

**OPENING SPEECH OF
H.E. MR MEVLÜT ÇAVUŞOĞLU, MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF
THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
11th AMBASSADORS' CONFERENCE
ANKARA, AUGUST 5TH, 2019**

**Excellency Mr. Deputy Prime Minister,
Distinguished Ministers,
Esteemed Guests,
Distinguished Ambassadors,
Dear Colleagues,**

I welcome you all to the **11th Ambassadors' Conference**.

I have the pleasure of joining you on this occasion, for the fifth time as Foreign Minister.

We have a rich and ambitious program this year as well.

On the occasion of the centennial anniversary of 1919, we will visit Samsun, the city where our Founding Father Great Leader Mustafa Kemal Atatürk sparked the flames of our War of Independence. We have published the "Centenary of 1919", the first book with documents from our archives.

Since the last Ambassadors' Conference, I have made **84 foreign visits**, 17 of which were in the company of our President. I have **hosted 52 counterparts in our country**. In total, I have made **311 international contacts**. We have swiftly adapted to the **Presidential Government System** and its new structure. Upon our President's instructions to "**stand tall, follow up, work hard**", we have never stopped, slowed down or felt tiredness.

The world is a community of 194 states. We have **embassies in 142** of them. Our Ambassadors also serve at **13 international organizations**.

With 243 missions in total, we are among the top five largest diplomatic and consular networks in the world.

Turkish diplomacy is a worldwide brand. This is confirmed by all our counterparts.

Turkish Ambassadors are **active both on the ground and at the table of diplomacy** on a daily basis.

Distinguished Guests,
Dear Colleagues,

Despite various shifts and changes over the centuries, the core functions of diplomacy persist in the 21st century.

However, the ground and the table are now broader and multi-layered in diplomacy and Turkish diplomats are among the pioneers of this new diplomacy.

It is not unusual to see our Ambassadors **delivering aid in disaster areas, helping our kidnapped citizens in conflict zones, mediating between disputing parties, and promoting Turkish businesses.**

Take one example: on Friday, 19 July 2019 in Nigeria, 4 Turkish citizens working at a quarry were kidnapped at gunpoint. My Ministry and Embassy intervened rapidly. And thanks to our initiatives, all 4 of our citizens were liberated.

I would like to give you a sense of the routine tasks of a Turkish diplomat:

- Promoting trade and investment through one-to-one contacts with foreign business people,
- Supporting the activities of TIKA (Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency), Turkish Red Crescent, AFAD (Disaster and Emergency Management Authority) and other Turkish aid institutions,
- Combating terrorism including FETÖ, PKK,
- Fighting against racism and Islamophobia, working with NGOs in this effort,
- Meeting with Turkish citizens and kinsmen, cooperating with Turkish NGOs,
- Performing effective public diplomacy using all available means,
- Delivering speeches and organizing conferences at universities/think tanks,
- Taking initiatives to establish or enhance inter-parliamentary friendship groups,
- Preserving and restoring our cultural heritage and our fallen soldiers' memorials,
- Supporting the activities of schools operated by the Turkish Maarif Foundation and Ministry of National Education as well as the activities of the Yunus Emre Institute, coordinating language and religious services, promoting Turkiye Scholarships,
- Initiating and increasing flights between countries,
- Organizing exhibitions and events to promote Turkish culture,
- Providing a broad range of services to our citizens, from birth to marriage, notary, education and conscription documents, all of which are provided by different institutions domestically,
- Extending a hand to our citizens in need,
- Preserving the virtues of our nation in every corner of the world, marking our national and religious holidays in third countries.

Just two weeks ago, all our missions around the globe organized commemoration events on the anniversary of the heinous coup attempt of July 15th.

These represent only a fraction of a Turkish diplomat's daily functions.

Let me tell you about another incident which occurred this year:

“A foreign national called the Consular Call Center about his relatives, who had reached out to him 20 minutes earlier while trying to cross from Turkey to Greece on an inflatable boat. The boat was perforated. He asked for help. We immediately informed the authorities and were able to save 17 people on board, 6 of whom were children.”

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**Dear Guests,
Dear Colleagues,**

The world is not a rose garden anymore.

38 of our embassies are located in severely unstable and fragile zones. **15 are in regions of active conflict or with serious threat of terrorism.** 31 Turkish embassies operate in countries suffering from famine, drought and epidemic diseases.

The recent terrorist attack targeting our colleague at our Consulate General in Erbil was a grievous example of the threats and challenges that Turkish diplomacy is facing. May Allah’s mercy be upon our **martyred colleague Osman Köse**. I offer my sincere condolences to his grieving family and our nation.

On this occasion, **I commemorate all our martyrs including those of July 15th with gratitude.** Our hearts are with their families who are also our family. As Mehmet Akif Ersoy wrote about the Martyrs of Çanakkale:

“The grave of history is not large enough to hold your memory and sacrifice.”

Taking this opportunity, I would like to wish Allah’s mercy upon all our **colleagues and their spouses** who have passed away since the last Ambassadors’ Conference, and offer my condolences to their families and our community.

In places where war, coups, failing states, suffering, oppression, and blood-shed are taking place, Turkish diplomats perform their duties uninterrupted and devotedly protect our interests. They are in constant negotiations in capitals, international organizations and at the tables of various processes.

We have developed **comprehensive consultations and cooperation methods including bilateral, trilateral, quadrilateral and other sorts of multilateral mechanisms.** We are going to make more use of those not only on political but also on technical levels.

We continue to make a **substantial contribution to regional and global stability and order through diplomacy.**

The **Astana process** which keeps the hopes of peace for Syria alive is a **good example showcasing Turkish diplomacy active at the table.** It is impossible to debate any search for a solution in Syria without referring to the Astana process.

The same goes for our **mediation and conflict resolution efforts.** Turkey is the leading country in mediation initiatives in three different international organizations. The UN Secretary General will address the Istanbul Mediation Conference in October.

We have established a Contact Group of Friends of Mediation at the OIC and perform its co-chairmanship. We train diplomats from the OIC countries at our Diplomatic Academy. We also train our own experts.

We will devote even greater attention to resolving disputes and frozen conflicts in the upcoming period.

This year, another Turkish Ambassador was elected as the Chief Monitor of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine. I thank Ambassador Apakan for his successful services and wish every success to Ambassador Çevik. **This is yet another reflection of the confidence that Turkish diplomacy enjoys.** Likewise, two very competent Turkish women were elected: one as a judge to the European Court of Human Rights, and one as a member of the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO). I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate them once again on their success.

We reassumed the chairmanship of the **Heart of Asia - Istanbul Process**, which was brought to life under our leadership. Moreover, Turkey will also be assuming the term presidency of the **Developing Eight, Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), Southeast European Cooperation Process and Asia Cooperation Dialogue.**

Before handing it over this year, we performed our three year-long **Chairmanship of the OIC Summit with the goal of revitalizing the outdated structure of the Organisation.** Our Chairmanship had an impact. We dynamized the OIC. To name a few, the Islamic Development Fund, Center for Police Cooperation, Contact Group of Friends of Mediation, Women Consultative Council, and Istanbul Arbitration Center are only some of the concrete results of our initiatives.

Regarding the **Palestine cause and attacks on Jerusalem**, we convened 2 Extraordinary OIC Summits and 3 Extraordinary OIC Executive Committee meetings at Foreign Minister level. With these meetings, we enabled the Islamic world to speak with one voice. We defended the rights of Muslims worldwide, just as we did after the attacks on mosques in New Zealand.

It would not be fair to view these responses to global challenges only in terms of geopolitical considerations.

Rising **racist and anti-Islam trends** in many corners of the world have urged us to action. Right after the heinous terrorist attack in **Christchurch** in New Zealand, I immediately traveled there in the company of our Vice President. Right after, **we urgently convened the OIC Executive Committee at Foreign Minister level in Istanbul. We also mobilized the UN General Assembly.** We ensured the adoption of a historic resolution on the necessary steps to be taken. We made all acknowledge that in addition to anti-Semitism and anti-Christianism, anti-Islamism is also a crime against humanity. This is also the case according to our faith.

We raised global awareness on all these issues through our Enterprising and Humanitarian approach.

Turkish diplomacy is highly active in the development of our **foreign economic and commercial relations.** The amount of foreign direct investment, which was 14.6 billion US dollars from 1984 to 2002, reached 210 billion US dollars from 2003 to 2019. We concluded or are in negotiations for Free Trade and Preferential Trade Agreements with many countries.

Not only are we talking about lifting visas reciprocally, but also passport free travel. Apart from conventional tourism, today we also attach importance to **health and sports tourism**. Turkey was elected as a member of the Executive Council of the World Tourism Organization. Our **defense industry** products are in demand in all corners of the world. In this year's Conference, we will be addressing these issues at length.

Let's not forget that, **a robust economy means robust foreign policy.**

Ladies and Gentlemen,
Dear Colleagues,

21st century diplomacy has transformed Ambassadors into executives, negotiators and managers.

Turkey's interests require working efficiently and in a focused manner both at home and abroad.

We introduced a **"3+2" principle of effectiveness to diplomacy**. We strive for effectiveness at the local, regional and global levels, plus, on the ground and at the table.

Our Ambassadors are not on their own on the ground and at the table. They are team leaders.

Above all, they work with diplomats who have embraced the culture of "Hariciye" (Foreign Service), originating from the office of "Reis ül-Küttab" in the Ottoman tradition. They work with diplomats who are loyal to the principles of the Republic, competent, well-informed and disciplined – espousing native and national values. In other words, these diplomats, as aptly described by Falih Rifkî Atay, are **"enlightened and patriotic"**. We have grown even stronger after clearing our Ministry of FETÖ affiliates.

Of course, other Turkish institutions are involved as well, playing a significant role to make Turkish diplomacy effective.

The Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TİKA), Yunus Emre Institute, Turkish Maarif Foundation, Turkish Red Crescent, Turkish Airlines, Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities, Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (AFAD) and Presidency of Religious Affairs are all active globally.

A strong diplomacy needs a structure where everyone does his/her best according to his/her expertise, while working harmoniously as a team.

A strong diplomacy requires thinking widely in the form of a network, and reaching to our national interests and goals in line with the priorities set out by the President.

Strong states have powerful Ambassadors. Embassies are places for information gathering, analysis, contacts, representation, intervention, negotiation, coordination, consultation and implementation. **Ambassadors, on the ground and at the table, are the leaders, or CEOs, of a team.**

We are all well aware of this national responsibility. Our Ambassadors are at the service of our national goals in every realm. With the contributions of all other Turkish institutions, we are operating in a wide range of areas. We have moved far beyond conventional diplomacy. **We have adopted "being robust on the ground and at the table" as our guiding principle.**

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We have developed an initiative taking approach, which we call Enterprising and Humanitarian. **We will continue to deploy this approach in managing crises.**

We have set sail to a rough sea and travelled significant distances. To travel even greater miles, we are **all ready to work harder.**

**Distinguished Ambassadors,
Dear Guests,**

We are going through one of the toughest times in the history of the Republic.

Our neighboring regions and the global environment are experiencing **a staggering change.**

The political, economic and technological transformations in the world are **not superficial, but run deep and are permanent.**

The existing global economic, social and political order is under strain. The **uni-polarity that emerged after the Cold War did not last long.** On the verge of evolution into a multicentric structure, the international system is going through the **turbulence of transformation.** Uncertainty is pervasive in the world and the range of sight is short.

On global and regional levels, **political and economic power struggles** fuel crises and breed tension and turmoil in the system. **Multilateralism is being pushed back. International organizations,** established to maintain global peace, prosperity and stability, are ineffective. Power vacuums emerge in conflict areas. Terrorists abuse this situation the most.

There are risks and threats targeting our country. We must transform these risks into opportunities.

Due to Turkey's **geopolitical location,** the ability to foresee and manage surrounding vulnerabilities, fragilities and crises is of vital importance.

In such an environment, we have a foreign policy approach that takes various scenarios into account and generates solutions to crises.

At the same time, we are entering a period where we have to come up with new ideas, new initiatives and new moves.

In every sense, **the next few years are very important.**

We are faced with a political and institutional decay which reached threatening levels on a global scale. **In such a context, national and universal values constitute the anchor of Turkish foreign policy.**

Every nation has a story. **What is indeed the story of Turkey?**

The fundamental principles of our state and the will of our nation are evident. We are in the league of democracies. Democracy, rule of law, free market economy, individual rights and freedoms, pluralism, secularism and welfare state constitute the foundation of our Republic.

Sovereignty unconditionally belongs to the nation. Peace at home and peace abroad complement each other. This is the fundamental principle of our foreign policy. What transforms these principles from thought into action and result is our **Enterprising and Humanitarian Foreign Policy.**

Turkey and the Turkish nation have stood tall and **always used their national strength at the service of the Truth and on the side of the righteous.**

Who put an end to the very first attempt at ethnic cleansing in Europe after World War II? Turkey, thanks to the **Cyprus** Peace Operation in 1974!

Who is trying to break the endless cycle of conflict, terror and suffering in the **Middle East**? Turkey, by preventing the disintegration of **Syria and Iraq**, which would result in terror and bloodshed!

While more than 70 million people in the world have been displaced, who is embracing this challenge and teaching the world a lesson of mercy? Turkey!

Who is fending off the unilateral attempts that threaten peace and stability in the **Eastern Mediterranean**? Again, it is Turkey!

In a geography surrounded by warfare, turmoil, proxy wars, sanctions and unbridled ambitions, is there any other democracy that has managed to become one of the **top 20 global economies, all thanks to her own efforts and assets?**

Can anyone imagine achieving this without being active both on the ground and at the table?

This is our story, and our foreign policy reflects our very own story.

Turkey is a member of NATO and the Council of Europe. We are a part of the European legal and security system. **We are both the West and the East.** The North and the South. **Our state and nation stand tall and strong as the guarantor of regional peace and prosperity.**

**Distinguished Ambassadors,
Dear Guests,**

We maintain this strategic vision, which I have just outlined, in the middle of a geography that has the highest rate of armament in the world.

The maritime repercussion of this challenging geography is the **Eastern Mediterranean.** We will not allow any attempts, which ignore the legitimate rights and interests of Turkey and the Turkish Cypriots, from succeeding in the Eastern Mediterranean, the junction of the three continents of the world.

Following the activities of our drilling ship Fatih in our continental shelf, our second ship Yavuz has started its drilling operations in the fields licensed to Turkish Petroleum by the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.

What we want to see is the equitable distribution of the resources and a joint settlement based on cooperation. The constructive proposals made by the Turkish Cypriots in good faith must be appreciated. On our side, we will continue to defend the rights of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus at all times and under all conditions.

The EU as a political institution cannot pretend to act as a tribunal on a legal matter such as maritime jurisdiction. Naturally, we will not take into account the so-called measures of the EU under any circumstances.

Cyprus is our national cause. The political equality and security of the Turkish Cypriots, a people we share a common fate with, is sine qua non for us. We do not exclude any formula for a solution based on these principles. Nor do we impose any type of solution. We are in for result-oriented negotiations. But there is no merit in starting a new process just for the sake of negotiating.

We would like to see **Greece** as a “partner” on the basis of a win-win relationship on all regional issues.

Our nation opens up its heart to those extending a friendly hand. Let us work together for the prosperity of our region and our peoples. Let us transform the Eastern Mediterranean into a basin of peace, prosperity and cooperation. **We therefore have a single message to everyone interested in the region: Let us cooperate, so that everyone wins!**

The stakes are high in the Middle East, the Caucasus and the Eastern Mediterranean.

We will always stand by our brotherly country **Azerbaijan** until the very end, primarily on the Nagorno-Karabakh issue.

We are pleased with the developments in our bilateral relations with European countries.

Last year, however, with the impact of the domestic issues it has been struggling with, the **European Union**, dismissing the win-win logic, missed the opportunity of cooperation on some important issues.

Unfortunately, we have witnessed that every warning delivered from this stage over the past two years has proved to be accurate. **Europe’s domestic affairs, much like its foreign policy, is a disappointment to all.** Traditional center parties have come out weakened in the European Parliament elections. Radical and populist parties on right and left have increased their votes. **Rising racism, xenophobia, anti-Islam trends and populism** undermine the fundamental values of Europe and shatter its democratic institutions to the core.

The EU will either turn to the false discourse of the last century, betraying its own principles, and **become the sick man of the world**, or **refresh itself** with a new push, shaking off its lethargy.

We believe that Turkey’s EU membership will create a strong stimulus in making the latter happen. **Throughout all the waves of the EU enlargements, the last time a G20-scale country was admitted was in 1986. However, bearing in mind that Spain is not a G20 country, the last time a G20 country gained membership was the UK in 1973.** If the EU were to spend its energy in the right direction rather than to keep Turkey at bay, then Turkey would be an EU member and the EU a stronger international actor.

We welcome the emphasis put by the new President of the European Commission on a more active EU in its neighborhood and the world including transatlantic ties and NATO. The Turkish people will of course have a say in the future of Europe, our common home.

We will not focus on the defects of the European Union, but rather on the objectives Turkey and the EU set together decades ago. Turkey's EU membership is a strategic matter not to be left to the hands of extremist currents and fanatics who are vocal across Europe today.

We will continue to fulfill our responsibilities. The last meeting of the Reform Action Group was held under the chairmanship of our President on Europe Day. We were always aware that the EU accession process would be a long and narrow road.

We will try to advance our EU membership process by making progress in the areas of reforms, communication, visa liberalization, the updating of the Customs Union, paving the way for accession. We will not allow matters like migration and security alone to overshadow all the other areas.

We will of course be active in our relations with the EU Member States and institutions. Our Directorate for European Union Affairs and National Agency will continue to work on these issues. **Every progress made in this direction will contribute to our country and our foreign policy goals.**

Dear colleagues,

One of the most fundamental objectives of our foreign policy is to form a **belt of sustainable peace and development in our neighborhood.**

There is a need, above all, to put an end to fragilities and conflicts.

The problems in the **Middle East** that led to the Arab Spring still persist. The Palestine-Israel conflict and the security of the Gulf are going through sensitive times. **It is truly a sad reality that at a time when regional ownership is most needed, countries in the region display a lack of unity.**

Turkey will continue to defend the **Palestinian** cause no matter the price.

Experience has shown that unilateral actions in the **Gulf** are detrimental to all countries in the region.

We will maintain our principled stance in supporting the legitimate expectations of the people on the street. At the same time, we must continue to approach regional dynamics while harmonizing our short and long-term interests.

We are ready to come together, as brothers and sisters, to cooperate and resolve existing issues.

Let me underline this: there will be no prospect of order in the Middle East without peace and stability in Iraq and Syria.

The disturbance of stability and peace in Iraq has adversely affected our region. **An Iraq that stands on its own two feet, within its constitutional framework and on the basis of sustainable peace and development,** will likewise contribute to the peace and stability in the region. Everyone must do their part to achieve this. **The reconstruction of Iraq is a milestone project of the 21st century that will establish regional order.** This is not just a statement; we are also taking action. The most generous reconstruction contributions come from Turkey, who regards Iraq as a friendly and brotherly country.

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As we have proved with Operation Claw, we will not stand back from doing what it takes, together with the Iraqi authorities, to **rid this cradle of civilization of the PKK and other terrorist organizations** just as we did with DEASH.

Turkey is leading and contributing to the international efforts to end the conflict in **Syria**. We are working to establish stability on the ground while maintaining our cooperation with Russia and Iran in **Astana and Sochi**. We have seen the concrete results of this cooperation in the **Idlib Memorandum**.

We used every opportunity to prevent the regime and its supporters from targeting civilians in Idlib. I call upon all the world to support our efforts. **Otherwise, the fallout of the humanitarian tragedy in Idlib could be much graver than the one experienced in 2015.**

At the same time, we are making efforts to bring together leading international actors on a common ground to find a lasting and credible political solution in Syria. Turkey is a leading contributor to the political process led by the United Nations within the framework of the Security Council Resolution No. 2254. We are also leading efforts to resolve humanitarian crisis caused by this conflict. These efforts are imperative for our national security and good neighborliness with our Syrian brothers and sisters.

We are also fighting against terrorist groups that feed on the conflict in Syria. Thanks to **Operations Euphrates Shield and Olive Branch**, approximately 340 thousand Syrians returned to lands cleared of **DEASH** and **PKK/PYD/YPG**. We will continue our resolute fight against any threat of terrorism directed at our national security.

Distinguished Ambassadors, Esteemed Guests,

As allies and friends, we would like to overcome the difficulties in **our relations with the United States of America** and to mitigate our disagreements through well intentioned and genuine efforts. We would like to maintain and enhance our bilateral cooperation on the basis of mutual interests and respect for sovereign decisions.

We expect the **United States to take concrete steps** on issues that directly threaten our national security. In fact, there are two fundamental issues. We expect the U.S. to cease its engagement with **PKK/PYD/YPG** in Syria and act on our extradition requests regarding **FETÖ**.

The procurement of S-400s from Russia has been taken out of its context. We purchased this system to fulfill our defense requirements. While this is the case, linking this issue to our participation in the F-35 program and with sanctions that have no relevance whatsoever to Turkey goes against the spirit of alliance.

The person who understands this best is the U.S. President Donald Trump. If the U.S. adopts a constructive approach, we can return to joint thinking, result-oriented consultation and cooperation regarding our relations.

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Ibn Khaldun's saying, "**geography is destiny,**" and our proverb "**do not choose a house, but rather pick your neighbor right**" have a solid, complementary geopolitical logic.

In the pursuit of peace and development in our region, **improving key regional relations** is important. We attach special value to our relations with important regional actors.

Our relations with **Russia** are making progress day by day on a transparent and solid foundation. This relationship is based on mutual respect and common interests. The concrete results we have achieved over the recent years need no explanation here.

When both sides meet, we express our views candidly, especially concerning various regional issues. **This does not affect our policies towards other countries.** Our support to the territorial integrity of Georgia and Ukraine, and to our Crimean Tatar kin are the most concrete examples in this sense. On the issues we agree or disagree, **we will continue to engage in dialogue and find avenues for cooperation with Russia** so that we can contribute to regional stability.

We attach importance to our relations with **Iran** both in terms of good neighbourliness and regional issues. The unilateral sanctions imposed by the U.S. are harmful to the people of Iran, as well as to the economies of Turkey and others in the region with commercial ties to Iran. Rather than unilateral actions, dialogue and diplomacy are required to de-escalate tensions.

We are an inseparable part of the **Balkans**. We will continue our contributions to overcome the fragile situation in the Balkans and to ensure stability and development in the region.

We will continue our contributions towards ending the conflicts in this region.

Starting with Bosnia and Herzegovina, our support to the countries critical to the future of the region, will never be withheld.

We support regional ownership and the region's integration with Europe and Euro-Atlantic institutions.

We are further strengthening our ties with the **Turkic World**. We will celebrate the 10th Anniversary of the Turkic Council at the Leaders' Summit to be hosted by brotherly Azerbaijan in October. We also want to see Uzbekistan as a member in this fraternal organization. We welcome **Hungary's observer status** in the Council.

We will continue strengthening our network of relations from the Caucasus to Central Asia on the basis of friendship, solidarity, mutual respect and cooperation, by also taking into account the regional dynamics. The trilateral and quadrilateral mechanisms we established in the Caucasus are already proving to be fruitful.

The momentum we achieved in our relations with **Africa**, the second largest continent of the world, is continuing with growing pace. **We established the institutional basis of our relations with Africa over the last decade.** We have increased our trade volume to 23 billion US Dollars. Our companies are operating airports and seaports in Africa. We attach importance to developing our trade in a balanced manner and our economic relations based on a win-win approach.

At the **Third Turkey-Africa Partnership Summit in Turkey** in 2020, we will together determine a roadmap for the years ahead. Our objective is to further contribute to sustainable development, peace and prosperity on the continent. Our solidarity with the African countries, with whom we agree on many key topics on the international agenda, is also increasing on international fora.

In this era where distances no longer matter, we are establishing new bonds with Latin America and the Caribbean. With three new embassies, we have attained one of the largest diplomatic networks in the region. One by one, we are reaching the goals set by our Action Plan. We continue our relations with various regional organizations at the institutional level. We contribute to the initiatives that will enhance peace and security in the region.

**Distinguished Ambassadors,
Dear Colleagues,**

Among our constant and most fundamental priorities is, without doubt, standing together with our citizens, kin and relatives abroad.

We are legally and morally responsible for protecting the rights of the **Turkish community in Europe. Over 6 million strong**, they constitute the majority of the Muslims in many European countries. They face racism, discrimination and xenophobia.

Equal opportunities and tolerance in all areas from education to employment are important for our citizens to successfully adapt to the societies they live in.

Overcoming the difficulties faced by our citizens will remain to be the primary duty of our Embassies and Consulates General.

In a period where anti-immigrant sentiments are on the rise, we host more than 4 million displaced people, 3.6 million of whom are from Syria, with the awareness of our humanitarian responsibility.

With the objective of supporting entrepreneurs who search for solutions to the needs of the refugees, we have launched the **Sustainable Development Goals Impact Accelerator** project with United Nations Development Programme. Through this project, our Ministry brought together the public and the private sectors to support the refugees.

We expect support from our partners in fulfilling this humanitarian responsibility.

Thanks to our efforts, countries in Europe are experiencing the lowest levels of migration and asylum of the past five years. The European Union, too, must fulfill all its commitments. The burden sharing mechanism must be implemented until Syrians return home.

We also expect support from our partners in the fight against terrorism. Double standards and hypocrisy in the fight against terrorism must end. Terrorism is a crime against humanity, and to fight against it is a common duty of all humanity. Turkey's fight against terrorism is a **contribution to all humanity.**

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We are ceaselessly continuing our **campaign against FETÖ**. We tell our interlocutors that FETÖ poses a significant risk to the countries where they are present as well. **We track FETÖ members wherever they are to deprive them of their capabilities and to bring them to justice.**

To date, FETÖ-affiliated schools in 22 countries have been shut down; schools in 19 countries have been transferred to the Turkish Maarif Foundation (TMV). To date, TMV has taken over or opened 290 schools around the world with close to 30,000 students enrolled to them. Likewise, through our joint efforts, FETÖ affiliated so-called trade structures, media outlets, companies and associations were shut down in 40 countries.

Terrorism is a scourge of the international system and feeds on its vulnerabilities.

There is a need to fix and fortify the international system. We are working to make the **international organizations** more effective. We are saying that “**the world is bigger than five**” so that the UN Security Council can become more in tune with global realities.

We are doubling our efforts as the co-chair of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations as well. The High Representative Mr. Moratinos will also address this Conference.

Esteemed Ambassadors,

We are obliged to closely follow and analyze regional and global developments and safeguard our interests.

We must work to **manage crises** on the one hand and **create favorable conditions** on the other. **We must see the opportunities and seize them. We must make good use of human resources and technology.**

In a rapidly changing world, under the leadership of our President, at the service of our nation, **we, at the Ministry, are always thinking of ways to increase our effectiveness and produce new methods and tools.**

Enterprising Foreign Policy also means being **innovative.**

Today, I am announcing two new initiatives for the first time aimed at improving our relations with the **Asian** continent in a planned and focused manner, which is quickly becoming the center of gravity of the world; making Turkey one of the centers for **thought production in the field of diplomacy**; and keeping Turkish diplomacy at pace with the rapidly developing **digital environment.**

Let's start with Asia.

In the 21st century, being effective in the areas of economy and diplomacy as well as on the ground and at the table requires embracing Asia. Asia is becoming the economic center of the world.

Different actors in the international community are in a competition to increase their presence in Asia **whereas our roots in this most dynamic part of the world run deep. Just like being European in Europe, to be Asian in Asia is valuable for us.** What makes us unique and special is our strong **standing on these two pillars.**

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Turkey's Asia policy to date has been successful. Now, there is a need for a new opening that will keep our approach up-to-date and carry it into the future. It is high-time to formulate a **new policy that recognizes the diversity of Asia but also has a holistic perspective towards the region.**

Today, we announce here, our new initiative: "Asia Anew."

We will further improve our relations in a holistic manner. We want to capture a brand new energy with all of Asia, on the basis of mutual respect, principles embodied in the United Nations Charter, common values and harmony.

This approach will reflect the basic tenets of our Enterprising and Humanitarian Foreign Policy that is active on the ground and at the table.

We will develop the tools that we require to comprehensively embrace Asia with the cooperation of **public and private sector, university as well as civil society.** We will think widely on many areas including **education, defence industry, investments, trade, technology, culture and political dialogue.**

The ASEAN meeting in Bangkok that I recently participated in and the contacts I made there with my Asian colleagues once again showed how timely and necessary our initiative is. In addition to all these, from September onwards Turkey will assume the **Chairmanship of Asia Cooperation Dialogue for the term of 2019-2020**, which is the most widely participated in forum on the Asian continent.

The aim of Asia Anew is not to pick an axis.

Our goal is to solidify Turkey's role as a conduit between Europe and Asia, to contribute towards our nation's sustainable development and progress as an information society.

As a second initiative, we will focus on the head-spinning developments taking place in the area of digital technology.

These developments affect diplomacy on all dimensions - its ground, its table and its theory.

We can see that it is possible to follow the global trends more effectively, to prevent crises with early warning systems, to use public diplomacy for reaching directly target audiences and deliver consular services more efficiently.

The state-of-the-art autonomous weapons will replace conventional battlefields. Big data and artificial intelligence will offer new capabilities for conflict prevention and resolution at the roundtables of diplomacy.

None of these are futuristic. **The future is already here!**

Though few in numbers, several Ministries of Foreign Affairs around the world are already making efforts to adapt to the digital age. We will be left behind if we **simply sit back and observe the effects of new technologies on foreign policy.**

In the digital age, we are all "digital diplomats" and we must use these tools effectively.

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Therefore, I have instructed my Ministry to work on the impact of **new technologies on foreign policy and on the necessary steps for transformation** in coordination with relevant authorities.

Digital technologies will also be the main theme of the UN Group of Friends of Mediation Ministerial Meeting that we will co-chair in New York this September.

As you know, leading countries and powers today go beyond the ground and the table while setting their foreign policy agendas. They create and use fora and international events where new ideas and trends are debated, and opinion-makers and decision-makers come together. **Together they set the agenda and the discourse.** We will also be engaged in similar efforts in the future.

**Dear Colleagues,
Dear Ambassadors of the Republic of Turkey,**

Our motherland is the most precious thing in the world entrusted to us.

It is an honourable duty to serve this nation with a unique history, culture and civilization. An honour to serve this well-established state and to live under its glorious banner. As its guardians, representatives around the world. As a Turkish Ambassador, a Turkish diplomat and as its Foreign Service.

Turgut Uyar could not have expressed our sentiments better:

**“I loved you from one end to the other;
All the way to Kars from Edirne.
Always talking highly of
The stone, the soil and the brave.”**

We are the five senses of Turkey wherever we serve in the world.

Being strong and standing strong. Siding with the truth and the righteous. **Inspiring others by our strength and helping those in need.** This is the kind of country we represent. A responsible and respected member of international community. Guardian of tranquillity, peace, stability and prosperity. A glimmer of hope for the oppressed.

We are working for an Enterprising and Humanitarian Foreign Policy, active on the ground and at the table, as an instrument of “Peace at home and peace in the world”.

On the centenary of the struggle that led to the establishment of our Republic, we are the Ambassadors of a state, government and nation that have set their objective to go beyond the level of contemporary civilization.

We will succeed in all these endeavours together. Hand in hand and shoulder to shoulder.

I salute all our Ambassadors and participants with love, respect and sincerest greetings.