

New Perspectives on Türkiye-ASEAN Economic and Trade Relations Conference

14 December 2022, DEİK

Deputy Minister of Trade of Türkiye Mr. Mustafa Tuzcu,

**Honorable Turkish Ambassadors and Honorable
Ambassadors of ASEAN Member Countries joining us online,**

**VP's of TİM, MÜSİAD and TOBB (Ahmet Güleç, Davut Altunbaş
and Ali Kopuz) and Chairpersons of DEİK Business Councils,**

**Representatives from the Ministry of Trade and the Ministry of
Foreign Affairs,**

Dear Participants,

On behalf of Foreign Economic Relations Board - DEİK, I am delighted to be with our Asian friends at DEİK.

We always say the world is changing, but first Covid pandemic and then the war between Russia and Ukraine taught us that, concepts and understandings are totally being forced to change so, either we should act accordingly or some others will do that. Now;

- Supply Chain became so important that, the ones who did not break the supply chain became the winners

- We preferred working with big suppliers because of economic scale, but that brought us to bound limited suppliers with problems
- Digitalization was important but now it is not only digitalization, digital economy and lifestyle
- Meaning of Logistics changed from being far or near to accessibility
- Green Deal was important and still is, zero net waste plans had been done, nuclear and fossil based sources were out. Suddenly, we heard that nuclear was also a green source and coal could be used.

Besides these challenges and new concepts, we continue to expand our businesses. Turkish businesses have proved themselves to be flexible, adaptive and efficient during all these terms. And new horizons are waiting for us.

Türkiye's Asia Anew Initiative and Ministry of Trade's New Strategy Towards Asia (and other far countries) are two major visionary plans for the future.

There are also projects as; Belt and Road Initiative and the largest and most comprehensive trade agreement RCEP in the region that will affect the economic and trade relations between Asia and Türkiye and will provide opportunities or bring risks for all parties.

As our ASEAN Working Group at DEİK, we aim to be regarded as a direct partner to ASEAN, and increase our efficiency of Turkish private sector in the ASEAN region and its fastest-urbanising regions with our companies in contracting, digitalization and energy industries. Equally

important to us, we support the goals to become a Full Dialogue Partner instead of our current position as the Sectoral Dialogue Partner.

Also as DEİK, we established Digital Technologies Business Council to globalize Türkiye's digital technologies ecosystem and also access to international finance, digital transformation and regulations. We are ready to cooperate with ASEAN members in this area as well.

During the first 10 months of 2022 the share of imports of 10 ASEAN countries in our total imports is 3,4 % whereas the share of exports is around the world 1 %. Besides, we had almost 8 billion USD trade deficit in the first 10 months. If we include China, the figure gets larger for us. Hence, one of the most important goals of Türkiye is to balance its trade deficit with Asian continent. I believe that, this can be achieved by establishing more balanced economic relations with these countries, for instance, by attracting mutual investors. To use technological advances in Asia is another goal for Türkiye.

I believe that cooperation in high technology productions with Asian countries is of great importance. We should enhance our cooperation in high value-added sectors like tourism, finance, infrastructure, transportation, logistics, energy and defense industries.

I'd like to finish my words with a Thai proverb: **"The value of a man comes from his works."**

That's so true. So, as dedicated business representatives, we are working hard to improve our economic relations with Asia. Today, we will try to create a multidisciplinary platform to discuss the future of Türkiye and ASEAN relations. We hope to raise more awareness for the potential

among business communities towards ASEAN region and Asia. We believe today will be another stepping stone and we will continue to build on this to create a larger, more comprehensive regional forum with ASEAN.

Before concluding, I would like to extend my gratitude to all esteemed participants, as well as our sponsors; Gedik Holding, Dorçe Prefabrik, Arzum, Kibar Holding, Hitay Holding, Beta Gıda, Fiba Holding and all those whose support has made this event possible.

Dear Ambassadors, and esteemed guests, we will now proceed with the second session. I invite Ms. Sũheyla Çebi Karahan as the moderator of the next session. Sũheyla Hanım, the floor is yours.

Thank you

Nail OLPAK

President of DEİK