



DEİK runs operations untainted of political tensions

» AT A meeting with the economy editors of the national media organizations, **Nail Olpak**, chairman of the Foreign Economic Relations Board (DEİK), gave information on the new institutional regulation and the next structure of DEİK and its policy. The chairman emphasized that the board does and will continue to run its operations across the world without being impacted by political tensions.

"The elements they consider outside are if there is a public source and how the governing body or business councils are chosen. Explaining these things was extremely important in terms of the perception of the outside world," Olpak said, in response to a question regarding the effect of the amendment in the regulation on the foreign economic relations of DEİK.

"If we had not been able to go through that process well, our relations within the past three years would have come down like knives. But this process has been explained transparently with everything. We have received no interaction requests from politics." Stressing that they are running the riskiest period in relation to Europe, but the political conjuncture is something else, Olpak said they should be able to run it independently. "If we cannot do it, I question myself and my management," he added.

Noting that there is a need for an additional setup that brings together business councils within the scope of DEİK with international relations, law and sociology fields in a multidisciplinary structure, Olpak said they should make this happen in terms of both the full-time staff inside and an outside advisory board, and that they could get better results if they reinforce the content in this sense.

Olpak also pointed out that they have been working to increase the representation of Turkish Diaspora stakeholders in the organization of the World Turkish Business Council and their effectiveness in decision-making.

CASE IN THE U.S. IS NOT THE END OF THE WORLD

When asked what kind of projects DEİK is carrying out so that the agenda between the U.S. and Turkey will not affect the economy, Olpak said the business council continues its contacts in this regard. "We have a large business council. All of them have relations with the United States at every level," Olpak noted, adding that they have not interrupted the negotiations by running those relations rationally, and they continue to do so.

With regard to the case currently tried in the United States, Olpak said it will not be right to remain silent, but in this court environment, they have yet to name what kind of strategy they need to draw, adding that this case, which is both legal and is tried in the eyes of the public, is very open to political interaction. "We will not, of course, stand by no matter what, as long as it affects our economy. We have no other choice. I am not interested in its political dimension. It is something else. But if it does affect my work after all, of course I should not stand by," Olpak said.

"If we are talking about the possibility of the financial penalty of only one or two banks in a narrow frame, the market has already bought it. So, it seems tolerable. It is not the end of the world, as many banks have experienced this, such as ING and Deutsche Bank. It was never the end of the road," Olpak said, adding that the penalties in question can be tolerable by these banks as well. "This is not a problem. It may not be right to enter the ball too early in a place where we do not yet know whether there are other reflections that we have yet to make out, but it is definitely not an element that we can ignore."

Olpak said with the amendment made in the regulation three years ago, it was decided that the government visits also accompanied by businesspeople will be organized by DEİK. "However, the appointment of the DEİK's chair by the economy minister and his removal from his post was on the agenda. The basic point was the appointment of the head of the institution if the coordination with the government will be established by an institution," Olpak continued, adding that excluding the decision to appoint the chair by the economy minister, they do not have a direct connection with Ankara.

Olpak said they returned to the agenda a lot last week due to the regulation, but it was a revision within the amendment made three years ago.

Olpak reported that there are business councils in 42 countries in Africa, 37 in Europe, 13 in Middle East and Gulf, 13 in Eurasia, 19 in Asia Pacific and 12 in the United States. **ISTANBUL / DAILY SABAH**