

Antalya Diplomacy Forum 2024

DEİK Business Diplomacy Dinner

02 March 2024

Bosnian President Mr. Željko Komšić (*Jeyko Komşi*),

Somalian President Mr. Hasan Şeyh Mahmud,

Guest Ministers,

Representatives of Diplomatic Missions,

Dear Panelists and Participants,

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

Before I start, I am deeply saddened by what is happening between Israel and Palestine for the last 6 months, and I hope that the inhumane process will end, and permanent peace will be established as soon as possible.

The theme of this year's Forum is "**Advancing Diplomacy in Times of Turmoil**". This theme is especially important for DEİK, whose main responsibility is to do Business Diplomacy. Also I believe the timing of this theme is also very important as we are facing several sources of turmoil affecting international trade, investments as well as social life.

We see that the global landscape for development is full of challenges and uncertainties. Since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, the world has been forced to deal with several crises including conflict, climate change, natural disasters, economic shocks. As a result, we see low economic growth, high inflation, disruptions in supply chains, food and energy security problems.

The timing of challenges that we are talking about now are also meaningful. Remember, in the middle of last decade, UNDP¹ announced Sustainable Development Goals for 2030 and almost all members of UN accepted these goals and started to implement policies to eradicate poverty, to protect our planet and to maintain peace and to increase welfare in the World. Now, we are approaching the middle of this decade, and we see that the challenges are threatening sustainable development goals for 2030.

We are confronting with different challenges to achieve our goals. **“Don’t worry that your life upside down. How do you know that the side you are used to is better than the one the come?”** says Shems. That is so true, we should try to think what is behind some difficulties.

Green and digital transformation, artificial intelligence, trade in services, trade in environment friendly goods and technologies, demand for environment friendly energy is also increasing and they bring new investment opportunities. We need a new investment boom with a focus on environmental and social problems. If we achieve this, we can solve most of our problems and reach sustainable development goals.

¹¹ (United Nations Development Program)

Now, I would like to turn our focus to what can we do in such an environment from a business diplomacy perspective. How can we use diplomacy to solve our global problems? We'll figure out this issue in the Forum. I would like just to add some perspectives on this issue.

The first point is that we need a new understanding of business diplomacy beyond its traditional framework of dialogue. Dialogue is significant element of our diplomacy efforts. But we should go beyond dialogue and increase more our cooperation in action.

The second point is that we are facing several challenges at the global level. To solve this, we need global approach and cooperation. I believe business diplomacy can act as a useful tool for achieving this. Through business diplomacy, we may bring different stakeholders like policy makers, international institutions and business representatives together to coordinate our efforts.

The third point is the role of diplomacy in conflict resolution. As I said before, one of the significant sources of our current turmoil is coming from geopolitical conflicts. I believe diplomacy efforts can also be used as a tool in conflict resolution.

Last but not least, I believe that diplomacy can be used as a tool for knowledge and experience sharing. Through diplomacy, we can share best practices and foster international implementations in different contexts.

The forum will provide a good platform to discuss these perspectives and more by distinguished panelists and experts.

I'd like to extend my gratitude to esteemed Ministers, to all participants and to our sponsors Albayrak Group and Pavo Group as well as to all those who made this event possible.

Nail OLPAK

President of DEİK