

**JOINT POLITICAL DECLARATION ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE
HIGH LEVEL STRATEGIC COOPERATION COUNCIL BETWEEN
GOVERNMENTS OF THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY AND THE REPUBLIC OF
IRAQ**

The relationship between the Republic of Turkey and the Republic of Iraq is characterized by strong social bonds of common history, culture and brotherly neighboring relations.

Turkey and Iraq share the same ideals in their regional objectives and these objectives are the promotion of peace, stability, freedom, prosperity and enhanced mechanisms of dialogue for increased economic cooperation and coordination.

In addition to their shared objectives, Turkey and Iraq face challenges and opportunities which require their concerted efforts. These challenges, together with the opportunities formed the basis of the "Memorandum of Understanding between the Republic of Iraq and the Republic of Turkey" signed by Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri Al Maliki and Turkish Prime Minister Tayyip Erdoğan on August 7, 2007 in Turkey.

The two sides, reiterating their commitments to the elements and principles of cooperation enshrined in this Memorandum of Understanding as well as their vision for their common future have decided to culminate their cooperation by forming a High Level Strategic Cooperation Council between Turkey and Iraq, based on the initiative of President Jalal Talabani during his visit to Turkey dated 7-8 March 2008.

Governments of the Republic of Turkey and Republic of Iraq are hereby committed to developing a long term Strategic Partnership with the aim of enhancing solidarity between Turkish and Iraqi peoples.

This Council will be headed by Prime Ministers of the Republic of Turkey and Republic of Iraq. Coordination of the work of the Council and finalization of its agenda for each meeting will be undertaken by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of both countries. Ministers in charge of energy, trade, investments, security and water resources will be members of the Council. With the development of cooperation to cover other economic areas of mutual interest the Prime Ministers may decide to enlarge the Council to include ministers responsible for such areas in their respective countries. High Level Strategic Cooperation Council will convene at least once a year under the Co-Chairmanship of the Prime Ministers. The Council will also have three meetings every year at Ministerial level. Senior level official meetings will take place once every three months in their respective capitals. Action Plans will be developed by the respective Ministers to accelerate cooperation in their areas of responsibility.

This Strategic Partnership will include a wide range of issues, foremost of which is cooperation in the political, economic, energy, water, cultural, security and military fields on the basis of following principles:

A. Political, Diplomatic and Cultural spheres

1. Supporting the efforts of the Iraqi government in fighting terrorism and preserving Iraq's independence, full sovereignty, territorial integrity and national unity against threats,
2. Concluding bilateral agreements in a speedy and timely manner to help establish stronger bonds between the two countries,
3. Emphasizing the Neighboring Countries as well as the Expanded Neighboring Countries meetings' commitments in support of Iraqi Government and its efforts to attain the goals of the Iraqi people for a free, independent, united, democratic, federal and prosperous Iraq.
4. Committing to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, in respecting internationally recognized borders; and pledging adherence to the principle of non-interference in internal affairs,
5. Respecting the richness of the multi-cultural, multi-religious, and multi-ethnic structure of Iraq and the importance of securing and respecting peaceful coexistence of all communities, as well as the Iraqi identity, for the future of Iraq,
6. Encouraging diplomatic, cultural, educational and scientific exchange programs for the government officials, as well as the students between the two countries and enhancing cooperation between institutions in the fields of higher education, technology and technical know-how,
7. Cooperating and coordinating their policies in international and regional forums, inter alia, by reciprocally supporting requests for candidacies in international organizations, committees and posts.

B. Economic and Energy Related spheres

1. Concluding strategic economic cooperation and integration agreements between the two countries before the end of 2008,
2. Encouraging cooperation to increase tourism and to facilitate tour operations in both countries,
3. Enhancing cooperation to increase their trade relations to the mutual benefit of their people and concluding a Free Trade Agreement between Turkey and Iraq to this end,
4. Encouraging and working on joint programs to establish free trade and industrial zones to contribute to increasing local employment and investments in Iraq; as well as to enhance trade relations among neighboring countries,
5. Cooperating in reconstruction work with a view to meeting the basic needs and services of the people of Iraq,

6. Encouraging cooperation in the field of water resources and agriculture to assist Iraq in meeting its agricultural needs and water requirements including irrigation by taking into account Turkey's agricultural needs and water requirements to provide such assistance,
7. Supporting cooperation in the field of transport infrastructure of Iraq with the aim of integrating Iraq with Europe through Turkey,
8. Encouraging public and private sector companies to increase cooperation in investments in both countries as well as enhancing trade relations between Turkey and Iraq,
9. In view of the increasing role the small and medium size companies play in terms of employment and welfare, supporting cooperation between small and medium size companies in all walks of economic life with a view to increasing employment opportunities in their respective countries,
10. Initiating exchange programs among the relevant economic and financial institutions of both countries to encourage these institutions to develop partnerships in the financial and banking sectors in their countries,
11. Supporting Iraq's economic development through assistance programs in its efforts of transition into a market based economy,
12. Cooperating in the field of energy by establishing partnerships between Turkish and Iraqi companies as well as transporting Iraqi natural resources to the world markets through most viable export routes, in this context upgrading and expanding the existing capacity of Kirkuk-Yumurtalık oil pipeline; and building a pipeline network to transport natural gas from Iraq to international markets via Turkey,
13. Realizing projects which would assist Iraq and Turkey in meeting their electricity needs, as well as organizing programs for the Iraqi personnel in the electricity sector.
14. Expediting the opening of new border gates between Turkey and Iraq.

C. Security and Military Cooperation spheres

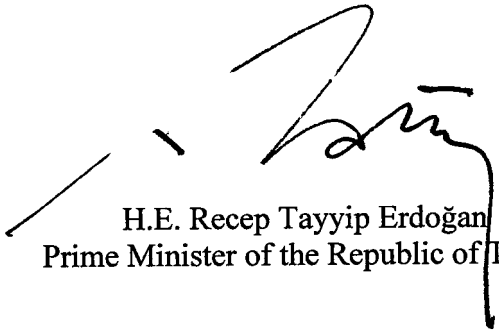
1. Respecting the security of the territories of each other and supporting the joint efforts of Iraq and Turkey to prevent the transit of terrorists and illegal arms to and from Iraq and emphasizing the importance of strengthening cooperation between Iraq and Turkey to control their common borders and prevent all kinds of illicit trafficking, including financial, logistical and all other support for terrorists and terrorist organizations; as well as rejecting all use of language that encourages violence and terror,
2. Finalization of the Military Framework Agreement between the General Staffs of the two countries,
3. With reference to and in accordance with the "Declaration of Principles between the General Staff of the Turkish Republic and the General Staff of the Iraqi Republic",

3. With reference to and in accordance with the "Declaration of Principles between the General Staff of the Turkish Republic and the General Staff of the Iraqi Republic", supporting the ongoing cooperation between the Turkish and Iraqi Deputy Chiefs of General Staff in their efforts to finalize the Military Cooperation Agreement, for the training and education of Iraqi officers,

4. Concluding the Agreement on Combating Terrorism between the Republic of Turkey and the Republic of Iraq.

5. Enhancing trade relations and investments in defense related industries by encouraging trade relations and investment partnerships between their respective public and private companies.

This Joint Political Declaration was concluded in Baghdad on July 10, 2008 and signed by



H.E. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan
Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey



H.E. Nouri Al Maliki
Prime Minister of the Republic of Iraq