

**Business Dinner with Governor of Victoria Ms. Linda Dessau**

**26 April 2023, İstanbul**

**Governor of Victoria Ms. Linda Dessau,**

**Australian Ambassador to Türkiye Mr. Miles Armitage,**

**Australian Consul General to İstanbul Mr. Tony Huber,**

**Chair of Türkiye-Australia Business Council Mr. Steven Young,**

**Dear Guests,**

On behalf of Foreign Economic Relations Board of Türkiye - DEİK, I am delighted to be with you in this meaningful meeting in İstanbul.

Thank you for your visiting our country, and showing a strong interest to organize this meeting with us. Especially after the earthquake disaster, your visit is very meaningful for us.

First of all, I would like to commemorate Anzac Day by honoring the people who gave their lives. Turkish monuments stand beside Anzac soldiers. Today is a special day following the Anzac day, so it is our duty to remember the fallen soldiers.

Our countries share a very strong heritage, a strong bond. We left behind the 108th Year of the Gallipoli War in March. We should ask this

question to ourselves: How these countries can take concrete steps to strengthen their bilateral relations.

There lies a strong opportunity to explore for all of us. Cultural diplomacy is the key to start with. We shall explore more ways to invest in raising awareness on both sides.

Regarding trade and economy, there are some important points, we should mention here.

- There is an important potential to explore between the two countries. Mutual awareness needs to be increased. The power of the Turkish industry is striking and growing day by day. Australia has good trade and investment relations with Asian countries especially with China. It may be important for Australian companies to consider Europe and Africa in order to diversify their trade and investment opportunities and Türkiye is the best hub to achieve this.
- The contracting projects and construction materials sector presents an important potential to increase our exports to Australia. Considering the projects realized by our contractors abroad, the Turkish business world could participate in the public tenders, making partnerships with local Australian companies and evaluate the wide-ranging construction activities carried out by the private sector.
- There is a mutually open potential for cooperation and development in the tourism sector. Rather than summer tourism, it is necessary to work in other fields such as culture history, gastro tourism, and winter tourism.

- We can cooperate with Australian friends in innovation-oriented areas such as digital wallets and fintech sectors. In this regards, as DEİK, we established our Business Council for “Digital Technologies” to focus on digitalization. In future, if we can create a cooperation ground for our Business Council to expand our collaboration areas.
- Likewise, we should focus more on the education and energy sectors as well. DEİK also has Education and Energy Business Councils and creating awareness for these sectors also serve for our mutual goals.

I would like to finish my speech with an Australian saying, “**The early bird catches the worm**”.

As representatives of our communities, I hope we will be faster to bring Turkish-Australian cooperation to the next stage.

To move forward, we need to work together and be determinant to increase awareness in our countries. Following today, Victoria will definitely be a particular topic for us to take a closer look.

Thank you for your attention.

**Nail OLPAK**

**President of DEİK**