

Finland - Türkiye 2nd JETCO and Roundtable Meeting**26 February 2025, Helsinki, 11.00****(Excellency Ministers, Ambassadors, Dear Participants)*****Minister of Trade Prof. Dr. Ömer Bolat,******Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Ville Tavo,******Deputy Minister Mustafa Tuzcu,******Ambassadors Deniz Çakar and Pirkko Härmäläinen,******President of Turkish Contractors Association Erdal Eren,******Risto Vuohelainen, Executive Director of Business Finland******DEİK/Türkiye-Finland Business Council Chairp Evren Dönmez******Distinguished Representatives of Public and Business Sectors,***

I greet you all on behalf of Foreign Economic Relations Board-DEİK and grateful to be together.

JETCO protocol, and since finance is important reinsurance agreement signed between Eximbank and Finvera is significant. As DEİK President and Eximbank Board Member I hope this milestones will help to facilitate stronger partnerships.

Our relations with Finland are progressing. Being together with dedicated 16 Finnish and 15 Turkish business representatives, this meeting together with networking session, will help to improve economic relations.

Foreign Economic Relations Board, DEİK, has been continuing its activities for 40 years, in order to enhance bilateral economic relations between Türkiye and other countries. We carry on our efforts with an understanding of “Business Diplomacy”, on a voluntary membership basis, with 152 business councils all over the world.

DEİK/Türkiye-Finland Business Council is one of them and is active for 34 years and counterpart is Business Finland.

Our bilateral trade is about \$1.8 billion, and I believe we have potential to increase, of course not only to increase but also in a balanced way. Beyond the trade, it is crucial that, economic and cultural relations expand into different areas, diversifying from investments to partnerships.

Let me underline few points, which I believe will help to develop our cooperation;

- First of all, we always emphasize that there is an urgent need for modernization of Customs Union, focusing on; agriculture, services and public procurement.
- As green and digital transformation go hand in hand, digital transformation is another specific area where we can cooperate more through DEİK’s Digital Technologies Business Council.
- I’d like to highlight challenges, faced by Turkish steel companies due to the quota restrictions imposed by EU. Despite Türkiye’s strong industrial capacity and commitment to high-quality production standards, these quotas continue to constrain sector’s potential for growth and competitiveness in EU market.

- Both countries' industries seem to complement each other. In addition to other points, construction, energy and defense are leading areas of cooperation, as well as; medical services, information and communication, digital and environmental technologies.
- Now, let me move on Türkiye's side. Our beautiful country, which is the largest; investment, manufacturing, and technology hub between Western Europe and China, has a foreign trade volume exceeding \$600 billion. We have significant investment opportunities in almost each sector, from energy to all industries, agriculture to infrastructure. So, I want to invite Finnish business community to invest in our country and take advantage of our investment opportunities especially in high technology sectors.

I would like to finish my speech with a Finnish saying, if I can pronounce well, **(Työ tekijäänsä neuvo)**, **(Töö tekiyaansa neuvo)** which means, **“Work teaches the worker.”**

That's so true. Success comes through experience and effort.

I'd like to extend my gratitude to esteemed Ministers, Ambassadors, sponsors, all participants and to all who made this event possible.

Thank you.

Nail OLPAK

President of DEİK