

## Greece-Cyprus-Israel Trilateral Summit, Thessaloniki 15.06.2017

### Joint Declaration

We, Alexis Tsipras, Prime Minister of the Hellenic Republic, Nikos Anastasiades, President of the Republic of Cyprus, and Benjamin Netanyahu, Prime Minister of the State of Israel, having met in Thessaloniki today, 15th June 2017, have agreed to continue strengthening the cooperation among our three countries in order to promote a trilateral partnership in various fields of common interest and to continue working together towards promoting peace, stability, security and prosperity in the Eastern Mediterranean and the wider region.

Though our partnership is special, it is not exclusive in design or nature, and we are ready to welcome other like-minded parties to join our efforts of promoting coordination and cooperation, as well as regional peace and stability.

The highly volatile situation and the continuous changes that occur in our region demand our full attention and frequent consultation among our three countries. We are pleased to note that our trilateral cooperation has developed and deepened since our last meeting in Jerusalem (8.12.2016).

This year the three of us have convened for a third trilateral summit under the title of Economic Growth through Innovation and Entrepreneurship. We have decided to focus on our collaboration in the fields of energy, economy, telecommunications, underwater cultural heritage and environment. In addition, we are committed to extending our relationship between Parliaments and the cooperation between our Diasporas.

Following the guidelines of the January 2016 Nicosia Declaration as well as the December 2016 Jerusalem Declaration, we welcome the work done and progress made thus far to promote our **energy cooperation** in Eastern Mediterranean.

In promoting our cooperation, four Ministerial Meetings took place, over the past year and a half, the most recent one in April 2017 in Tel Aviv, with the participation of the Minister of Energy of Italy and with the presence of EU Commissioner for Energy. In the same scope, three Secretary Generals' meetings also took place over the same period.

We express our strong support for the establishment of the East-Med Pipeline (Eastern Mediterranean) as another gas corridor, directly linking gas findings in Cyprus' and Israeli EEZs with the European markets. We note with satisfaction the progress made in the promotion of this project, and welcome the Ministers' joint decision to identify terms of a necessary Intergovernmental Agreement to expedite the project. We also welcome the establishment of a quadri-lateral working group (Greece, Cyprus, Israel, Italy) with the aim to closely monitor and support the development of the EastMed project as a secure and viable export route for natural gas from the Eastern Mediterranean to Europe.

We reaffirm our interest in the Euro-Asia Interconnector project. Our Governments have expressed interest in this project and we are expecting finalization of the feasibility studies. Our Governments support cross-sector synergies between Euro-Asia Interconnector project and fiber optic connections that will provide enhanced cooperation concerning the deployment of interconnection between Europe, Middle East and Asia.

We acknowledge the need to facilitate the promotion of the implementation of these two trilateral projects both by securing the unobstructed carrying out of the remaining necessary studies and surveys by the Project Promoters and speeding up our respective national procedures.

We wish to reemphasize that these trilateral energy projects, "East-Med" pipeline to Europe and the "Euro Asia Interconnector", are of strategic importance both to our three countries, as they result in the creation of economic and political benefits, and to Europe by enhancing its energy security and furthering the EU's policy of diversification of energy sources and routes.

Discussions on renewable energy, as well as energy efficiency, alternative fuel for transportation and smart mobility were also conducted; with a view to further enhance the development of cooperation programs between our respective institutions and the private sectors.

**The Environment** and its protection should continue to receive special attention in the context of the trilateral cooperation, with special focus on the common challenges faced by our three countries, namely protection of the marine environment, water and wastewater management, as well as adaptation to climate change impacts.

As reaffirmed by the Ministers responsible for the environment of our three countries in their meeting on the 8th of December 2016 and in line with the decision taken at their previous meeting in April 2016 in Jerusalem, we confirm our commitment for holding a trilateral ministerial meeting on environment on an

annual basis and trilateral working group meetings, at technical level, three times a year, one on each of the three thematic areas mentioned above, depending on needs identified and progress achieved.

In this respect, we take note of the outcomes of the three working group meetings that took place on the 2nd of February, in Athens, on climate change adaptation, on the 9th of February, in Tel Aviv, on water and wastewater management with emphasis on olive mills waste treatment and on the 23rd of February, in Nicosia, on the protection of the marine environment from pollution and in particular from oil spills. We welcome the significant progress achieved at technical level.

We stress, once more, the importance of strengthening our cooperation in the protection of the marine and coastal environment and in joint capacity building activities on the impacts of the olive oil sector on the environment as well as in exchanging information and sharing knowledge and expertise in the field of climate change adaptation.

Our countries are also determined to promote the protection of underwater cultural heritage in the region from illicit excavations and damage that might be caused by other activities. We thus welcome Cyprus' intention to develop a framework of close consultation and cooperation on this issue to be discussed by our competent authorities.

The three countries have been working closely to promote cooperation in the field of **Research & Innovation** and towards that goal they signed a Memorandum of Understanding during their previous meeting in Jerusalem on December 8th, 2016. In implementing that MOU, they have been examining ways to encourage and facilitate, to the extent possible, the development of direct collaborative research of interest to all parties, as well as promoting technological and industrial research cooperation among research organizations in the three countries.

In the field of **Telecommunication Technologies**, the three countries agree to develop cooperation in the sectors of electronic technology, telecommunications and electromagnetic compatibility, undertaking relevant measures aimed at supporting – encouraging enterprises to use relevant European standards for design, production and certification of their products and services.

A special interest will be given to cooperation in satellite manufacturing, earth remote sensing satellites and communication satellites and relevant space projects, and in the area of electromagnetic compatibility (EMC) issues.

The countries agree to encourage the space technology sector in their respective countries in order to achieve the implementation of space projects, commercial

satellite and mobile services, mobile application development and enterprise solutions, software, microchips and equipment providers, services dedicated to mobility as well as organizations in adjacent industry sectors.

In the field of frequency coordination, the three Governments following the Radio Regulations of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), in case of additional frequency needs and/ or interference problems the three countries will come to trilateral agreements under ITU regulations.

The Parties, in the field of the Fiber Optic Undersea Cable, agree to support the deployment of new cable interconnections among the three countries. Such infrastructure is a critical link between Europe, Middle East and Asia and will enhance the capacity of internet connections. Furthermore, it will reduce the international interconnection costs. Bearing in mind that there are plans for energy infrastructures deployment, we see great opportunity for cross-sector synergies that will allow for huge cost savings. Moreover, it will give a strong message for the investment on NGA infrastructures. The trilateral cooperation will expedite the implementation of the project, by facilitating all the administrative procedures, e.g. permit granting.

In the field of Internet of Things and Smart Cities, the Parties are moving towards the deployment of the infrastructures that will allow the implementation and operation of the Internet of Things, namely fixed NGA infrastructures, as well as 5G networks. Our cooperation will focus on the deployment of integrated applications for smart cities, e.g. security systems, smart transportation, energy management etc. This is a multidisciplinary sector that involves research institutions, industry, academia, local authorities etc.

In the field of Cyber Security, the enhancement of cooperation between the countries is necessary in order to achieve a high level Cyber Security.

In the area of Innovation and entrepreneurship, the Parties agree to promote Joint R&D and Business Development programs as well as joint activities between Hellenic, Israeli and Cypriot start-ups. The three parties agreed to establish a common strategy and framework for Lifelong learning, Educational programs and internship, incorporating also private sector and academic institutions into these efforts.

In order to encourage cooperation and dissemination of knowledge and know-how between high-tech industries in Greece, Cyprus and Israel, the governments confirm that designated programs will be established for the training and specialization of students and high-tech scientists among the three countries.

As part of the above cooperation, Israel is offering in the near future a pilot program for a limited number of students and/or junior scientists from Greece and Cyprus for

training and specialization in specific fields of mutual interest which will be agreed among the three parties.

The three countries agree to encourage knowledge and best practices sharing and consider their existing innovation eco-system available at the Hellenic, Israeli and Cypriot technological industries supporting innovative companies, start-ups and technology ventures.

The three countries agreed to jointly transform their SME's (Small and Medium Sized Enterprises) communities to integrate ICT solutions and boost their competitiveness in the marketplace.

The three countries, recognizing the importance and mutual benefit deriving from their **cooperation in the industrial fields**, expressed their readiness to develop and strengthen such cooperation in the manufacturing sector, through the encouragement of entrepreneurship, the promotion of business cooperation and the creation of an attractive business environment for the development of joint ventures, with the aim to take advantage of investment opportunities.

The sides acknowledge the important role of SMEs (Small and Medium Sized Enterprises) for development and economic growth, as well as the significance of "startups" as a driver for innovation and the creation of new jobs and agreed to enhance their cooperation in the above mentioned fields. Such cooperation could include the exchange of information, know-how and best practices in the area of SMEs support policies, with emphasis on innovation and internationalization in order to improve SMEs competitiveness and enhance their access to international markets.

The three countries noted the commitment of the **Health** Ministers to hold a Trilateral meeting June 20<sup>th</sup> in Cyprus and sign a Joint Declaration of Intent which reiterating their desire to strengthen cooperation and establish a long term and mutually beneficial partnership in the field of Public Health and Medical Science, especially through exchanging respective information and knowledge in the areas of Health.

The three countries acknowledge the importance of **tourism** and the vast potential for a comprehensive collaboration on joint tourism projects and synergies involving private and public stakeholders in the field of tourism in order to encourage the influx of tourists to the region, especially from China, USA and Russia, by offering joint tour packages, including cruises, religious, cultural and other thematic tourism products. We agree to explore ways of sharing information and know-how about tourism innovation and digitalization in order to support local small tourism businesses, joint initiatives and more. The three countries acknowledge the opportunities for investments in real estate, hotels, marinas and other tourism

infrastructure in their respective countries. Our three Ministers in charge of tourism agree to meet and examine the various facets of the cooperation of our countries in this sector.

Over the last six months, Israel, Greece and Cyprus, along with Croatia, have undertaken joint staff work in order to establish a multi-national force for aerial firefighting. The cooperation between the countries in the field of firefighting has already proven its importance, and it is vital to continue the joint work and cooperation, in order to enable a better regional response to incidents of fires.

The **Ministries of Foreign Affairs** fulfilling their role as the major coordinators of the full scope of issues we have discussed today, will continue to consult regularly in order to monitor and guide the progress of the undertaken projects as well as identifying eventual ways of expanding our political and economic cooperation. In this regard, we have asked the Director Generals of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs to hold annual trilateral meetings, to take stock of the implementation of the issues we have discussed today.

The three Governments reiterate their support for the establishment of a formal dialogue and ongoing cooperation between the **diaspora communities**, parallel to the inter-governmental dialogue.

To this end, the three sides will work to adopt a plan of concrete action in coordination with the leaderships of the diaspora communities, aimed at enhancing the trilateral cooperation.

These joint projects may include dialogue on university campuses between students from the respective diaspora communities, the organization of a youth conference with representatives from the three diaspora communities, as well as other potential project of mutual interest.

We reiterate our commitment towards the enhancement of **EU-Israel relations** in areas of mutual interest, including cooperation on political, strategic and regional issues. To this end, we underline the need to promote a new and updated Partnership Priorities Program between the State of Israel and the European Union as well as convening as soon as possible the EU-Israel association council.

We recognize the importance of cooperation in the framework of the Euro-Mediterranean Institutions towards contributing to peace and stability of our region.

We acknowledge the grave dangers posed by **terrorism**, both regionally and globally, and have agreed to continue joining forces with the international community to tackle these challenges by focusing, among other things, on radicalization and the

prevention of violent extremism leading to terrorism. We strongly and unequivocally condemn all actions of terrorism and call upon all states to confront this threat, including through closer security cooperation. In light of the above, we have agreed to further enhance our cooperation in this sphere, through the trilateral dialogues between our expert counter- terrorism authorities. Efforts to curb the flow of foreign fighters, to restrict financial and military support to terrorist groups, and to counter extremist propaganda should intensify. Incitement to violence should be condemned and stopped.

We emphasize that the management of the **refugee and migration crisis** is the responsibility of the international community as a whole and that the challenges related to large movements of refugees and migrants can only be addressed through effective cooperation between countries of origin, transit and destination. This common goal should be pursued on the basis of solidarity and global responsibility sharing among all actors. Hence, we will continue, collectively, our efforts to save lives, fight migrant smuggling and counter the incentives for irregular migration by addressing its multiple root causes.

We express our 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 that 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's independent foreign policy.

The Governments express their hope that the resumption of negotiations of the **MEPP** will conclude in a just and lasting solution.

We are convinced of the strategic nature and necessity of our trilateral cooperation and will continue working closely together in order to realize its full potential, to the benefit of our countries and peoples, and to that of the wider region.

The three leaders have agreed that the next trilateral Summit will be held in Nicosia, in the last trimester of 2017.

Thessaloniki, June 15<sup>th</sup> 2017

H.E. Alexis Tsipras  
Prime Minister of the  
Hellenic Republic

H.E. Nikos Anastasiades  
President of the  
Republic of Cyprus

H.E. Benjamin Netanyahu  
Prime Minister of the  
State of Israel