

Roundtable Meeting with U.S. Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross
7 September 2019
İstanbul

Honorable Secretary,
Mr. Ambassador Satterfield,
TAIK Board Members,

On behalf of the Foreign Economic Relations Board of Turkey – DEİK and TAIK it is a great honor to welcome you Mr. Secretary again, after our lunch. Your presence here today and nearly a week, means a lot.

During the last few years, it looked like as if the only agenda our two countries had, was Pastor Brunson, sanctions, tariffs, S-400 and F-35. However, we never had a fall in our trade volume during this time. On the contrary, the volume increased constantly.

From a businessman point of view, where we have 21 billion dollar trade volume, it is so astonishing to see the two Presidents, at the very heart of this turbulence, taking a decision to raise our trade volume to 75 billion dollars. Yet, this wasn't enough for these two ambitious leaders, so that they revised it to 100 billion dollars which as business community we liked very much. This is how I read it.

And you're underlining a fifty to fifty balanced trade together with a short term road map where you're not postponing the matter to comities or decades. That's also a great vision. Thank you.

As DEİK of course as TAIK, it is our duty to coordinate and support all of these efforts. And we have been involved with TAIK's project from the very beginning. We hosted several meetings in our office and facilitated the coordination with the Trade Ministry and the other non-profits. And TAIK shared the report with the American side, your side. And there, we possibly had two alternatives. Either we were not going to hear anything back from your side, or it was going to attract serious attention. The second one happened.

Even where an ordinary citizen is chatting about CAATSA and sanctions, the Secretary of Commerce is here in İstanbul with us.

So, Mr. Secretary and Mr. Yalçındağ, you, me, we all have a huge responsibility to shorten the way. As DEİK, we will continue to support any endeavor coming from our Business Councils and we will be at the service of our members willing to increase commercial ties with the United States.

Before closing, I want to add one important point Mr. Secretary.

We're speaking about five times bigger trade level. Of course, from our side, we'll be competitive and also from quality vise there'll be no question. But, you, US side may put a question to the table about the capacity and the availability which are quite important as important as the others. I should say that, you'll be convinced yourself that, there'll be no capacity or availability problem from our side.

Thank you again Mr. Secretary for being here with us today, which proves American interest in moving forward with a positive agenda with Turkey. I wish a fruitful discussion and a concrete outcome for this meeting.

Thank you all. Now I give the floor to TAIK Chairman, Mr. Yalçındağ.

Nail OLPAK

President of DEİK