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# “President Erdoğan Stated That Ethical Rules Will Continue to Serve as a Guide for Public Officials”

President Erdoğan said during his speech at the “Signing Ceremony of the Cooperation Protocol on Ethics Education and Training of Ethics Educators,” “The public interest is above everything else. Our primary priority is ensuring that each of our citizens benefits from public services equally, fairly, and effectively.”

President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan attended the “Signing Ceremony of the Cooperation Protocol on Ethics Education and Training of Ethics Educators” held at the Presidential Complex and delivered a speech. President Erdoğan congratulated all public officials on Ethics Day and Ethics Week, expressed his gratitude to public employees who serve diligently both domestically and abroad, and wished them success in their duties. Stating his hope that the activities and events to be held during Ethics Week would be beneficial for the country and the nation, President Erdoğan said: “I find the cooperation protocol signed between our two esteemed institutions extremely meaningful and appropriate. This protocol, which foresees the organization of educational and awareness activities and the training of qualified instructors, will play a significant role in spreading ethical awareness in the public sector. I hope the protocol brings beneficial outcomes for both institutions. I extend my gratitude once again to the Chairperson of the Board and to our Minister of Family and Social Services.”

## “THE PUBLIC OFFICIALS ETHICS BOARD CONTRIBUTES TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ETHICAL AWARENESS”

President Erdoğan stated that the Public Officials Ethics Board, which they established in 2004 to enhance the quality of public services and strengthen ethical values, has recently carried out effective and successful work. He continued: “Our Board contributes to the establishment of ethical awareness in our country through its investigations and research activities, its collaborations with various institutions and ministries, and its organization of trainings, seminars, conferences, and panels. Last year, a total of 228,922 public officials received ethics-centered training through our Board. Various activities were organized to ensure that values, principles, rules, and standards are fully embraced and implemented. I want it to be known that I consider these efforts very valuable in terms of efficiency, productivity, and transparency in public services. I extend my thanks to our Chairperson Ms. Zerrin, to the members of the Board,

and to all personnel of our Ethics Board for their efforts and dedication. I also offer my gratitude to all members who have served successfully in the Board until today. I pray to God for success in the future endeavors of our Public Officials Ethics Board. As President, I will continue to provide them with strong support as needed.”

Reminding that the Republic of Turkey is a state with a strong tradition, President Erdoğan added: “Our state experience has a deep-rooted history that exceeds 2,000 years. When we examine this past in all its stages, two truths consistently emerge. The first is that our ancestors had a very strong founding will and an unyielding spirit of independence. Even in the darkest moments of our history, our forefathers managed to establish new states that would endure for centuries. This tradition, shaped by the principle of continuity embodied in the expression ‘eternal state,’ clearly reveals how skilled our nation is in organization and revival. The second truth is the human-centered approach in our concept of governance and administration. The principle of ‘Let the human live so the state may live’ and the motto ‘service to the people is service to God’ have guided our management philosophy for centuries.”

## “THE PUBLIC INTEREST IS ABOVE EVERYTHING ELSE”

President Erdoğan continued his remarks, saying: “Throughout our history, every flag we raised in the skies has been a symbol of goodness, justice, prosperity, peace, virtue, and faith on Earth. The spirit that transfers tradition,

custom, moral values, and codes from the past to the future is preserved in this national structure and national consciousness. All the qualities we define today as ‘ethics’ have manifested in our national character through these very concepts. The importance given to knowledge, morality, competence, and merit has undoubtedly played a major role in maintaining stability in state governance and public service.”

“Look how Nizamülmülk expressed this matter a thousand years ago in his work Siyasetname: ‘When we assign major responsibilities to individuals who are without character, nobility, or virtue, we render scholars, nobles, and virtuous people idle and useless.’ Our Lord also commands in the Holy Quran: ‘Indeed, Allah commands you to render trusts to whom they are due and when you judge between people to judge with justice.’” Emphasizing that merit, competence, justice, and peace are interconnected and mutually reinforcing values—especially in state affairs—President Erdoğan reminded that even the smallest concession in these areas can lead to increasingly larger challenges and destructions, as recorded in the pages of history. President Erdoğan added: “No matter the position, rank, or title, I want to remind every one of my colleagues in public service of this: each of these positions is temporary. These duties and authorities are entrusted to us by the nation. What truly matters is to serve the people sincerely and to earn the consent of God and the goodwill of our nation. The public interest is above everything else.”

## “THE STATE MEANS A MECHANISM THAT SERVES ITS CITIZENS”

President Erdoğan stated that ensuring each citizen benefits from public services equally, fairly, and effectively is one of their most fundamental priorities. He said: “In this context, we have never and will never show leniency to anyone who abuses their duty and authority, fails to respond to the demands and expectations of the people, becomes part of the problem instead of the solution, damages the dignity, reputation, and benevolent identity of the state, squanders public goods and resources, or lays hands on the public treasury.” Using the expression, “We will not



tolerate anyone who oppresses the citizens they are obliged to serve by abusing the power of their position,” President Erdoğan stated, “The state means order, regulation, and discipline. The state is the mechanism that serves its citizens.” He emphasized that in both the state and society, order is ensured not only by laws but also by conscience, and that the fact that an action or decision is in line with the law does not necessarily mean it is ethical or legitimate. President Erdoğan underlined that no one will be allowed to exploit gaps in the legislation and say, “I did it, so it’s done,” thereby violating even a single citizen’s rights or the rule of law. He expressed that public personnel, who are responsible for delivering public services to the nation, are expected to show the utmost sensitivity on these matters. Stressing that every citizen who prioritizes the public good, complies with legal and ethical standards, strives to address the problems of the people, and works with a strong sense of duty holds a place of high esteem in the nation, President Erdoğan said, “I congratulate these colleagues of ours. May God be pleased with them.”







“We Have Taken All Steps to Ensure the State Mechanism Functions More Effectively”

President Erdoğan said that in a people-oriented state administration, ethical principles are at least as important as legal provisions for a government that prioritizes serving its people.

He noted that ethical rules are not merely regulations or even restrictions that public officials must follow; they also ensure that every public employee performs their duties properly and acts with a consciousness of serving their state and nation. President Erdoğan continued his remarks as follows:

“To reinforce this awareness, we established and implemented ethical rules within public administration in 2005. We have taken all the necessary steps to ensure the state mechanism operates more efficiently and to guarantee that the state delivers faster, more effective, and higher-quality services to our citizens. Thankfully, over the past 20 years, there has been significant accumulation of knowledge and practical examples in this regard. Today, I am pleased to say that we have made substantial progress in maturing the model of the state we aspire to. I sincerely appreciate the efforts of the Public Officials Ethics Board, which has played a major role in institutionalizing this system.”



Recalling past difficulties, President Erdoğan said, “In the recent past, we suffered greatly from the bureaucratic oligarchy, the ‘come today, return tomorrow’ mentality, and the ‘this cardholder is my relative’ mindset.” He expressed that those who saw themselves as superior to the public, avoided interacting with citizens, and displayed arrogance caused great suffering to the people for years.

President Erdoğan added: “We experienced days when treacherous organizations like FETÖ, terrorist

groups, and various criminal networks infiltrated the ranks of the state and threatened our nation’s future. With the support we received from our people, we managed to overcome all these challenges, trials, and coup attempts with our heads held high.”

#### “4 Million 590 Thousand Applications Were Made to CİMER in 2024”

President Erdoğan emphasized that they have ensured citizens receive first-class service without needing personal connections or intermediaries. He stated that throughout their 23 years in power, they have worked day and night to improve public services, raise service standards, and make services more accessible.

He continued: “With the legal and constitutional regulations we have enacted, we have increased efficiency in the public sector. We introduced new institutions and mechanisms, such as the Presidential Communication Center (CİMER), to expand avenues for seeking justice and accessing information. We implemented a modern version of the groundbreaking ‘white desk’ initiative we started at the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality in 1994, extending it nationwide through CİMER. Acting as a bridge between the state and the public, CİMER received 4 million 590 thousand applications in 2024. As a symbol of our participatory governance approach, CİMER has also played a key role in exposing numerous criminal organizations closely followed by the public. By tearing down the walls that once stood between the people and the state, we have strengthened the bureaucratic capacity of politics. We have eliminated obstacles standing in the way of national will. We found solutions to the chronic political instability that for years invited tutelage and bureaucratic oligarchy. We have established justice in representation and stability in governance, for which we are grateful. From now on, we will continue with the same determination and commitment to bring works and services to our nation. We will continue to implement our ‘Century of Türkiye’ goals, one by one, with our knowledgeable, conscientious, moral, and visionary public officials, and with all our institutions.”

# OTS Secretary General Omuraliev: Hungary’s Hosting Increases Its Role Among Member States

**Secretary General of the Organization of Turkic States (OTS), Kubanychbek Omuraliev, stated that Hungary, an observer member, hosting the OTS Informal Summit for the first time demonstrates Budapest’s increasing role within the organization.**



Omuraliev wrote an article regarding the OTS Informal Summit held on May 20–21 in Budapest, the capital of Hungary.

He explained that the OTS has long been bound by shared cultural and historical heritage and was officially established in 2009. He also recalled that the 15th anniversary of the OTS was celebrated in Ankara in October 2024.

Omuraliev pointed out that in 15 years, cooperation among the member states has expanded to cover more than 35 areas. He emphasized the active roles of various bodies under the OTS, including the International Organization of Turkic Culture (TÜRKSOY), the Parliamentary Assembly of Turkic States (TURKPA), the Turkic Academy, the Turkic Culture and Heritage Foundation, the Union of Turkic Chambers of Commerce and Industry, and the Turkic Investment Fund.

Highlighting the collaboration with different international organizations, Omuraliev underlined that this was the first time an observer member hosted an OTS Informal Summit, which signifies Hungary’s growing role within the OTS.

Omuraliev noted that many regional and global issues were discussed during the summit and that the Budapest Declaration was signed at its conclusion. The declaration reaffirmed the regional integration, strategic orientation, and commitment of the OTS.

He shared that the leaders signed the decision regarding Uzbekistan becoming a part of the Turkic Culture and Heritage Foundation, and that the Council of Foreign Ministers signed the decision to appoint an Executive Director to the OTS Representation Office in Hungary.

Omuraliev stated that the foreign ministers approved the decision to grant the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) observer status in the Turkic Academy. He also mentioned that a ceremony was held to present the “Ali-Shir Nava’i International Award” to Nobel Laureate in Chemistry, Prof. Dr. Aziz Sancar. Omuraliev emphasized that the award honors Sancar’s scientific contributions and his dedication to the unity and identity of the Turkic world.

**SOURCE: VEDAT KURT**



# Traditional Festivities of Kyrgyzstan Celebrated with Joy in Iznik

Ambassador of Kyrgyzstan Ruslan Kazakbaev emphasized Kyrgyz-Turkish friendship during the event in Iznik.



## Traditional Kyrgyz Festivities Celebrated with Joy in Iznik

**I**ZNİK (Civil Initiative) Zeliha Sorkunlu/ Kyrgyz Festivities, traditionally organized every year by the Kyrgyz Republic, were held this year in the Iznik district of Bursa. The event was attended by the Ambassador of Kyrgyzstan to Ankara, Ruslan Kazakbaev, Iznik District Governor Arif Karaman, Mayor Kağan Mehmet Usta, AK Party Iznik District Chairman İnanç Şahin, Consul General of the Kyrgyz Republic in Istanbul Lira Sydykova, Consul General of the Kyrgyz Republic in Antalya Rustam Koshonov, Honorary Consul of Kyrgyzstan in Bolu Atillahan Kurt, Honorary Consul of Kyrgyzstan in Bursa Bilal Tutuş, and many Kyrgyz citizens. The delegation visited the Kyrgyz Tomb and, after offering prayers, visited Iznik Mayor Kağan Mehmet Usta in his office. At the event, which took place in the area next to the Iznik Municipality İzzet Peşte Water Sports Camp and Training Center, traditional Kyrgyz dishes were cooked, traditional games were played, and the festivities were celebrated with great enthusiasm.

Iznik Mayor Kağan Mehmet Usta Emphasizes Kyrgyz-Turkish Friendship In his speech at the event, Iznik Mayor Kağan Mehmet Usta said: "Today, here in Iznik, which has hosted many civilizations throughout history and is a meeting point of cultures, we are happy to host the traditional festivities of our Kyrgyz brothers. Kyrgyz culture, which has its roots in the vast steppes of Central Asia, has a rich history centered on hospitality, solidarity, and living in harmony with

nature. Keeping this culture alive and promoting it here in Iznik is not only a cultural enrichment for us but also a step that strengthens our heartfelt ties." Mayor Usta also emphasized that such events reinforce the friendship between the two peoples and contribute to the strengthening of cultural ties.

In his speech, Mayor Usta also said: "Today, we are not only sharing our meals, games, and traditions. We are also underlining our common history, friendship, and brotherhood. This event once again shows how deep and strong the ties between Turkey, Iznik, and Kyrgyzstan are."

Ambassador of Kyrgyzstan Ruslan Kazakbaev: "Kyrgyz-Turkish Friendship Is Growing Stronger Every Day"

The Ambassador of Kyrgyzstan to Ankara, Ruslan Kazakbaev, gave a brief speech at the event, stating that the festivities are an important occasion that reinforces the friendship between Kyrgyzstan and Turkey. Kazakbaev said: "Such cultural events are the best way to strengthen the relations between our two countries. It is a great pleasure for me to be here with you today and to have the opportunity to experience more closely the hospitality and culture of the Kyrgyz people. Kyrgyzstan and Turkey have a historically rooted friendship, and we will continue to work together to carry this friendship into the future."

Kazakbaev emphasized that the event organized in Iznik was an important occasion where the two peoples shared their cultural richness and strengthened their friendship.

**Bolu Honorary Consul Atillahan Kurt: "Ties Between Kyrgyzstan and Turkey Are Deepening"**

Bolu Honorary Consul of Kyrgyzstan, Atillahan Kurt, also made a brief speech at the event. "The brotherhood between Kyrgyzstan and Turkey is not limited to diplomatic relations but is also deepening



through cultural and humanitarian ties.

This event in Iznik gave us the opportunity to get to know the rich culture, traditions, and hospitality of Central Asia. Seeing more and more Kyrgyz citizens here each year is a reflection of these strong ties."

"We will continue to work together for the further strengthening of relations between Kyrgyzstan and Turkey," Kurt added, noting that such events allow both peoples to get better acquainted and help to strengthen relations.

**Iznik Tile Presented in Memory of the Day**

During the event, Iznik Mayor Kağan Mehmet Usta presented Iznik tiles to Kyrgyzstan Ambassador to Ankara Ruslan Kazakbaev, Kyrgyzstan Consul General in Istanbul Lira Sydykova, Kyrgyzstan Consul General in Antalya Rustam Koshonov, and Bolu Honorary Consul Atillahan Kurt.

**Kyrgyz Festivities Invest in Cultural Wealth**

This event, held in Iznik, is not merely a festive gathering but continues to serve as a bridge between Turkey and Kyrgyzstan, deepening cultural ties. Such festivities allow both peoples to get to know each other more closely, reinforcing mutual respect and understanding.





# Turkish Foreign Minister Fidan Meets with Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov in Moscow

Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov met in the Russian capital, Moscow.

During the portion of the meeting open to the press, Fidan expressed his satisfaction at being in Moscow once again and praised the productive program. He said, “Yesterday, I was received by (Russian President Vladimir) Putin, and I had the opportunity to convey the sincere greetings, best wishes, and important messages of President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan.”

Touching on Turkey-Russia relations, Fidan stated: “Our relations are progressing in a very healthy manner in line with the direction set by our leaders. In our rapidly changing region, the deep-rooted relations between Turkey and Russia play an important role in ensuring stability and security. The fact that Russia chose Istanbul for direct negotiations with Ukraine reflects our countries’ shared understanding aimed at establishing stability.” Fidan noted that his talks with Lavrov would cover all aspects of the multidimensional relations between the two countries, including energy, economy, and regional issues, particularly in the Middle East and Africa.

**“Our cooperation in trade and investment is developing”** Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov also expressed his pleasure at hosting Fidan and his delegation in Moscow. Emphasizing that the intensive and comprehensive agenda between Russia and Turkey is shaped by Presidents Putin and Erdoğan, Lavrov highlighted Fidan’s meeting with Putin the previous day and said: “Our mutual business-oriented and results-driven approach to deepening our partnership was reaffirmed during yesterday’s meeting. We have many important plans for bilateral cooperation. We aim to eliminate unlawful external barriers in the topics discussed. Our cooperation in trade

and investment is growing and will continue to grow.” Lavrov stated that he and Fidan would discuss matters related to implementing the goals set by their respective leaders, adding: “Russia and Turkey are involved in international initiatives aimed at improving the situation in various regions, including North Africa and the Middle East. As President Putin mentioned yesterday, we value Turkey’s role in potentially facilitating direct negotiations with the Ukrainian side once again.”

Lavrov further stated, “We share a common perspective with Turkey on the Palestinian issue. What is happening in Gaza and the West Bank is unacceptable.” He added, “For a second round of negotiations with Ukraine, we may once again turn to our Turkish friends.”

## Joint Press Conference by Foreign Ministers Fidan and Lavrov

Speaking at a joint press conference following his meeting with Lavrov in Moscow, Foreign Minister Fidan said they also discussed international issues. Fidan noted that there have been significant developments over the past five months in establishing political and economic stability and security in



Syria. Despite ongoing “disinformation campaigns,” he highlighted that the Syrian government has largely gained the support of both the public and the international community. He added that Syria is continuously improving its capabilities and capacity in the fight against terrorism and organized crime. Pointing out that Turkey supports efforts to unify all military groups in Syria under a national army and centralized command, Fidan stressed the importance of all relevant parties using their influence to implement the memorandum signed on March 10 between President Ahmed Shara and Ferhad Abdi Şahin.

Fidan emphasized the importance of the decisions by the United States and the European Union to lift sanctions,

underlining that Turkey, under President Erdoğan’s leadership, has conducted intensive diplomatic efforts to have these sanctions lifted and that they are pleased with the results of those efforts.

## “Turkey and Russia will continue working to preserve Syria’s unity”

Fidan said that he and Lavrov discussed all these matters during today’s meeting, adding: “As Turkey and Russia, we will continue to work for the preservation of Syria’s unity and territorial integrity. At the same time, we will continue our efforts to ensure the Syrian people achieve prosperity and stability.” He noted that in addition to Syria, he and Lavrov also discussed one of the region’s most pressing crises — Gaza and the Palestinian issue.

“The ongoing genocide and humanitarian tragedy there must be stopped immediately,” Fidan said. “Otherwise, as we have always stated, no one will be able to prevent a major chaos and escalation that will engulf Israel as well. This much blood, suffering, and pain cannot go unanswered. It must stop immediately. Humanity and the international community must do everything they can to recover from this test they have failed. We will continue to work with Russia in this regard,” he concluded.





## German Chancellor Merz: EU may retaliate against US tech companies with tariffs

Merz called on Europeans to unite and show confidence in the face of the tariff dispute with the US, saying the EU could retaliate against US technology companies if the trade dispute with the Trump administration escalates.



German Chancellor Friedrich Merz called on Europeans to show unity and self-confidence in the face of the tariff dispute with the United States, saying the European Union (EU) could retaliate against US technology companies if the trade dispute with the Donald Trump administration escalates. Friedrich Merz said at the European Forum event organized by the West German Radio and Television Corporation (WDR), referring to US President Donald Trump's tariff threats, "We are not begging. Let's not make ourselves smaller than we are."

Pointing out that Europe, with its 500 million consumers, is the second-largest market for many US companies after the United States, Merz said that the EU must protect its own interests.

Merz said, "Right now, we are saving American technology companies a lot of money in terms of taxes. This does not have to stay like this; it can be changed." Stating that he fully supports the approach of European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen in the tariff dispute with the US, Merz reiterated Germany's stance that it will not enter into side agreements but will allow the EU to handle trade issues.

**"We must not react carelessly and hastily. In our view, tariffs will hurt us. But if we cannot do anything else, we must use this tool (retaliation against US technology companies)."**

Merz said that he takes Trump's statements very seriously "even though he knows they will not have a long shelf life," adding that additional tariffs are in nobody's interest.

## President Aliyev: Attacks on Islam Have Become State Policy



The 3rd International Conference on Combating Islamophobia was held in Baku, organized with the support of Anadolu Agency as a "Global Communication Partner." President Aliyev's message to the participants of the conference was read by Presidential Assistant Hikmet Hajiyev. In his message, President Aliyev stated: "Unfortunately, Islamophobia has recently taken on a more explicit and systematic character on a global level. Today, this negative phenomenon is observed not only in specific countries but also in many parts of the world. Hostility toward Islam, hatred, and intolerance against Muslims are becoming more widespread and are intensifying."

Aliyev, noting that Islamophobia manifests in different forms, said: "Islamophobia appears in various forms—from racism and discrimination against Muslims in daily life, hate speech, physical attacks, stigmatization in the media and on social media platforms, to institutional discrimination and other similar practices. These unfair and biased approaches seriously hinder the ability of Muslims to integrate into society and to feel like equal citizens."

Highlighting that in some Western countries Islamophobia has turned into an official policy, Aliyev said: "In some countries that historically engaged in the slave trade, pursued colonialism and occupation, and committed genocide—countries that now portray themselves as defenders of human rights and democratic values—Islamophobia has effectively become a form of state policy. Under the guise of protecting secular values, laws are

enacted in these countries that restrict the rights and religious freedoms of Muslims, violating their basic rights such as access to education, housing, and employment."

**"Attacks on Islam and Muslims under the pretext of freedom of expression are unacceptable"** Stressing that acts that insult Islam are unacceptable, Aliyev stated: "Attempts to insult Prophet Muhammad, the burning of the Holy Quran, attacks on mosques and places of worship, and the destruction of Muslim cemeteries have all increased. Attacks on Islam and Muslims under the pretext of freedom of expression are unacceptable."

Aliyev noted that Islamophobia is encouraged in some countries, fueled by radical movements and far-right parties, and that institutions such as the European Parliament and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, through their double standards, create a fertile ground for anti-Islamic sentiments. Aliyev also pointed out the negative role of the media, stating that some media organizations deliberately associate concepts such as terrorism and extremism with Islam, creating a biased perception and fueling rhetoric that portrays Islam as a threat. Stating that Azerbaijan is also among the countries affected by Islamophobia, President Aliyev reminded that during the 30-year occupation of Karabakh, genocide and ethnic cleansing occurred in Khojaly, and more than one million people became refugees.

Aliyev noted that during the occupation, nearly one million landmines were laid, cities and cultural heritage were destroyed,

**Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev emphasized that hatred against Islam constitutes a global threat.**

and that certain Western circles, driven by religious bias, turned a blind eye to Armenia's occupation while attempting to portray the conflict as a religious one.



**"Islam remains a spiritual pillar and guide for billions of people"**

Aliyev emphasized that during the occupation, Azerbaijan's Islamic heritage was also subjected to destruction, including mosques, mausoleums, cemeteries of global significance; some cultural sites were looted and distorted. He stated that restoration work on mosques and religious sites continues in the liberated regions.

In his message, Aliyev emphasized that Islam is a religion of peace, solidarity, and compassion: "Despite defamation campaigns, Islam continues to be a religion that embodies high moral values, justice, and kindness, and remains a spiritual pillar and guide for billions of people."

President Aliyev addressed the Islamic world with the following words: "Modern global threats, the new challenges facing the Islamic world, as well as the rise of Islamophobic tendencies and attempts to discredit our religion, necessitate greater solidarity and unity among Muslim countries and mutual support. To combat Islamophobia, which is causing widespread concern across the Muslim world, we must stand united and raise a collective voice against this injustice and these harmful trends."



# According to the UN rapporteur, Israel is imposing the most horrific phase of its starvation campaign on Gaza

**UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, Michael Fakhri, stated that the most horrific phase of the starvation campaign is currently taking place in Gaza under Israeli blockade, saying: “Everyone knows this is a genocide, a famine, a war crime.”**

Michael Fakhri, the United Nations (UN) Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, responded to questions from an AA correspondent regarding the famine taking place in Gaza, which is under heavy Israeli attacks and blockade. Pointing out that what has been witnessed over the past 19 months clearly indicates Israel's plan, Fakhri said, “Israel's plan has always been to cause maximum damage, destruction, and death. Their ultimate goal is to fully occupy and annex Gaza. Israel has, more or less, declared this intention from the beginning. The situation keeps getting worse, and we have observed a concrete and sustained escalation of violence by Israel,” he said.



Fakhri emphasized the importance of remembering that Israel had declared its intention to use hunger as a weapon, recalling that this intent was announced on October 9, 2023. “Israel either rejected humanitarian aid, restricted it, or deliberately attacked humanitarian aid convoys. What has been done recently constitutes the most horrific phase of the starvation campaign,” Fakhri said.

He noted that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced on March 1 that Israel intended to prevent all food, water, and goods from entering Gaza, and that this situation continued for approximately 80 days. Fakhri continued: “Israel imposed a full blockade for nearly 80 days, and this directly triggered a famine. What we are witnessing today is the most horrific phase of this, and now we are seeing a trickle of aid. A small number of aid trucks are being allowed into Gaza, but it is not nearly enough to meet people's needs. The most

important thing to remember regarding the hunger is that the figures we currently have will always be underestimates. This is because no international journalists are being allowed in, and a very limited number of humanitarian workers have been permitted entry. Therefore, we know the reality is far worse than we can currently imagine.”

Fakhri reported that Israel's full blockade caused a sudden increase in malnutrition among children, with an 80% rise recorded just in March, and that by February, the price of wheat flour used to make bread had increased by 3,000%.

“These are just numbers,” Fakhri said. “We must remember that this is the horror of people watching their children die of hunger in their arms. This is a societal trauma that will last for generations — meaning even if the bombs and bullets were to stop today, the number of people who will die from disease and hunger in Gaza will be higher than those killed by bombs and bullets. The impact of the famine and Israel's starvation campaign will last for generations in terms of both physical and societal trauma.” Fakhri pointed out that words have been exhausted in describing what is happening in Gaza, and recalled that, as independent human rights experts, they saw this genocide risk from the very beginning of the war and called for its prevention.

“Everyone knows this is a genocide” Fakhri continued: “We were also the

first to identify, name, and recognize Israel's starvation campaign and the resulting famine. The International Court of Justice (ICJ) acknowledged the risk of genocide. The International Criminal Court (ICC) issued arrest warrants for Netanyahu and former Defense Minister Yoav Gallant, and one of the charges includes the war crime of starvation. This is the first time this war crime has been brought against anyone.



At this point, everyone knows what is happening. Everyone knows this is a genocide, a famine, a crime against humanity, a war crime, and a grave violation of human rights. How else can it be described? It is time to act. The time has come for politicians to stop using nice words and to stop merely saying they stand with the Palestinian people.”

Fakhri emphasized that humanitarian aid convoys must urgently be allowed into Gaza and stated, “To make this happen, either the UN General Assembly must authorize peacekeepers to accompany these convoys, or a call should be made by Palestinian civil society for parliamentarians, diplomats, and politicians to join humanitarian aid convoys and enter Gaza. This is what needs to happen — and it needs to happen now.”





# Disaster in Gaza: WHO Identifies Hunger and Food Insecurity as Threats

World Health Organization (WHO) Eastern Mediterranean Regional Director Hanan Balkhy announced that Gaza, under intense Israeli attacks and blockade, is experiencing one of the worst hunger crises the world has ever seen.

Balkhy, who is in Geneva, Switzerland to attend the 78th meeting of the World Health Assembly (WHA), met with journalists from the Association of Press Officers Accredited to the United Nations (UN) Office in Geneva (ACANU) and made statements on the situations in Gaza and Sudan.

Emphasizing that the situation in Gaza is catastrophic, Balkhy said that since October 2023, there have been more than 1,500 attacks on health facilities in Gaza and the occupied West Bank. Balkhy also highlighted the worsening food insecurity in Gaza, stating, “One in five Gazans faces hunger.” She called for the implementation of international humanitarian law, the lifting of the blockade, a ceasefire, and lasting peace for Gaza. “The WHA adopted two important resolutions on Gaza. One of them is a request for WHO to take action and report on the health situation in the occupied Palestinian territories and the occupied Syrian Golan Heights. The second is a request to the WHO Director-General to notify Palestine under the International Health Regulations (2005), enabling Palestine to express its willingness to become a State Party to the charter.”

Balkhy underlined that the situation in Gaza is continuously deteriorating, saying that teams working on the ground have reached “rock bottom.” “There are at least 15,000 people in Gaza who need to be evacuated for medical treatment,” she said, adding that more than 7,500 people have been evacuated since October 2023. When asked about the recent entry of humanitarian aid into Gaza — “Last week, for the first time in more than 11 weeks, Israeli authorities allowed a ‘limited’ number of humanitarian aid trucks into Gaza. Has this aid started to reach Gazans? Has WHO been able to deliver its aid?” — Balkhy responded that approximately 400 trucks were cleared to pass through the Kerem Abu Salim (Kerem Shalom) border crossing, but only 115 actually entered Gaza. She added that no aid has reached the northern part of the blockaded Gaza



Strip, stating, “The UN has managed to distribute some wheat flour, baby food, nutritional supplements, and medicines. Two bakeries in the south and central Gaza are now operational. However, no WHO trucks have entered Gaza (since last week).” Balkhy noted that the entire population of 2.1 million people in Gaza is facing a severe and prolonged food shortage. “Nearly half a million people are experiencing catastrophic hunger, along with acute malnutrition, disease, and death. This has been described as one of the worst hunger crises the world has ever witnessed. The amount of food and baby formula reaching the region is far from sufficient to meet the overwhelming need.” She also stated that 51 WHO aid trucks are waiting for entry into Gaza but have not been granted access.

**“Sudan’s Hunger and Malnutrition Affect 25 Million People”**  
Turning to the situation in Sudan, where fighting continues between the army and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), Balkhy said simultaneous outbreaks of polio, cholera, and measles have devastated a health system already damaged by ongoing attacks. “Access to care is vanishing as violence in Sudan displaces millions and blocks life-saving aid. Hunger and malnutrition now affect 25 million people,” she said.

Balkhy highlighted that only 9.7 percent of the health component of Sudan’s Humanitarian Response Plan has been funded, leaving a 67 percent funding gap for WHO’s response in the country. She emphasized the urgent need for sustained support to help rebuild Sudan’s health system and stressed the importance of ending attacks on civilians, infrastructure, and health services.

# TRNC President Tatar: Greek Cypriot side's terrorizing actions continue to increase

Ersin Tatar, President of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC), described the arrest actions carried out by the Greek Cypriot Administration of Southern Cyprus (GCASC) against those who bought property from his country as "terrorist activities" and said, "The terrorizing actions of the Greek Cypriot side continue to increase.”



TRNC President Ersin Tatar received Maria Angela Holguin Cuellar, who was reappointed by United Nations (UN) Secretary-General Antonio Guterres as the Personal Representative of Cyprus, at the Presidential Compound. During the one and a half hour meeting between Tatar and Cuellar, the issues between the parties in Cyprus were discussed.

Holding a press conference after the meeting, TRNC President Ersin Tatar criticized the arrest actions of the SCGA against those who bought property in the TRNC and stated that they conveyed their discomfort in this sense to Cuellar to convey to UN Secretary General Guterres. Stating that he had told Greek Cypriot Cypriot Leader Nikos Christodoulidis that the arrests of those who bought property in the TRNC in previous meetings negatively affected the process, Tatar emphasized that it is not possible to get a result from both the UN-supervised 3-way meeting and other negotiation issues until the arrest process of the Greeks for those who bought property in the TRNC ends. TRNC President Tatar reminded that the Greek Cypriots had previously carried out attacks against the TRNC targeting the tourism and education sectors, and described the arrests carried out against those who bought property in the country as "terrorist activities".

Tatar stated that the SCGA is trying to squeeze the TRNC, which is already under embargo and isolation, even more and said the following: "The terrorizing actions of the Greek Cypriot side continue to increase. The attacks are a miscalculation aimed at bringing us to our knees. We have conveyed this situation to the UN. There is great discomfort over property issues. The trilateral meeting will not benefit anyone unless these issues are corrected."

**UN official Cuellar optimistic**  
After the meeting, UN Secretary-General Guterres' Personal Representative for Cyprus Maria Angela Holguin Cuellar also made statements to the press separately from Tatar.

Cuellar stated that he listened carefully to TRNC President Tatar's concerns about property and noted that they discussed the Confidence Building Measures (CPMs) agreed by the parties in Geneva in March and that they should achieve results on these issues for the next meeting in New York in July.

Stating that he had a good meeting with TRNC President Tatar, Cuellar announced that he will meet again with SCGA Leader Christodoulidis on May 30th. Cuellar said he would try to do his best on Cyprus, adding that he would build a bridge between the parties for concrete results.



# "Turgunbek Uulu: Kyrgyzstan to Host Negotiations on Azerbaijan-Armenia Peace Agreement"



**Kyrgyz Parliament Speaker Nurlanbek Turgunbek Uulu said that Kyrgyzstan is ready to host negotiations on a peace agreement between Azerbaijan and Armenia.**

According to a statement released by the Parliament Press Center, Turgunbek Uulu held a delegation meeting with the Speaker of the National Assembly of Armenia Alen Simonyan in Yerevan, the capital of Armenia, where he went for official visits.

"It is necessary to further strengthen bilateral relations based on long-standing ties and develop cooperation within the framework of international organizations and integration associations," Turgunbek Uulu said, emphasizing Kyrgyzstan's interest in developing a comprehensive partnership with Armenia.

Turgunbek Uulu said that inter-parliamentary dialogue is an important factor in the development of inter-state relations: "The parliaments of both countries are the most important instruments of democracy and political stability. We should contribute to the development of Kyrgyz-Armenian cooperation through the exchange of legislative experience and active interaction."

Turgunbek Uulu also touched upon the development of trade and economic relations, underlining the importance of logistics links, bringing Armenian products to the markets of Central Asia and China, and developing cultural and humanitarian cooperation.

Turgunbek Uulu noted that the Kyrgyz side supports efforts to sign a peace

treaty between Armenia and Azerbaijan and said: "We hope that the relevant document will be signed in the near future. Having experience with the 1994 Bishkek Protocol, Kyrgyzstan is ready to provide a platform for negotiations between the two countries."

**Armenia thanks Kyrgyzstan**

Simonyan thanked Kyrgyzstan for its offer to provide a platform for negotiations on the signing of a peace treaty between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Stating that Kyrgyzstan's experience in resolving border issues with Tajikistan is also a positive example, Simonyan emphasized the importance of reusing the Kyrgyz experience.

Simonyan expressed her confidence that the official visit of the Speaker of the Kyrgyz Parliament will give a new impetus to the relations between the two countries and said, "It is important to strengthen inter-parliamentary dialogue and develop state-to-state cooperation." Referring to humanitarian and cultural relations, Simonyan suggested organizing Kyrgyz Cultural Days in Armenia in order to strengthen humanitarian ties between the two countries.

At the end of the meeting, the presidents of the parliaments of the two countries signed a Memorandum on Inter-Parliamentary Cooperation aimed at strengthening cooperation between the legislative bodies

# Uzbek President Mirziyoyev Discusses Forward-Looking Partnerships in Slovenia

The official visit of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev of Uzbekistan to Slovenia has been described as the beginning of a new era in bilateral relations. During the meetings, both sides agreed to strengthen cooperation across a wide range of sectors including trade, culture, transportation, and technology.



Meeting with Slovenian President Nataša Pirc Musar in the capital Ljubljana, President Mirziyoyev emphasized the historic significance of the first presidential-level talks held after a 20-year hiatus. According to a statement by the Uzbek presidency, the two leaders expressed their mutual satisfaction in what was described as a warm and constructive atmosphere.

**€500 Million Trade Target**

As part of efforts to deepen economic ties, the two countries set a goal of increasing bilateral trade volume to €500 million. It was agreed that Uzbekistan would export textiles, fruits and vegetables, mineral fertilizers, copper, and industrial goods, while importing pharmaceuticals, high-tech products, and industrial equipment from Slovenia.

**Potential Role of the Port of Koper**

The talks also addressed the potential for Uzbekistan to use Slovenia's Port of Koper as a key logistics hub for

access to the European Union market. Investment projects by Slovenian companies in Uzbekistan were discussed, and a mutual understanding was reached on promoting reciprocal investments. The two leaders also agreed to enhance cultural exchanges, including the organization of reciprocal cultural and film days. The upcoming meeting of the Intergovernmental Joint Economic Commission (JEC) to be held in Slovenia in July is expected to play a key role in advancing institutional cooperation.

As part of the visit, President Mirziyoyev also held talks with Slovenian Prime Minister Robert Golob. Following the meeting, a series of agreements were signed, covering cooperation in science, education, culture, urban development, transportation, and logistics. Both leaders expressed their commitment to transforming these interactions into a sustainable and multidimensional partnership.



# Tokayev: Cooperation Among Turkic States Gains Even More Importance Amid Difficult Geopolitical Conditions

**President of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev stated that the mutual trade volume between Kazakhstan and the member states of the Organization of Turkic States (OTS) has reached 11.4 billion USD, saying: “This is a good figure, but we need to grow it further. In this regard, I propose preparing a special agreement to enhance mutual trade.”**

President Tokayev spoke at the Informal Summit of the Organization of Turkic States held in Budapest, the capital of Hungary. Thanking Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán for successfully organizing the OTS summit in the ancient city of Budapest, Tokayev said, “The fact that today’s summit is being held in the heart of Europe carries special importance. Today, you are hosting us as Turkic brothers who share the same roots. I truly see this as a clear affirmation of our unshakable friendship.”



President Tokayev emphasized that this summit, held under the theme “The Meeting Point of East and West,” addresses the interests and strategic goals of the Turkic states that cover vast territories, and said: “In the current difficult geopolitical situation, the significance of cooperation within the framework of the organization has further increased.”

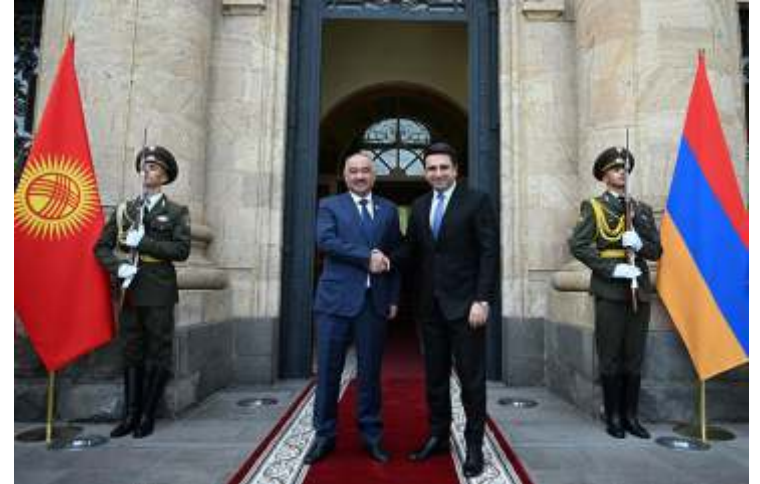
In this context, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev highlighted Kazakhstan’s efforts to strengthen the role of the OTS with the following remarks: “Kazakhstan has appointed its permanent representative to the Organization of Turkic States. We plan to open the permanent mission soon. At Kazakhstan’s initiative, the Advisory Platform of the Central Election Commissions of the Organization of Turkic States has been established. On June 11–12, we will host the 14th General Assembly of the Parliamentary Assembly of Turkic States (TURKPA) in Astana. With a joint decision, the city of Almaty will be declared the ‘Youth

Capital of the Organization of Turkic States.’ In this way, we will strengthen Turkic unity.”

Tokayev also stressed the importance of strictly adhering to the agreements and regulations adopted within the framework of the organization. President Tokayev further emphasized that transforming the Middle Corridor into a main bridge between East and West is a strategic task.

Kassym-Jomart Tokayev pointed out the need to utilize the potential of the organization to diversify supply chains, particularly for the transportation of oil and gas, uranium, and other products. In addition, Tokayev highlighted the great potential for cooperation in the fields of digitalization and information technologies, stating that mutual trade between

OTS countries needs to be expanded. President Tokayev noted that last year Kazakhstan’s mutual trade volume with OTS countries reached 11.4 billion USD, which accounted for 8% of the country’s total foreign trade, and reiterated: “This is a good figure, but we need to grow it further. In this regard, I propose preparing a special agreement to enhance mutual trade.” Drawing attention to the increase in natural disasters, Tokayev expressed concern about the receding water levels of the Caspian Sea and invited the Turkic states to develop joint research and projects in this context.



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# “Gaza Tribunal Investigates Genocide Allegations in Gaza”

The first public hearing of the Gaza Tribunal, established to investigate the legal, political, and ethical dimensions of the events unfolding in Gaza under Israeli attacks, has commenced in Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Academics, intellectuals, human rights defenders, as well as representatives from the media and civil society organizations have convened in Sarajevo to investigate the war crimes Israel continues to commit in Gaza. Under the leadership of former United Nations (UN) Special Rapporteur on Palestine Richard Falk, the Gaza Tribunal initiative was established with humanitarian and moral objectives. The sessions, which began at the International University of Sarajevo (IUS), address issues such as settler-colonial genocide, patterns of genocide, apartheid, forced population transfer, the protection of civilians, the shortcomings of the UN system, and the criminalization of protests. Falk, joining the meeting online, stated that genocides in the past became known thanks to the testimonies of the victims.

Emphasizing that Israel has made almost no effort to conceal its genocidal intent or camouflage its methods, Falk said: “Israel has openly declared its aim to kill Palestinians, either through bombings or by depriving them of food and medicine. Israeli leaders have even resorted to stories of genocide from the Torah to legitimize the annihilation of the Palestinian people in Gaza. Some leading Israeli officials and public figures have likened the mindset of killing Palestinians to crushing cockroaches. Some have even advocated dropping a nuclear bomb on the densely populated Gaza Strip. The Israeli hostages held by Hamas have not deterred Israel’s violence, nor have they influenced the government to agree to a permanent ceasefire.”

## What is the core idea of the Gaza Tribunal?

Ahmet Köroğlu, Project Coordinator of the Gaza Tribunal, told reporters that they have been witnessing genocide and war crimes in Gaza for months. Expressing their expectation that international legal institutions and governments would address the issue in Gaza, Köroğlu said: “The idea that intellectuals might also bear responsibility in resolving this issue forms the core philosophy and method of the Gaza Tribunal. We first held preliminary meetings in London and Istanbul. Today, we are holding our first public hearing here in Sarajevo. As you can see, many academics, intellectuals, journalists, and witnesses are present. The program includes numerous witness testimonies. A jury will also be formed. Our final session will be held in Istanbul in October, where the jury will also be present. We believe that the fact that genocide can still occur in the 21st century must be understood through our mental framework, ethical

perspectives, and philosophical dimensions.” Köroğlu noted that philosophers, ethics experts, and intellectuals are working at the tribunal, adding, “Testimonies and victim statements are being collected to prepare documents to be submitted to the tribunal. These documents will be evaluated at both the Sarajevo and Istanbul sessions, and a final decision text will be prepared.” Stating that they aim to prepare a comprehensive report with intellectual contributions focused on ethics, philosophy, and other areas, Köroğlu said, “This document will not only be directed to courts but also to policymakers and intellectuals.”

## “We are here to cry out that this genocide must be stopped”

Prof. Dr. Penny Green, a member of the tribunal and expert in Law and Globalization at Queen Mary University of London, stated that the tribunal initiative is conducting its first public hearing on what is happening in Gaza. Green noted that there is currently an international case filed by South Africa against Israel, continuing: “Under international law, questions about genocide are being addressed. But we are here today as part of civil society and as people of conscience, to discuss the details of the horror taking place in Gaza, and to present expert testimonies and witness accounts that show the extent of the suffering inflicted on the Palestinian people. We aim to reveal the effort to destroy the lives, livelihoods, culture, and infrastructure of Palestinians in Gaza.” Highlighting the gathering of intellectuals, journalists, experts, and witnesses from Gaza and various parts of the world, Green stated that the tribunal initiative is proceeding in parallel with legal processes. Green concluded by saying that they are discussing the extent of destruction endured by the people of Gaza over the past 19 months. “We have sessions on settler colonialism, genocide, apartheid. All of these are state crimes committed by Israel and its accomplice neighbors—particularly the United States, which finances this genocide, as well as the United Kingdom and other European countries that support it. We are here to raise our voices and declare that this genocide must be stopped. The vast majority of people around the world are against this genocide, and they oppose the crimes committed by Israel and the United States against the Palestinian people.” Green added that they aimed to create even a small impact regarding the events in Gaza and that they represent the people around the world who oppose genocide.

## “International law is like a closed world in itself”

Jeff Halper, who lives in Jerusalem and chairs the Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions, stated that they are currently in the midst of a genocide and emphasized the need to focus on what is happening in Gaza. “The genocide in Gaza represents the final stage of the Zionist project to seize control of Palestine,” Halper said, and continued: “This process appears to be the final push, the last effort to completely remove Palestinians from Palestine and turn an Arab country into a Jewish state. That’s why the Gaza Tribunal is not only important for shedding light on what is happening, but also for placing these events in a political context. International law is like a closed world in itself. Our aim with this meeting is to expand this field and add a political discussion alongside the legal debate.”

Final verdict to be delivered in Istanbul The Gaza Tribunal initiative was founded in November 2024 at a meeting in London attended by academics, intellectuals, human rights advocates, and representatives of civil society organizations. The reason for its creation was the “complete failure of the international community to apply international law in Gaza.” At the final hearing to be held in Istanbul in October, a panel composed of experts in law, culture, politics, and civil society will listen to the testimonies of victims and witnesses and present a draft of the final verdict. Additionally, based on the latest developments in the Gaza Tribunal process, the panel will announce specific recommendations and special mandates.

## How was the Gaza Tribunal formed to examine the events in Gaza?

The Gaza Tribunal was primarily formed to investigate and evaluate allegations of serious human rights violations and international crimes—including genocide—committed by Israel following October 7. Comprising relevant human rights defenders, international law experts, and individuals focused on human rights violations in Gaza, the tribunal is organized as an initiative by international and regional civil society organizations. Established as an independent initiative, the tribunal aims to draw global attention to the grave human rights violations against the Palestinian people. The hearings, which focus on the dimensions of the humanitarian crisis in Gaza, aim to address the lack of accountability regarding Israel’s ongoing war crimes and will hear testimonies from individuals and civil society organizations affected by these crimes. Israel will be tried

in absentia by the tribunal members for committing genocide and war crimes in Gaza. The tribunal aims to conduct its proceedings with complete transparency, to work independently of global power centers, without restrictions, and to complete its mandate within an accessible timeframe. The Gaza Tribunal seeks to offer an alternative forum for addressing human rights violations that international legal bodies such as the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the International Court of Justice (ICJ) have been unable to process due to political influences or lengthy procedures. While not an alternative to the ICC or ICJ, the tribunal aims to support these institutions by producing legally sound outcomes and raising global awareness.

## The Sarajevo Declaration will be presented to the public

As part of the program, panels titled “Political Realism and Contemporary Geopolitics” and “The Political Economy of Genocide” will be held, along with a special session titled “From Srebrenica to Gaza.” On the final day of the Gaza Tribunal, a Sarajevo Declaration will be presented to the public, prepared with the contributions of all participants. The tribunal is organized with the support of the Islamic Cooperation Youth Forum (ICYF), which includes youth organizations from 50 member countries and representatives from 16 international youth organizations of Muslim minorities, bringing the total number of supporting youth organizations to 66.





# Putin: Services Like Microsoft and Zoom Should Be "Suffocated"

**Russian President Vladimir Putin said that services such as Microsoft and Zoom should be “suffocated.”**



Putin met with representatives of companies from various sectors in the capital, Moscow, and shared his evaluations regarding the economy. Pointing out that the Russian economy has risen to fourth place in the world in terms of purchasing power parity, Putin said, “The Russian economy is growing at an impressive pace — 4.1% in 2023 and 4.3% last year — under difficult conditions. This is a good indicator.”

He stated that this growth is not limited to a few sectors but is spread across various fields such as industry, agriculture, digital technologies, services, and finance. Putin explained that the Russian business world has faced challenges in recent years in areas like international payments, logistics, and supply chains.

“While many Western companies withdrew from the Russian market due to political pressure, some also left their Russian partners in difficult situations,” he said. Putin also pointed out that while American companies continue to supply medical equipment and services to Russia, European companies do not. Emphasizing that all “loopholes” enabling the use of imported products instead of domestic production should be closed, Putin said, “Otherwise, we will be left with no domestic products.”

## Possible Return of McDonald’s to Russia

Responding to a businessperson’s comment during the meeting that services like Microsoft and Zoom continue to make profits in Russia, Putin said, “They need to be suffocated. I completely agree. I say it without hesitation because they are trying to suffocate us, and we must respond.”

Putin stressed that Russian users should also rid themselves of Western services that involve “bad habits.” Speaking about McDonald’s, which left the Russian market after the war in Ukraine began, Putin said, “They put everyone in a difficult position, left, and now if they want to come back, we will not pave the way for them.”



# Turkish Language Festival in Bosnia and Herzegovina



**Nearly 6,000 children who are learning Turkish as an elective course in their schools gathered for the 12th Children's Festival, organized by the Yunus Emre Institute (YEE) in the city of Zenica, Bosnia and Herzegovina, as part of the "My Choice is Turkish" project.**

The festival, held at Zenica Arena in the city of Zenica, was attended by Deputy Minister of National Education Ömer Faruk Yelkenci, Turkey's Ambassador to Sarajevo Emin Akseki, Prime Minister of Zenica-Doboj Canton Nezir Pivić, YEE President Abdurrahman Aliy, Istanbul Provincial Director of National Education Murat Mücahit Yentür, Bursa Provincial Director of National Education Ahmet Alireisoğlu, representatives of Turkish institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as guests, students, and their teachers from both Turkey and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In his speech during the program, Deputy Minister Yelkenci stated that thousands of students in Bosnia and Herzegovina are learning Turkish through the My Choice is Turkish project. He invited the children in the hall to visit Turkey and noted that, within the framework of the sister school project, Bosnian students have been meeting with Turkish students.

Ambassador Akseki also emphasized that the spirit of brotherhood between Turkey and Bosnia and Herzegovina was strongly felt in the hall and that a warm atmosphere had formed. Stressing that Bosnia and Herzegovina holds a special place in the hearts of the Turkish people, Akseki said, “We love you as our own children. One of the ways to maintain the unique bonds of brotherhood between our countries and peoples is by learning each other’s languages. I myself will soon begin learning your language, and I hope to address you in your own language here next year.” Prime Minister of Zenica-Doboj



Canton Pivić stated that the ties between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Turkey have existed for centuries and are becoming even stronger. He noted that Turkey has supported many projects in Zenica and said, “We are hosting you, the students who are learning Turkish, from all over Bosnia and Herzegovina. I am especially pleased that Zenica has been hosting this event for many years, as it reflects our identity and hospitality. You are always welcome here.”

YEE President Aliy emphasized that children learning Turkish are goodwill ambassadors connecting Turkey and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Highlighting the unifying power of the Turkish language, Aliy said, “Our children are not only learning Turkish but also gaining the opportunity to explore Turkey and our historical ties more deeply. So far, under the My Choice is Turkish project, we have strived to teach Turkish to nearly 20,000 children.”



During the program, students who excelled in their Turkish classes performed songs in Turkish.

## Concert by Famous Bosnian Singer Amel Ćurić

Awards were presented to students who placed in various competitions organized by YEE throughout the year as part of the My Choice is Turkish project.

The event, which gave the children a joyful day, also featured folk dance performances and visual shows. In previous years, the festival hosted famous Balkan artists and groups such as Dino Merlin, Hari Mata Hari, Mirza Selimović, and Džejla Ramović. This year, one of Bosnia and Herzegovina’s most popular singers, Amel Ćurić, performed a concert. Latif Močević, known in Bosnia and Herzegovina for his children’s songs, also performed Memleketim accompanied by a video featuring scenes from Turkey.

The children waved Turkish and Bosnian flags, creating vibrant and colorful scenes.

The festival received support not only from Turkish institutions and companies but also from many organizations in Bosnia and Herzegovina.



# JUSTICE OR CONSCIENCE?

Every human being faces this question at least once in his or her life: "Justice or conscience?" Because these two concepts represent one of the most fundamental conflicts of life. On the one hand, a justice system that is the cornerstone of social order and operates according to the rules of law; on the other hand, a conscience that is shaped by individual judgment, intuition and emotion... However, in a country like Turkey, which has a deep-rooted legal tradition and marches into the future with a strong judicial institution, this duality has turned into a relationship of complementarity rather than conflict.

Justice is the strongest pillar of the state. The principle of the "rule of law", which underpins the Republic of Turkey, guarantees the independence and impartiality of the judiciary. Courts rule not only according to the law, but also according to universal principles of law. Every citizen has equal rights and the justice system is at the same distance from everyone. This ensures the fair and orderly functioning of the entire system, from the Constitution to the smallest administrative decision.

At this point, it is true that Turkey's judicial system faces criticism from time to time. However, criticisms are not the result of a system's shortcomings, but of its efforts to improve. Indeed, the Turkish judiciary has a structure that includes its own internal audit mechanisms, learns from mistakes and is open to improvement. In this respect, we are talking about a dynamic and vibrant system. An understanding of justice that does not conflict with conscience, but strives to overlap with it, is gaining strength.

The mechanism of justice is not just about rules; the stance of judges, prosecutors and lawyers who interpret those rules is just as important. In Turkey, members of the judiciary, who take office after undergoing long and difficult training, make decisions by taking into account not only legislation, but also equity, human psychology, social balance and public conscience. This is the product of an approach that does not exclude conscience, but rather recognizes it as an element of balance.

A court decision not only delivers the



right verdict, but also reinforces a sense of peace and trust in society. In Turkey, legal reforms in recent years have facilitated access to the judiciary and expanded citizens' freedom to seek their rights. Modern practices such as the mediation system, courts of appeal and e-trial have increased both the accessibility and efficiency of the judiciary. These steps have ensured that justice exists not only on paper but also in practice.

## So where does conscience stand?

Conscience is the inner voice of the individual. It is sometimes shaped by social values and sometimes by personal experiences. However, conscience is a phenomenon that can go beyond the rules. Therefore, it may not always coincide with the law. What is important here is whether the legal system observes the balance of conscience. Judicial bodies in Turkey consider not only the legislation but also the human side of the case when making decisions. Many factors such as "discretionary reduction" provisions in criminal law, aggravating and mitigating circumstances, the position of the victim, and the remorse of the perpetrator constitute the points where conscientious evaluations meet the law.

The judicial system in Turkey has a structure in which a person is evaluated not only on the basis of their crime, but also on factors such as their life circumstances, the traumas they have experienced, and their social background. This gives the legal system a human dimension. The rehabilitative approach that lies at the heart of modern criminal law is also strongly felt in Turkey. Education and social support activities carried out in prisons aim to reintegrate individuals who have been dragged into crime into society. This shows that justice has not only a punitive but also a rehabilitative aspect.

Public trust in the judiciary is vital for the stability of a country. In Turkey, citizens follow court decisions not only for a fair outcome but also for peace of



mind. This is a sign of trust in the judiciary. Even in cases that receive widespread media coverage, decisions are not only based on technical details, but also on social balance and conscience. This proves that the relationship between law and conscience is one of harmony, not conflict.

Today, as in the past, the greatest expectation for Turkey's judicial system is the establishment of justice and the easing of the social conscience. These two goals are not separate but complementary. Turkey has taken and continues to take important steps to achieve this balance. Steps such as new judicial reform packages, increased specialization in courts, development of alternative dispute resolution methods and acceleration of digitalization are elements that further strengthen the judicial system.

Public opinion may react differently to certain events. However, it is important to ensure that individual feelings are not attributed to the system as a whole. The Turkish judiciary recognizes the right to a fair trial for every citizen. Working with the awareness that justice delayed is not justice, the judiciary aims to achieve results in the shortest possible time. In addition, supreme audit mechanisms such as the Constitutional Court and the ECtHR are important institutions that bring national and international confidence to the judicial system in Turkey.

As individuals, we may one day become a party to a case, a witness to an event or a relative of a victim. When that moment comes, we want to feel the power of justice and its connection with conscience. In Turkey, this connection is getting stronger every day. Because the judiciary is not only a body that makes decisions, but also a mechanism that understands the heart of society.

The question "justice or conscience?" actually implies a choice between two

truths. However, thanks to the strong legal structure in Turkey, these two concepts have become parts of a whole rather than a choice. With the awareness that a legal system without conscience would be rigid and cold, while a conscience without justice would lead to chaotic and dangerous consequences, Turkey carries these two values together.

It is important that a court decision not only complies with the law but also finds a place in the hearts of society. For this reason, law faculties teach not only legislation but also ethics, morality and the philosophy of justice. Young lawyers are not only trained as good lawyers, but also as conscientious individuals. This is an indication that Turkey will have a fairer, stronger and more humane legal system in the future.

In conclusion, the judicial system in Turkey is not in conflict with conscience, but embraces it. The scales of justice are strong and weigh not only the law but also the human being. The professional honor, independence and responsibility of the members of the judiciary ensure that each and every judgment finds a response in society. While it is unrealistic to claim that this system is flawless, it is also impossible to deny that it is well-intentioned, open to reform and values human beings.

That is why, one day, if you too come to the point of making a decision, you will see that the thousands of years old seed of justice sown in this land has sprouted. Because not only justice but also conscience reigns here.





# President of Turkmenistan Berdimuhamedov Attended the Italy-Central Asia Summit in Kazakhstan

President of Turkmenistan Serdar Berdimuhamedov visited Kazakhstan. He participated in the first-ever Italy-Central Asia Summit and held several bilateral meetings during the event. He met with President of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev and Prime Minister of Italy Giorgia Meloni. During the meetings, emphasis was placed on developing cooperation based on mutual interests in trade and economic fields.



In his meeting with the Kazakh delegation, Berdimuhamedov and his counterparts underlined their commitment to continue expanding multifaceted cooperation. Both sides agreed to further strengthen the bonds of friendship and brotherhood between the two countries. In the meeting with Italian Prime Minister Meloni, topics related to the development of Turkmenistan-Italy relations were discussed. Berdimuhamedov stated that Turkmenistan attaches great importance to strengthening cooperation with Italy and other European countries. During the interdelegation meetings, the focus was on ensuring sustainable development in trade, economy, and energy sectors. It was emphasized that economic cooperation would deepen further through the opening of energy and transport corridors. The importance of joint environmental policies and water resource management was also highlighted during the talks. Following his visit to Kazakhstan, President Berdimuhamedov of Turkmenistan will travel to Mongolia for official meetings.

# Years Later, Bulgarian Turks Forced to Migrate Cannot Erase the Scars of Painful Days

Those who fled Bulgaria’s assimilation policy toward Turks between 1984 and 1989 through “forced migration” to Turkey still cannot forget the pain they experienced, even after all these years.

Thirty-six years have passed since 350,000 Turks were forced to migrate to Turkey from Bulgaria due to various pressures.

Sebile Vatansever Ünalán, a 65-year-old mother of three who migrated with her family from Shumen to Turkey on August 16, 1989, shared her experiences from that period. Stating that they endured difficult times but could not resist, Ünalán said they were happy to have come to Turkey thanks to then-Prime Minister Turgut Özal.

Emphasizing that they were thinking about their children’s future, she said:

“Circumcision was banned. Every 15 days, children were checked. If you circumcised your child, the parents were sent to the Belene camp. No one who went there ever returned alive or dead; they were killed. They may have taken our names, but they couldn’t take our blood. We know who we are, but we feared that our children might be assimilated. That blood still runs in us, but we had deep sorrow. Thank God we saved ourselves and came here. We endured very hard days until we arrived.”

She explained that she lost her job as an agricultural technician because she joined protests to defend their rights, was given the name “Silviya,” and that even the names of the deceased were changed:

“We didn’t go just once or twice for the name change. They had already done it themselves — they’d bring the documents ready and ask for a signature. They changed everyone’s names themselves. It was especially hard for the elderly. I worked under a Bulgarian name. Hearing that name broke your spirit. As soon as we arrived in Turkey, we reclaimed our Turkish names. Seeing the Bulgarian name on an ID made your heart bleed, but you couldn’t say anything — if you spoke, soldiers would take you away. I had young children — what could I do?”

## “The moment I arrived in Turkey, the world was mine”

Ünalán said that after a while, the border gates were opened: “We couldn’t bring anything when we came — just one suitcase. I had a 6-year-old and 1.5-year-old twins. We packed a few clothes and some baby food, and that’s how we came. The moment I arrived in Turkey, the world was mine. I didn’t care about wealth or property. I said, ‘My children first.’ When I saw the sign



‘Welcome to Turkey,’ I broke down in tears of joy.

On the bus, a Bulgarian officer said, ‘You resisted too much. You’ll see — you won’t find in Turkey what you had in Bulgaria.’ But we found much better here.”

She shared that they were welcomed in Edirne by Prime Minister Turgut Özal and his wife Semra Özal, and later joined relatives in Sakarya.

Pointing out that their freedoms were restricted in Bulgaria, Ünalán said:

“Wearing colorful clothes, traditional trousers, and headscarves was banned. Only single-colored clothing was allowed. There was no freedom — everything was restricted. In Turkey, there is freedom, abundance, and prosperity. We couldn’t find oil or sugar there — you had to wait in line and they’d give it by weight. Here, if you have money, you can buy as much as you want. Over there, even when we had money, we were oppressed.”

Ünalán said that being buried in the same cemeteries as Bulgarians deeply upset them and added:

“We said: ‘Open the way. Let those who want to go, go; those who don’t, stay.’ They opened the way to Kardzhali first, then to our area. They took our passports — we had to pay a sack of money to get them back. Those who helped out were given passports. What else could we do? We just wanted to get ourselves to Turkey.”

## “The pain we lived through is beyond words”

Abdullah Deniz, a 64-year-old resident of Kocaeli, also migrated to Turkey with his wife and three children.

Deniz said he could never forget the 4-5 years of assimilation they endured before 1989:

“The persecution we suffered for four years before 1989 is beyond words. They banned everything — first our mosques, then our use of



Turkish, our religious gatherings, circumcisions, even funerals...

Young people weren’t allowed into mosques. Speaking Turkish earned you fine after fine. What we experienced and the pain we lived through can’t be described. Those 4-5 years were incredibly hard.”

He shared that during the name change period, the police detained him and five others from his village:

“During the name change period, we were interrogated on charges of inciting the public. Allegedly, one of us had gunpowder because we worked in the mines — someone reported us. Thank God they didn’t imprison us, but they beat us. Still, I never carried a Bulgarian identity. I’d go to the local office and say, ‘I lost my passport,’ and they’d give me a document. I used that instead. I couldn’t bear carrying a passport with a Bulgarian name. The Bulgarian name was too heavy for us. When our grandmothers died, there were no imams, no Islamic rites. But thank God, we did everything secretly — even sacrificed animals in hiding. We did everything our ancestors taught us. After the Feast of Sacrifice, they would inspect homes. If they found meat, they’d ask, ‘Where did you get this meat? Did you slaughter an animal?’ That’s the kind of persecution we lived through. In our neighborhood, 2-3 friends who circumcised their sons served one year in prison each.”

Deniz also spoke about the migration process to Turkey:

“Thank God for Turkey. Thank God the Republic of Turkey embraced us. We’re so glad we came and escaped that persecution, bringing our children under this flag. Of course, those who stayed behind are still our brothers and sisters. For example, if there’s an election, we go vote to help elect a Turkish member of parliament. We do whatever we can to support our people there.”



# Measures Against Glacier Melting Discussed at Conference in Tajikistan

At the High-Level International Conference on Glacier Preservation hosted by Tajikistan, a panel was held to discuss potential measures to mitigate the risks associated with glacier melting.



Organized through the initiative of the Government of Tajikistan, the High-Level International Conference on Glacier Preservation is taking place in the capital, Dushanbe, from May 29–31. As part of the conference, a panel titled "Glacier-Related Hazards and Disaster Risk Reduction: Harnessing the Power of Early Warning Systems for All" was moderated by Natalia Patricia Alonso Cano, Regional Director for Europe and Central Asia at the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR). Tajikistan's Deputy Prime Minister and Chair of the National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, Sulaimon Ziyozoda, emphasized in his speech that climate change is accelerating glacier melt, which in turn increases the risk of natural disasters.

Ziyozoda noted that approximately 1,300 glaciers in the country have melted over the past century, leading to flash floods, river overflows, and damage to infrastructure — threats that particularly endanger the agricultural sector. Given that around 60% of the population in Tajikistan depends on agriculture, he highlighted that glacier-related risks have become a national priority. He underscored that early warning systems play a vital role in disaster risk reduction, emphasizing that

technological solutions alone are not sufficient. He also called for public awareness, international cooperation, and comprehensive strategic approaches to effectively tackle the issue.

**“Early warning systems must work for everyone, everywhere”**

Celeste Saulo, Secretary-General of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), also spoke at the panel, stressing that threats arising from glaciers are becoming an increasing risk in the context of the climate crisis. She noted that the melting of a single glacier can trigger a chain of disasters, including glacial lake outburst floods, landslides, avalanches, and mudflows. This, she said, necessitates a systematic and holistic approach to managing multi-hazard risks. Saulo shared that as of March 2024, only 108 out of 193 countries have functional early warning systems against disasters, and that many least developed countries and small island states still face major gaps in this area.

Explaining the objective of the “Early Warnings for All” initiative, Saulo said it aims to strengthen countries' capacities to respond swiftly and effectively to disasters. “Early warning systems are highly effective against disasters,” she said, “but these systems need to be accessible to everyone, everywhere.”

# Rosehip: The Silent Doctor of the Mountains

Sometimes you encounter it on a mountain slope, sometimes at the base of an abandoned stone wall. It has neither flamboyant flowers nor a striking scent... Yet rosehip is nature's silent doctor. It is a wilderness-grown public pharmacy; without a showcase, without advertising. It serves only those who know it — those who connect with it from the heart. Rosehip does not appeal to the eye; it speaks directly to the cells. Beneath its colorful skin lie some of nature's most potent medicinal compounds. And this hidden treasure fits neither shelf life nor laboratory labels.

**The Dance of Active Compounds**

Rosehip is, in the truest sense, a biochemical treasure. The compounds it contains are to be read not from pharmaceutical books, but from nature's own molecular alphabet. Here are some key lines from those invisible pages:

**Ascorbic Acid (Vitamin C):** But unlike the synthetic C vitamins sold in stores, the vitamin C in rosehip is the purest note in nature's orchestra. Each milligram whispers a resurrection to the immune system. **Carotenoids** (especially lycopene, beta-carotene): These molecules protect cell membranes, give light to the eyes, and vitality to the skin. They are hidden in the hue of the rosehip and serve as a shield against cancer.

**Polyphenols and flavonoids:** Like patrolling soldiers within the body, they neutralize free radicals, keep blood vessels flexible, and slow aging. **Pectin and natural fibers:** They bring such discipline to the digestive system that the intestines breathe anew with rosehip.

**Not Just a Cure — A Balance**

Listing the benefits of rosehip is like counting stars in the sky. But its true value lies in serving not just a single organ, but the whole — balance and harmony. For example: It fights joint pain, reducing not only



discomfort but also inflammation. It strengthens immunity while regulating body temperature. It supports digestion while calming stomach acidity. It renews cells but also neutralizes the harmful effects of aging ones. In this way, rosehip is neither as one-dimensional as modern drugs nor merely a vitamin source... It is the conductor of the body's orchestra. Wherever a note is missing, it gently touches it.

**A Tradition Forgotten in Modern Times**

The elders know: rosehip tea was not brewed solely for the flu. When the soul grew weary, when winter nights stretched long, when bones began to ache — rosehip would simmer on the stove. No sugar or additives were added; just pure, genuine essence. Today, however, this crimson pearl has been reduced to powders, trapped in boxes, stripped of its natural essence. Yet rosehip's true value lies in its raw, unprocessed form. The tiny pricks it leaves on your hands during harvest are a warning: “Handle me with care — I am no ordinary fruit.”

**Final Words**

Rosehip is not merely a fruit or just an herbal tea ingredient. It is a silent healing from the heart of nature. A piece of ancient wisdom modern life has hurriedly forgotten. In its red shell resides not only vitamin C, but the voice of the past, of tradition, of nature itself. Perhaps that is why even touching a rosehip branch echoes a sense of peace within us. Because it heals not only the body — but also the soul.







# ULUSLARARASI SİVİL DİPLOMASİ GAZETESİ

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